

*(The following is not a verbatim transcript of comments or discussion that occurred during the meeting, but rather a summarization intended for general informational purposes. All motions and votes are the official records).*

## **FINANCE COMMITTEE**

Regular meeting of the Finance Committee was held on Monday, January 3, 2022 in the Council Chambers, City Hall, Cranston, Rhode Island and via Zoom Webinar.

### **CALL MEETING TO ORDER:**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 P.M. by the Chair.

Present                    Councilwoman Jessica M. Marino  
                                 Councilman John P. Donegan  
                                 Councilman Matthew R. Reilly  
                                 Councilman Richard D. Campopiano  
                                 Councilwoman Nicole Renzulli, Vice-Chair  
                                 Council Vice-President Robert J. Ferri, Chair  
                                 Council President Christopher G. Paplauskas

Also Present:            Robert Strom, Director of Finance  
                                 David Dimaio, Council Budget Analyst  
                                 John Verdecchia, Assistant City Solicitor  
                                 Louis P. Cirillo, Clerk Administrator  
                                 Tom Lima, Video Technician  
                                 Heather Finger, Stenographer

### **MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING:**

Council President Paplauskas, seconded by Councilman Donegan, made a motion to continue these minutes until the next meeting of the Committee. On a roll call, the motion was voted unanimously in the affirmative.

#### **I.        COMMITTEE BUSINESS MATTERS CARRIED OVER**

#### **II.      CORRESPONDENCE/COMMUNICATIONS**

##### **A.    *ARPA Funds allocated in the current budget* – Explanation from Director Strom**

Director of Finance Strom appeared before the Council and said that he has been asked to provide an update concerning the City's ARPA funding. He provided a spreadsheet entitled "City of Cranston, American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) FY22" [\[click to view\]](#), and explained that the City has received \$21 million of the \$42 million allocated and that additional funds will be paid to the City likely in May and August. He further explained that the City has not yet expended any of these funds and that the Council will approve the expenditures per the provisions of the ordinance.

Director Strom reported that the funds are invested in a very conservative restricted account, and this account has produced approximately \$21,000 in accumulated interest.

Director Strom referred to the spreadsheet provided, and explained that ARPA fund revenues, budgeted in this year's budget as approved by the Council, total \$7,871,611, and that this amount is based upon FY 19 and FY 20 actual expenditures, since the FY 21 actuals are not yet available. He added that some line items had shortfalls while others were ahead of plan, resulting in an overall amount of \$7,871,661 (which includes \$1,657,922 in related Public Safety payroll expenses).

Director Strom reported that the final figures should be close to the estimates, and that \$7.8 million in ARPA funds will be necessary to balance the budget.

**Councilman Reilly** asked to know if the Public Safety payroll expenses were solely attributable to COVID or if there were other factors contributing to these expenses with Director Strom responding that these payroll expenses were all COVID related.

**Council Vice-President Ferri** asked to know if Director Strom anticipates the possibility of shortfalls in next year's budget with Director Strom responding that there may be some, and it may be possible for different budget lines to experience shortfalls, while others may fall off the list. He added that it is too early to be certain regarding these possibilities.

**Council Vice-President Ferri** referred to building permit revenues, and asked to know if these actually increased during this period. Director Strom responded that this line increased \$118,162 over the three-year period.

**Councilwoman Renzulli** thanked Director Strom for attending this meeting and providing the explanation. She asked to know when the Council might be advised of any additional loss of revenue with Director Strom responding that he should know more by the fourth quarter, adding that although revenues appear to be currently trending fairly well, there is concern regarding an uptick in COVID related issues.

**Councilwoman Renzulli** asked to know which lines may be impacted by a COVID uptick with Director Strom responding that it will potentially impact restaurant, municipal court, third party rescue, some permits and parks and recreation revenues. He added that it was still too early to predict any of these.

**Council Vice-President Ferri** thanked Director Strom for his presentation, explaining that the information should be very useful to aid Councilmembers in responding to constituent questions and concerns.

The above explanation was informational only – No vote was taken.

### **III. PUBLIC HEARINGS\* and/or NEW MATTERS BEFORE THE COMMITTEE**

#### **A. PUBLIC HEARINGS**

#### **B. NEW MATTERS BEFORE THE COMMITTEE**

- ***Real Estate Tax Abatements***

Councilwoman Marino, seconded by Councilman Reilly, made a motion to recommend approval of this list of Tax Abatements as recommended by the City Assessor.

No one appeared to speak in favor or oppose.

On a roll call, the motion was voted unanimously in the affirmative.

- ***Motor Vehicle Tax Abatements***

Councilwoman Marino, seconded by Council President Paplauskas, made a motion to recommend approval of this list of Tax Abatements as recommended by the City Assessor.

No one appeared to speak in favor or oppose.

On a roll call, the motion was voted unanimously in the affirmative.

- ***Tax Assessment Board of Review assessed December 31, 2020***

Informational only. No action taken.

- ***Tax Interest Waiver Approvals***

Councilwoman Marino, seconded by Council President Paplauskas, made a motion to recommend approval of this list of Tax Interest Waivers as recommended by the City Treasurer.

No one appeared to speak in favor or oppose.

On a roll call, the motion was voted unanimously in the affirmative.

- ***Tax Interest Waiver Denials***

Councilwoman Marino, seconded by Council President Paplauskas, made a motion to recommend denial of this list of Tax Abatements as recommended by the City Treasurer.

No one appeared to speak in favor or oppose.

On a roll call, the motion was voted unanimously in the affirmative.

- ***Adjournment***

The meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

/S/ Louis P. Cirillo, RICMC  
Clerk Administrator