

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

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June 30, 2020
Start: 8:25 PM
Recess: 8:50 PM.

HELD AT: REMOTE HEARING (VIRTUAL ROOM 1)

B E F O R E: DANIEL DROMM
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS: Adrienne E. Adams
Alicka Ampry-Samuel
Diana Ayala
Robert E. Cornegy, Jr.
Laurie A. Cumbo
Vanessa L. Gibson
Mark Gjonaj
Farah N. Louis
Steven Matteo
Francisco P. Moya
Keith Powers
Helen K. Rosenthal
James G. Van Bramer

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

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2 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: (inaudible) Sergeant
3 Martinez, you may begin with the opening statement.

4 SERGEANT MARTINEZ: Good evening, and
5 welcome to tonight's remote New York City Council
6 hearing vote of the Committee on Finance.
7 Participants, please turn on your video and silence
8 your electronic devices. Thank you. We're ready to
9 begin. (bell)

10 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Good evening and
11 welcome to tonight's Finance Committee hearing where
12 we will be adopting the fiscal 2021 Budget. I'm
13 Council Member Daniel Dromm and I chair the
14 Committee. We have been joined by my colleagues. I'm
15 going to just bring up their names. Council Members
16 Cornegy, Grodenchik, Koslowitz, Powers, Adams, Cumbo
17 Rosenthal, Van Bramer, Moya, Ampry-Samuel, Louis,
18 Barron, Yeger, Ayala, Lancman, Matteo, Rose, Perkins,
19 Lander, Vallone, Gibson Gjonaj, Chin, Torres, and
20 Menchanca, and Kallos. Excuse me. We're also joined
21 by Richard by Council Members Richards, Miller,
22 Reynoso and Salamanca. Today-tonight the Finance
23 Committee will take the necessary action of the City
24 Council to adopt the Fiscal 2021 Budget, which totals
25 approximately \$88.1 billion. In all, this committee

2 will vote on nine budget related items. In addition,
3 we will also be voting one Article XI Property Tax
4 Exemption. Before we begin, I just want to take a
5 moment to recognize that this was a very difficult
6 and emotional budget process for the members of this
7 body. Faced with the city's dire financial position
8 as a result of COVID-19, we did not have the ability
9 to fund all the worthy items, and organizations that
10 should be funded in an ideal world. Heart-wrenching
11 choices had to be made, and after weeks of intense
12 budget negotiations, and rigorous debate, the
13 Councils and the Mayor reached an agreement that even
14 in the midst of negotiations—midst of a financial
15 crisis protects and preserves vital programs and
16 services. So, for that at least I'm proud. I had a
17 long list of thank yous to all the hard-working and
18 dedicated Council Members and staff who helped us get
19 to this moment, but in the interest of time, I will
20 just give a big thank you to them collectively. I
21 think you know who you are, and we appreciate all
22 that you have done. Throughout this year's budget
23 process the Council's guiding principle was to ensure
24 that the most vulnerable New Yorkers were protected
25 and that we maintain critical social services. I am

2 proud to say that we managed to meet that goal
3 through this year's budget. As a result of our
4 tenacity and persistence throughout this negotiation
5 process, the Fiscal 2021 Budget includes funding to
6 preserve Summer Youth Program including \$61 million
7 for the Summer Youth Employment Program; \$13 million
8 for Work, Learn, Grow and \$42 million for summer camp
9 slots so our youth have a safe and supportive
10 environment and activities and joy opportunities to
11 help them secure their futures. In addition, the
12 Council listened to the calls for police reform, and
13 sought to progressively transform our city's Police
14 Department and reimagine public safety in our
15 schools. As a result, the Adopted Budget will include
16 a \$1 billion cut to the NYPD's expense budget. This
17 will be achieved through a series of headcount
18 reductions and transfers, a large reduction in
19 overtime and other budgetary savings. Among the other
20 Council priorities that will be included in the
21 budget are: The restoration of \$100 million in Fair
22 Student funding; the restoration of \$11.6 million for
23 the Single Shepherd Guidance Counselors and \$4.8
24 million for 38 social workers. The preservation of
25 the CUNY ASAP Program in its entirety, \$18.6 million

2 in health initiatives and \$16.5 million in mental
3 health initiatives, and \$20.2 million (bell) for
4 cultural programs and SIGs and \$11.9 million for
5 alternatives to incarceration. Now, let's discuss the
6 items that the Finance Committee will vote on today.
7 Finance Committee members were emailed their
8 documents and a description of what they are. So, I
9 am just going to list the items that are on our—on
10 our agenda tonight that require a vote. The first
11 item is the Resolution adopting Fiscal 2021
12 Executive... Excuse me. Fiscal 2021 Expense Budget.
13 The second item is the Resolution Adopting the Fiscal
14 2021 Contract Budget. The third item is Reso A for
15 Fiscal 2021 Capital Budget approving the schedule of
16 changes for the Capital Budget since the Executive
17 Budget including Council Discretionary Allocations.
18 The fourth item is Reso B for the Fiscal 2021 Capital
19 Budget, which is approved—which is approval—it's an
20 approval of the Capital Budget as amended by Reso A.
21 The fifth item in the Resolution approving the 47th
22 year of the Community Development Program and the
23 46th year of the allocations. The 6th, 7th, 8th and 9th
24 items are four resolutions necessary to fix the
25 property tax rates for Fiscal 2021 and the tenth item

2 is an Article XI Property Tax Exemption in the
3 Speaker's District. As a reminder to members
4 Schedule C it the schedule of the Expense and
5 Contract Budgets and the appropriations for the
6 organization is listed in Schedule C are in the
7 Expense and Contract Budgets. Council Members will
8 have to sign a disclosure form indicting whether or
9 not a conflict exists with any of the groups listed
10 in the Schedule C or Reso A, which details the
11 designations of capital discretionary funds. If any
12 Council Member has a potential conflict of interest
13 with any of the organizations included, he or she has
14 the opportunity to disclose the conflict at the time
15 of their vote. As a further reminder, please
16 disclose any conflicts you may have with proposed
17 subcontractors that are used by any of the
18 organizations sponsors. These disclosures must be
19 made before the subcontractor can be approved. As,
20 those are all of the items for tonight, we have
21 Stated Meeting right after this vote, and it will
22 certainly be a long night. So, I would respectfully
23 request that the members of the Finance Committee
24 delay their comments until the stated meeting or at
25 the very least keep them brief. We will only be

2 hearing from Finance Committee members at this
3 hearing. I also want to give an opportunity for my
4 co-chair of the Subcommittee on Finance to say a few
5 words. That is Council Member and Subcommittee Co-
6 Chair Vanessa Gibson.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Thank you so much
8 Chair Danny Dromm and thank you for your incredible
9 passion, and your consistency during this process.
10 Good evening to all of my colleagues on the Finance
11 Committee. As members of this City Council, we have
12 the challenging task of making tough decisions that
13 will have a long-term impact on all New Yorkers
14 including those New Yorkers most affected by the
15 COVID-19 Pandemic. We thought of this budget process
16 from a place of zero with the Administration
17 unwilling to fund any valuable safety net programs
18 that have been lifelines for our children, residents
19 and families. With no federal support a \$2 billion
20 cut from Albany, \$7 billion loss in revenue, \$9
21 billion deficit, and no authority to borrow money,
22 this Council attempted to ensure that we protect
23 workers such as guidance counselors, social workers,
24 educators, and many essential workers who have been
25 on the front lines during this pandemic. This has

2 truly been one of the most challenging budgets that
3 we have faced and one of the worst economic crises
4 that we've faced together. I am thankful for the
5 hard work and the relentless hours poured into this
6 budget all done remotely, by the way, by our Speaker
7 Corey Johnson, our Finance Division led by Latonia
8 McKinney, the entire Finance team and all the members
9 of the Budget and Negotiating Team. Together, we
10 worked around the clock all weekend, late nights
11 going through budget lines, one-shots, peg
12 restorations and we did exactly what New Yorkers
13 expected us to do. We did not come to this place and
14 space today easily. I care as all of us do about our
15 constituents and their families. So many people are
16 being destroyed and have been destroyed by the COVID-
17 19 Pandemic. I want to thank all of the advocates
18 the community partners and activists that have been
19 and continue to be a part of this defining moment in
20 our history recognizing the 401 years of systemic
21 racism and the racism of the COVID-19 Pandemic. This
22 budget has made important investments in protecting
23 Education and Youth, Summer Youth, Work, Learn Grow,
24 COMPAS, SONYC, Beacon, Cornerstone programs, Single
25 Shepherd, Fair Student Funding, Fair Futures, the

2 CUNY ASAP program, parks workers, guidance
3 counselors, social workers, school nurses, Supporting
4 Food Access, the Cultural Institutions, Housing
5 programs, Immigration Healthcare, Supporting Victims
6 of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault and the New
7 York City Crisis Management System just to name a
8 few. This budget is painful, but understand it would
9 have been much, much worse had the City Council not
10 fought relentlessly to protect all these programs.
11 So, as we vote in a matter of a few minutes or so, I
12 just urge all of my colleagues to be reminded that
13 this budget is not perfect. It is painful. It's
14 imperfect, and it falls far short of much more that
15 we wanted to accomplish, but given the horrific
16 financial climate, no money from Albany, no money
17 from the federal government, a loss of revenue from
18 thousands of New Yorkers who have died with COVID-19
19 we have to make tough decisions that I know many are
20 not happy about. I am going to stand on the side of
21 supporting my children, my seniors, my LGBT brothers
22 and sisters and all of the constituents that live in
23 my district that will benefit from much of what we
24 have restored. We started at the bottom and now we
25 are here, and this budget is really a reflection of

2 the very best that we could have done under the
3 circumstances. So, I think you, Mr. Chair. Thank you
4 for your support and to all of my colleagues. Many of
5 you who have reached out. It has not been easy when
6 you feel personally attacked, when you feel that your
7 family is being attacked. And again, we are elected
8 officials so we take all of that understanding the
9 responsibility that it comes with, but I think there
10 is always opportunity to grow and improve, and even
11 after today, the work will continue to reform the
12 city to make changes and important investments and
13 with that, I thank you, Mr. Chair and I look forward
14 to working with all of my colleagues in the days
15 after this budget is passed collectively together.
16 Thank you so much.

17 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And thank you, Chair
18 Gibson. It has been an absolute pleasure to work with
19 you on this budget, and as they say: I couldn't have
20 done it without you. So, thank you very, very much
21 for all of your love and support. I deeply appreciate
22 it. Okay. I'm going to now ask Billy Martin, the
23 Committee Clerk to call the roll.

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2 CLERK: William Martin, Committee Clerk,
3 roll call vote Committee on Finance. All items are
4 coupled. Chair Dromm.

5 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: I proudly vote yes.

6 CLERK: (coughs) Excuse me. Gibson.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: On behalf of my
8 children and families in District 16 who need the
9 money in this budget, I vote aye on their behalf.

10 CLERK: Cornegy.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER CORNEGY: I vote aye. I
12 reserve my comments for the Stated Meeting.

13 CLERK: Cumbo.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: (pause)

15 MALE SPEAKER: Okay. (pause)

16 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Did you hear me?

17 CLERK: No, Council Member. My apologies.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: I'm sorry. I am
19 disclosing on the record of the Council proceedings
20 that the New York City Department of Education is
21 funded in the Budget we are adopting, and my sister
22 is employed by DOE, and I vote aye.

23 CLERK: Thank you. Koslowitz?

24 COUNCIL MEMBER KOSLOWITZ: I vote aye.

25 CLERK: Lancman.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER LANCMAN: Aye.

3 CLERK: Rosenthal.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Permission to
5 explain my vote.

6 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: (pause)

7 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Okay. I'm going
8 that as granted. I want to congratulate---

9 CLERK: And that would begin it.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: I want to
11 congratulate Chair Dromm and also Council Member
12 Gibson for skillfully guiding us through this very
13 difficult process. I also want to thank your finance
14 team for providing answers to our many questions and
15 with that, I vote aye on all except M 230 and
16 accompanying Resolutions 1360 and 1361, and 231 with
17 accompanying Resolutions 1362 and 1363, and M 232
18 with accompanying Resolution 1364. Thank you. (pause)

19 CLERK: Van Bramer.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: Permission to
21 explain my vote?

22 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Yes.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: Thank you.

24 I'll say more later at the Stated Meeting, but I did
25 want to say this: We have all been called on to meet

2 this moment in history. The people have demanded a
3 real \$1 billion cut to the NYPD, but also re-
4 imagining the public safety in this city. Sadly, the
5 most historic part of this budget is how badly we
6 managed to meet the moments. The people have spoken
7 through marches and rallies and by occupying City
8 Hall. We must listen to the people we work for. That
9 is our job. We must hear the cries in the streets
10 and respond. This budget does not really defund the
11 NYPD by one \$1 billion. In fact, through overtime
12 reductions of \$350 million, we know that that's
13 simply a goal and a suggestion, and that history has
14 told us that the NYPD can blow through those
15 suggestions or deadlines anyway. So, we should have
16 done more. We should have eliminated more cadet
17 classes, actively reduced headcount of uniformed
18 officers and we side with you. one of the things that
19 I'm most disheartened about is the fact that some do
20 not believe that arts and education fundamentally
21 changes lives. It is black and brown communities
22 that that have been under-served by the arts
23 generally and arts and educational—arts and education
24 specifically. The Mayor's Budget cuts \$15 million
25 from the DOE's Budget for Arts in the Classroom. This

2 is short-term thinking that will cost us in the long-
3 run. A society that fails to appreciate the role of
4 education, culture, the arts and libraries in any
5 battle for a more just society is doomed to fail.
6 Therefore, I vote no on all. Now, I am disclosing on
7 the record of the Council proceedings that (bell)
8 that Breaking Ground is funded in the Budget we are
9 adopting, and my sister Dawn does great work for that
10 agency that serves the homeless and is associated
11 with this entity. Thank you.

12 CLERK: Grodenchik.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Thank you. I
14 am disclosing on the record of the Council
15 Proceedings that Queens College or the City
16 University of New York is funded in this budget we
17 are adopting and my son is a student at Queens
18 College, TSQ, Inc. is funded in the budget we are
19 adopting and my son, my wife and myself are
20 volunteers with that wonderful organization. With
21 that, I vote aye on all.

22 CLERK: Adams.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER ADAMS: I am disclosing on
24 the record of the Council's proceedings that Prose
25 and Ivy Foundation of Queens is funded in the Budget

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2 we're adopting and I am associated with this entity,
3 and also I'm not sure if this applies, but I am a
4 member of the Greater Allen A.M.E. Cathedral of New
5 York, which may still be affiliated with the Allen
6 Community Senior Center also funded in this budget.
7 With that, I vote aye on all.

8 CLERK: Ampry-Samuel.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER AMPRY-SAMUEL: Hi. I am
10 disclosing for this proceeding for the
11 record...disclosing in the proceedings that my brother
12 is an employee for the Department of Education, and I
13 will be voting aye.

14 CLERK: Ayala.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA: I am disclosing on
16 the record for the Council's proceedings that
17 Harriets High School (sic) is funded in the budget
18 that we're adopting and my child is a student of
19 Harvey (sic) High School is funded in this budget and
20 my son is a student at Harvey High School, and the
21 AHRC is funded in the budget that we're adopting and
22 my partner is associated with this entity. The
23 Children's Aid Society is funded in the budget that
24 we're adopting and my son is associated with this
25 entity. Harriets High School is funded in this

2 budget that we're adopting and my son is also
3 associated with this entity and I vote aye on all.
4 (bell)

5 CLERK: Gjonaj.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER GHONAJ: I am disclosing on
7 the record of the City Council proceedings that to
8 the best of my knowledge and understanding PS 175 is
9 funded in the budget and we're adopting and my wife
10 is associated with that entity, and that CUNY is
11 funded in the budget we're adopting, and my son may
12 or may not be a student at CUNY, and that Bronx Fair
13 Housing Network is funded in the budget we're
14 adopting and my brother may or may or may not be
15 associated with this entity, and that New York Public
16 Library is funded in the budget we're adopting and
17 my brother may or may not be associated with this
18 entity, and that my sister is associated with
19 Department of Education, and that my immediate
20 extended and past associates may or may not be
21 associated with any of the entities funded in this
22 budget we are about to adopt. With that, I vote no
23 on all except for Land Use Item LU-665 and
24 accompanying Resolution 1366.

25 CLERK: Moya.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER MOYA: Aye.

3 CLERK: Powers.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: So, I'm just
5 disclosing on the record at City Council proceedings
6 that Mount Sinai Hospital is in the budget we are
7 adopting and my mother is associated with this
8 entity. I will hold my longer version to be
9 statements for the full Stated, but in the last two
10 weeks we have made significant progress, and I am
11 highly in support of the work that my colleagues have
12 done to restore social services to make a real first
13 step in NY and to continue to this conversation as we
14 move forward. Thank you.

15 CLERK: Louis.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER LOUIS: I am disclosing on
17 the record of the Council proceeding CUNY, York
18 College is funded in the budget and we are—that we
19 are—that we are adopting, my sister is an employee of
20 this entity. BRAG is funded by the budget. My sister
21 is associated with this entity. Brookdale Hospital
22 is funded by the budget that we're adopting and my
23 mother is an employee of this entity. Coney Island
24 Hospital is funded by the Budget and my sister is
25 employed by this entity, and the Metropolitan

2 Transportation Authority is funded by the Budget, and
3 my brother is associated with this entity. I vote
4 aye on all. Thank you.

5 CLERK: Matteo.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: Thank you. I'm
7 going to, as the request of the Chair, I'm going to
8 forego my statement, but I just will say really quick
9 that over the last two weeks I've been consistent.
10 They passed the budget, and that is too much for me
11 to support. For that reason, I'm going to vote no on
12 all except for Land Use 665 and 1366. As for
13 conflicts, I'm disclosing on the record that my
14 children attend the PS 30 Wagner High School and the
15 College of Staten Island, which are all funded in
16 this budget, and my brother works at Richmond
17 University Medical Center, which is also funded in
18 this budget. So, again, no on all except Land Use 665
19 and 1366. Thank you.

20 CLERK: Vote on the following items,
21 Resolution 1355, Resolution 1356, Resolution 1357 are
22 adopted by a vote of 14 in the affirmative, three in
23 the negative, no abstentions and 230 with Resolution
24 1360 and 1361, and M-231 with Resolution 1362 and
25 1363 are adopted by a vote of 13 in the affirmative,

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2 4 in the negative, no abstentions, and 232 and
3 Resolution 1364 were adopted by a vote of 13 in the
4 affirmative, 4 in the negative, no abstentions, and
5 245 and Resolution 1355 is adopted by a vote of 14 in
6 the affirmative, 3 in the negative and no
7 abstentions. Land Use Items 665 and Resolution 1366
8 is adopted by a vote of 16 in the affirmative, 1 in
9 the negative and no abstentions, and 239, 210, 211,
10 212, 213, 214, 215, 233, 234, 235 and 236 are adopted
11 by the committee 14 in the affirmative, 3 in the
12 negative and no abstentions. Thank you. (pause)
13 Council Member Dromm.

14 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: (pause) (humming)
15 Alright, I'm very sorry. I did not know I was on mute
16 and with that vote, I do want to thank the Committee
17 Clerk and say this meeting is adjourned at 8:50 in
18 the evening. Thank you very, very much. [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 JULY 6, 2020