

(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).

REGULAR MEETING – CITY COUNCIL

-JULY 25, 2022-

Regular meeting of the City Council was called held on Monday, July 25, 2022 in the Council Chambers, City Hall, 869 Park Ave., Cranston, Rhode Island.

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

Roll call showed the following members present: Councilwomen Marino, Renzulli, Vargas, Germain, Councilmen Donegan, Campopiano, Council Vice-President Ferri and Council President Paplauskas -8.

Absent: Councilman Reilly -1.

Also Present: Mayor Kenneth J. Hopkins; Anthony Moretti, Chief of Staff; Christopher Millea, City Solicitor; John Verdecchia, Assistant City Solicitor; Mike Igoe, Acting Finance Director/City Controller; Stephen Angell, City Council Legal Counsel (appeared via Zoom); David Dimaio, City Council Budget Analyst.

On motion by Council Vice-President Ferri, seconded by Councilwoman Vargas, it was voted to dispense with the reading of the minutes of the last meeting and they stand approved as recorded. Motion passed on a vote of 8-0. The following being recorded as voting “aye”: Councilwomen Marino, Renzulli, Vargas, Germain, Councilmen Donegan, Campopiano, Council Vice-President Ferri and Council President Paplauskas -8.

Council President Paplauskas stated that Councilman Reilly had a pre-planned vacation with his family and will not be attending this evening.

I. PUBLIC ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND COMMENDATIONS

TROOP 66 GARDEN CITY, ACHIEVING THE RANK OF NATIONAL EAGLE SCOUT, BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

Council President Paplauskas stated that the above item will be continued to next month’s meeting.

Council President Paplauskas asked for motion to suspend the Rules and take the Docket out of order to hear proposed Ordinances 6-22-01 and 6-22-02.

On motion by Council Vice-President Ferri, seconded by Councilwoman Vargas, it was voted to suspend the Rules in order to hear the two School Department Ordinances first. Motion passed on a vote of 9-0. The following being recorded as voting “aye”: Councilwomen Marino, Renzulli, Vargas, Germain, Councilmen Donegan, Campopiano, Council Vice-President Ferri and Council President Paplauskas -8.

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6-22-01 ***ORDINANCE RATIFYING SCHOOL COMMITTEE'S COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT WITH THE CRANSTON TEACHERS' ALLIANCE, LOCAL 1704, AFT PARAPROFESSIONALS UNIT (September 1, 2022-August 31, 2025)***

6-22-02 ***ORDINANCE RATIFYING SCHOOL COMMITTEE'S COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT WITH THE CRANSTON TEACHERS' ALLIANCE, LOCAL 1704, AFT***

On motion by Councilwoman Renzulli, seconded by Councilman Donegan, it was voted to approve proposed Ordinance 6-22-01.

Under Discussion:

Council President Paplauskas stated that there was a lengthy hearing on these two Ordinances last week. He asked Superintendent Nota-Masse and Chief Financial Officer Balducci to come forward if they have anything to add. He also stated that he will then ask the Administration to speak and then have public comment.

Both Superintendent Nota-Masse and Mr. Balducci stated that they stand on their previous testimony.

Council President Paplauskas asked Administration if they have anything to add for the two Ordinances.

Mayor Hopkins appeared to speak and thanked Council President Paplauskas for the opportunity to speak before the Council this evening. He stated that, as Mayor, he has provided unprecedented funding for our Schools in just two short years. Last year, he funded the Schools with an incremental \$1.5 million. This year, he provided an extra \$1 million for such things as fair School contracts and programs for our children. He reminded everyone for his financial support for the construction of both our new Garden City School and soon to be Gladstone Elementary School. There has been some public dialogue about his concern for the Schools future ability to meet the financial obligations of the contracts. He stressed that he would like to be clear, never did he oppose fair increases in competitive wages, increases for our educators and staff personnel. His concern and job responsibility is solely to ensure that Schools and the city will be able to afford its financial commitment to its employees over the three-year term of these contracts. He met with the School Administration and School Committee to explain the financial challenges that he is taking on as the Mayor. He expressed in that meeting that there is uncertainty as to the taxpayers' ability to continue to incrementally fund the Schools as he has been doing. Subsequently, these two contracts were forwarded to the Council for approval. Over the past few weeks, he has taken the initiative to discuss his specific concerns with both the Superintendent of Schools and the School Committee Chairman. The issues were then narrowed down to the issues concerning the years two and three wage reopeners. The bottom line is that he was delighted to hear from the School Administrators and the Chairman last week that the Schools are able to cover their financial obligations through the terms of these contracts. He was also delighted to know school programs for the kids will not be in jeopardy. In fact, he has applauded the School Administrators, educators and staff to reach a fair agreement that the School Department can afford over the next three years. He is present this evening to ask that the Council vote unanimously to accept the two contracts as presented to them.

Council President Paplauskas opened up public comment for the two School contract Ordinances only.

Elizabeth Larkin, President of Teachers Union, appeared to speak and stated that since the Committee meeting last week, she is glad that people have turned their opinions to what is really important because we have a very fair and equitable contract and, as she stated last week, it is absolutely rich in educational language and schedules and enhancements for teachers teaching and learning.

Dan Wall, 27 Sagamore Rd., Chair of School Committee, appeared to speak and stated that, as he stated last week, he is very pleased to hear the support the Council expressed at last week's Finance Committee meeting. He is also glad to see the Mayor this evening and giving overwhelming support to the contracts.

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Roll call was taken on motion to approve Ordinance 6-22-01 and motion passed on a vote of 8-0 The following being recorded as voting “aye”: Councilwomen Marino, Renzulli, Vargas, Germain, Councilmen Donegan, Campopiano, Council Vice-President Ferri and Council President Paplauskas -8.

On motion by Council Vice-President Ferri, seconded by Councilwoman Marino, it was voted to approve Ordinance 6-22-02. Motion passed on a vote of 8-0. The following being recorded as voting “aye”: Councilwomen Marino, Renzulli, Vargas, Germain, Councilmen Donegan, Campopiano, Council Vice-President Ferri and Council President Paplauskas -8.

II. PUBLIC HEARINGS & PUBLIC COMMENT

Dorothy McDonough, 23 Edge St., appeared to speak regarding proposed Ordinances 4-22-04 and 5 and stated that she is really surprised that no one has picked up on some of the issues that she will be bringing up now. She has read that this proposed project is going to be four stories. She surveyed Reservoir Ave., Park Ave., Pontiac Ave. and there are no four story buildings that are directly on the sidewalk. Another issue is the size and magnitude of this proposed building. Seventy two apartments in an overdeveloped part of the community. What kind of traffic study was done for this proposal? She would be very interested to know if a traffic study was done during a school year because we have not had school those two years. She lives off the main artery of Park Ave. There are buses from Cranston High School East trying to make it up Park Ave. from Edgewood. Anyone who goes to the Dutemple area in the morning, especially when school is starting can see how congested that small, tiny neighborhood is with traffic getting to the school. There are two ways to get in and out of that area. It abuts the highway so there is no getting out from the back. You either get out from Park Ave. or you get out from Pontiac Ave. and it is virtually impossible in the morning. Her concern is that the traffic that that building of that magnitude is going to create is not going to just create traffic problems here, it will all the way to Warwick Ave. She feels that the traffic issue has not been fully explored the way it should be and she would like to see the traffic studies that were done if they are available, when they were done, what time of day they were done. She is not against this project, she objects to the magnitude of it.

Russell Souza, 123 Midwood St., appeared to speak regarding the rodent problem in the Stadium area. He stated that last year, the city did a decent job in getting rid of the rodents, but they are back again, probably because of the same woman that people are seeing still feeding animals and birds. He spent a lot of money on his car from the rodents chewing the wires. He has neighbors who are also present this evening with the same problem. This woman is causing a lot of problems for the neighbors. There are birds and seagulls all over her lawn. Last year, Channel 10 had to go to the area and straighten out this problem. If that is what it is going to take to do it, the city has to get involved with this woman. The problem is on Caporal St. There are other people that are present that would like to speak on this also. Council President Paplauskas asked that the other members of the public who would like to speak regarding this issue wait and speak under Undocketed Items on the Docket.

Claire Stadtmueller, 963 Seven Mile Rd., appeared to speak via Zoom regarding the Agreement between the State of Rhode Island D.O.T. and the City of Cranston for the Gratis Transfer for Streetlight Facilities to the D.O.T. She stated that that is the control of over 628 streetlights. While it may seem like a good deal for Cranston to be rid of the responsibility of maintaining 628 lighting facilities and seemingly be compatible with the green new deal to have them outfitted with LED lights, she asked Council Members prior to voting to consider the following: outsourcing away some public oversight in Cranston to the huge entity of RIDOT is unacceptable and dangerous. This is not responsible stewardship and more information is needed. Abdication of rights is not how a community protects itself. Have the men and women of the community been made aware of this transfer? The LED lights that will be attached to these lighting facilities are not the innocuous energy savers they are promoted to be. LED lights cause depression as experienced by truckers exposed to them. LED lights are dangerous for birds and insects yet one of the roads given away in this power grab is the rural Pippin Orchard Rd. where there are beehives, fruit and vegetable farms, including the Urban Edge Farm growing our food.

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She questioned if there has been an environmental impact study done and if these lighting facilities are insured and by whom. Giving away oversight to another government agency precludes having oversight of any future plans for these lighting facilities. She questioned how the men and women of Cranston will know if there are surveillance cameras installed with the lights and how will they know if the so-called small WTF, wireless transmission facility, pulsing microwave radiation into their homes have been attached to the lighting facilities? The Agreement says that the D.O.T. can shut down the lights. She questioned if this will set the stage for infrastructure that works only when the RIDOT deems it should? The Agreement states ‘The City hereby assigns such easement rights to RIDOT’. She also stated that the aforementioned questions need to be answered regarding this assignment of easement rights because without the future oversight, the lack of rights could mean anything, surveillance, microwave radiation, health depleting LED lights. She asked that the Council swore to protect the men and women of the City. She asked that they consider the gravity of this Agreement prior to voting.

Steve Frias, 107 Garden Hills Dr., member of the Planning Commission, appeared to speak via Zoom regarding proposed Ordinances 4-22-04 and 4-22-05 and addressed the question asked by Ms. McDonough regarding any traffic study done and stated that there was a traffic study performed. It was performed based on data from 2018. As to the comment she made about the height of the proposed four-story building, if you look at the map, there are also three-story buildings in the area and multi-family. Also, there are safeguards in our Ordinance that the Ordinance Committee recommended for off-street parking if that is a concern.

Sheila Resseger, 50 Malvern Ave., appeared to speak via Zoom regarding the Agreement between the State of Rhode Island D.O.T. and the City of Cranston for the Gratis Transfer for Streetlight Facilities to the D.O.T. and stated that she was not able to attend the July 14th Ordinance Committee meeting where the Committee discussed this Agreement. She does not know if there was any testimony given regarding the hazardous environmental and health impact of LED lighting. Other communities have debated the risk benefit analysis of the use of high-powered LED lighting on streetlights. LED lighting has been shown to have harmful effects not only on humans but also on bees, birds and trees. She asked if Cranston has considered whether the installation of LED lights is the best way forward or discuss the intensity of the LED streetlights and its plans to convert the lights along State roads to LED lights. Once the State D.O.T. has complete control over these streetlights, how will Cranstonians be able to voice any objections?

III. RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION ALLOWING THE POLICE DEPARTMENT OF THE CITY OF CRANSTON TO COLLABORATE WITH NONADJACENT RHODE ISLAND MUNICIPALITIES AND POLICE DEPARTMENTS THROUGH A STATEWIDE MUTUAL AID AGREEMENT

On motion by Council Vice-President Ferri, seconded by Councilwoman Renzulli, it was voted to approve the above Resolution.

Under Discussion:

Solicitor Millea stated that this Resolution is adopted by the City based on RIGL 45.40.42-2, which was amended in the last Legislative year. Mutual Agreements between Police Departments used to have to be contiguous. The Law was amended in the last Legislative year to allow, as an example, Cranston Police Department could agree with the Town of Westerly for Mutual Aid for whatever the reason or the City of Providence or Woonsocket. No longer do you have to be next to each other to engage, but it does require the approval of the City Council, which is why this is before the Council today. It has been requested by our Police Colonel and he recommends its passage.

Councilwoman Marino stated that while she very much respects the fact that Solicitor Millea has represented that the Police Chief is in favor of this Resolution, typically, she believes it is procedural to have Resolutions go to Committee first and something of this nature, as a Council Member, she would prefer to hear it in Committee with further information and discussion.

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Council President Paplauskas stated that he did not have any information on this beforehand. Usually, ceremonial Resolutions come direct to the floor and it has been consistent in sending everything else to Committee. Since there is no date on this where it is needed right away, he would like to send this to Safety Services and Licenses Committee so the Police Chief or his Designee can attend to give the Council an update on this.

Solicitor Millea stated that if the Council wishes to send it to Committee, that is up to the Council as long as we can get it done as quickly as possible.

Motion to approve and second were withdrawn.

On motion by Councilwoman Germain, seconded by Councilwoman Renzulli, it was voted to refer the above Resolution to the Safety Services and Licenses Committee. Motion passed on a vote of 8-0. The following being recorded as voting "aye": Councilwomen Marino, Renzulli, Vargas, Germain, Councilmen Donegan, Campopiano, Council Vice-President Ferri and Council President Paplauskas -8.

IV. REPORT OF COMMITTEES

SAFETY SERVICES AND LICENSES COMMITTEE

(Councilwoman Nicole Renzulli, Chair)

CLASS BV LIQUOR LICENSE - NEW (OVER CAP)
999 RESTAURANT INC. D/B/A HOT POT BUFFET
(Yulin Zhang)

734 Park Ave.

On motion by Councilwoman Germain, seconded by Councilwoman Vargas, it was voted to approve the above license application. Motion passed on a vote of 8-0. The following being recorded as voting "aye": Councilwomen Marino, Renzulli, Vargas, Germain, Councilmen Donegan, Campopiano, Council Vice-President Ferri and Council President Paplauskas -8.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

(Council Vice-President Robert J. Ferri, Chair)

ADVICE AND CONSENT OF MAYOR'S APPOINTMENT OF ERNEST TOMMASIELLO AS COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

On motion by Councilwoman Renzulli, seconded by Councilwoman Germain, it was voted to approve the above Advice and Consent of Mayor's appointment of Ernest Tommasiello as Community Development Director. Motion passed on a vote of 7-1. The following being recorded as voting "aye": Councilwomen Marino, Renzulli, Vargas, Germain, Councilmen Donegan, Campopiano and Council President Paplauskas -7. The following being recorded as voting "nay": Council Vice-President Ferri - 1.

6-22-01 *ORDINANCE RATIFYING SCHOOL COMMITTEE'S COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT WITH THE CRANSTON TEACHERS' ALLIANCE, LOCAL 1704, AFT PARAPROFESSIONALS UNIT (September 1, 2022-August 31, 2025)*

6-22-02 *ORDINANCE RATIFYING SCHOOL COMMITTEE'S COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT WITH THE CRANSTON TEACHERS' ALLIANCE, LOCAL 1704, AFT*

Discussion and vote was held earlier in the meeting.

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RESOLUTION URGING THE COUNCIL AND ADMINISTRATION TO USE ARPA FUND TO REPAIR, RENOVATE AND FIX BUDLONG POOL

On motion by Councilwoman Renzulli, seconded by Council Vice-President Ferri, the above Resolution was adopted on a vote of 8-0. The following being recorded as voting “aye”: Councilwomen Marino, Renzulli, Vargas, Germain, Councilmen Donegan, Campopiano, Council Vice-President Ferri and Council President Paplauskas -8.

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING REAL ESTATE TAX ABATEMENTS

On motion by Councilwoman Renzulli, seconded by Councilwoman Germain, the above Resolution was adopted on a vote of 8-0. The following being recorded as voting “aye”: Councilwomen Marino, Renzulli, Vargas, Germain, Councilmen Donegan, Campopiano, Council Vice-President Ferri and Council President Paplauskas -8.

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING MOTOR VEHICLE TAX ABATEMENTS

On motion by Councilwoman Marino, seconded by Councilwoman Vargas, the above Resolution was adopted on a vote of 8-0. The following being recorded as voting “aye”: Councilwomen Marino, Renzulli, Vargas, Germain, Councilmen Donegan, Campopiano, Council Vice-President Ferri and Council President Paplauskas -8.

TAX INTEREST WAIVER APPROVALS

On motion by Councilwoman Marino, seconded by Councilwoman Renzulli, it was voted to approve the above list of Tax Interest Waiver Approvals. Motion passed on a vote of 8-0. The following being recorded as voting “aye”: Councilwomen Marino, Renzulli, Vargas, Germain, Councilmen Donegan, Campopiano, Council Vice-President Ferri and Council President Paplauskas -8.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

(Council Vice-President Robert J. Ferri, Chair)

AGREEMENT BY AND BETWEEN STATE OF RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND THE CITY OF CRANSTON FOR THE GRATIS TRANSFER FOR STREETLIGHT FACILITIES TO D.O.T.

On motion by Councilwoman Renzulli, seconded by Councilman Donegan, it was voted to approve the above Agreement. Motion passed on a vote of 7-1. The following being recorded as voting “aye”: Councilwomen Marino, Renzulli, Vargas, Germain, Councilmen Donegan, Campopiano and Council President Paplauskas -7. The following being recorded as voting “nay”: Council Vice-President Ferri -1.

OAKLAND CEMETERY:

REQUEST DATED JUNE 7, 2022 FROM GRA (GM2, INC.) ON BEHALF OF RHODE ISLAND PUBLIC TRANSIT AUTHORITY (RIPTA) TO CONDUCT WORK AT OR NEAR THE OAKLAND CEMETERY

On motion by Councilwoman Marino, seconded by Councilwoman Vargas, it was voted to approve the above request. Motion passed on a vote of 8-0. The following being recorded as voting “aye”: Councilwomen Marino, Renzulli, Vargas, Germain, Councilmen Donegan, Campopiano, Council Vice-President Ferri and Council President Paplauskas -8.

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ORDINANCE COMMITTEE
(Councilman Matthew R. Reilly, Chair)

10-21-03 *ORDINANCE IN AMENDMENT OF CHAPTER 3.08 OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF CRANSTON, 2005, ENTITLED ‘REVENUE AND FINANCE - CONTRACTS AND PURCHASES’*

On motion by Council Vice-President Ferri, seconded by Councilwoman Marino, the above Ordinance was adopted on a vote of 8-0. The following being recorded as voting “aye”: Councilwomen Marino, Renzulli, Vargas, Germain, Councilmen Donegan, Campopiano, Council Vice-President Ferri and Council President Paplauskas -8.

4-22-04 *ORDINANCE IN AMENDMENT OF THE 2010 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN OF THE CITY OF CRANSTON, AS AMENDED 2012 (641 PARK PROJECT – LEGION BOWL)*

On motion by Councilwoman Germain, seconded by Councilwoman Marino, the above Ordinance was adopted on a vote of 8-0. The following being recorded as voting “aye”: Councilwomen Marino, Renzulli, Vargas, Germain, Councilmen Donegan, Campopiano, Council Vice-President Ferri and Council President Paplauskas -8.

4-22-05 *ORDINANCE IN AMENDMENT OF CHAPTER 17.84 OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF CRANSTON, 2005, ENTITLED ‘ZONING’ (CHANGE OF ZONE – 661 PARK PROJECT – LEGION BOWL)*

On motion by Councilman Donegan, seconded by Councilwoman Marino, the above Ordinance was adopted on a vote of 8-0. The following being recorded as voting “aye”: Councilwomen Marino, Renzulli, Vargas, Germain, Councilmen Donegan, Campopiano, Council Vice-President Ferri and Council President Paplauskas -8.

4-22-08 *ORDINANCE IN AMENDMENT OF CHAPTER 17 OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF CRANSTON, 2005, ENTITLED ‘ZONING’ (CHANGE OF ZONE – 870 OAKLAWN AVE)*

On motion by Councilman Donegan, seconded by Councilwoman Vargas, the above Ordinance was adopted on a vote of 7-0. The following being recorded as voting “aye”: Councilwomen Marino, Renzulli, Vargas, Germain, Councilmen Donegan, Campopiano and Council Vice-President Ferri -7. Council President Paplauskas recused.

5-22-03 *ORDINANCE IN AMENDMENT OF THE 2010 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR THE CITY OF CRANSTON, AS AMENDED 2012 (0 COMSTOCK PARKWAY, 2184 PLAINFIELD PIKE AND 2174 PLAINFIELD PIKE – ASSESSOR’S PLAT 36, LOTS 5, 36, 38, 51, 52 AND 53)*

On motion by Councilwoman Germain, seconded by Council Vice-President Ferri, the above Ordinance was adopted on a vote of 8-0. The following being recorded as voting “aye”: Councilwomen Marino, Renzulli, Vargas, Germain, Councilmen Donegan, Campopiano, Council Vice-President Ferri and Council President Paplauskas -8.

5-22-04 *ORDINANCE IN AMENDMENT OF CHAPTER 17 OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF CRANSTON, 2005, ENTITLED ‘ZONING’ (CHANGE OF ZONE - 0 COMSTOCK PARKWAY, 2184 PLAINFIELD PIKE AND 2174 PLAINFIELD PIKE – ASSESSOR’S PLAT 36, LOTS 5, 36, 38, 51, 52 and 53)*

On motion by Council Vice-President Ferri, seconded by Councilwoman Germain, the above Ordinance was adopted on a vote of 8-0. The following being recorded as voting “aye”: Councilwomen Marino, Renzulli, Vargas, Germain, Councilmen Donegan, Campopiano, Council Vice-President Ferri and Council President Paplauskas -8.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT FOR UN-DOCKETED ITEMS

Rachel Ware, 15 Connecticut St., appeared to speak and stated that she is present to ask the City Council's help with a matter that has caused her family many grievances and have gone unresolved in the City of Cranston. On September 6, 2019, her fiancé, Josh Mello, was arrested in front of his then nine-year old daughter at George Peters Elementary School. They were picking her up on her first day of her new School as they had done so for four years in the previous School with no issues. The Principal, Jen Antonelli, revoked Josh's parental rights when she had no authority to do so. There was no Court Order active in the Family Court and nothing filed with the Police Department that prevented him from picking up his child that day. His daughter's teacher knew he was picking her up and made sure to bring her down for dismissal instead of waiting for the bus. Upon the teacher handing his daughter to Josh, the Principal yelled that he could not take her. Josh asked to speak to her in private and went into the Office. When they proceeded to the Office, an Officer joined them. She found Josh in the system and confirmed to the Officer that he indeed is the dad and has permission to pick the child up, but she still did not feel comfortable and called the Superintendent. Josh stated to her that she had no right to prevent him from taking his child and proceeded to walk out of the Office unabated by the Officer, was not told by the Officer to stop, he rejoined herself, the teacher and his daughter. They quickly finished their conversation and headed to their vehicle. Halfway to the vehicle, the Officer, who was not an SRO Officer, came running out towards them yelling 'you can't take her. I am going to touch your minor child'. Josh being a father, says 'you're not going to touch my child' and he was aggressively arrested and insulted in front of the School and in front of his nine-year old daughter. They have been trying to bring attention to this matter and they would like to have an understanding on how to proceed. Back in 2019, they did approach the Superintendent and she has documents stating that they asked to speak on this matter because it is not just their family and her step-daughter that is being affected by this. Other families can be affected by these issues. Upon Josh being arrested, they found out that Janet Antonelli had decided to revoke his rights away based on an emergency care card, which states who can specifically pick up people for emergencies and early dismissal. Josh was there picking up his child at dismissal, it was not an emergency. He had permission to do so. Someone allowed the mother of the child to change this document without a Court Order. She is present asking for help as she has gone to the School Committee, she has sat with School Committee Members Traficante and Mancuso this year and spoke to them about this issue and it has gone on deaf ears. They have been stonewalled multiple times on other various issues and she is present asking for the City Council's help as they have all taken Oaths being City Officials and Elected to uphold the US Constitution and the RI Constitution and she thinks they need help having parental rights taken and addressed to prevent this from happening from anybody else.

Josh Mello, 15 Connecticut St., appeared to speak and stated that as his fiancé has stated, he was wrongfully and willfully kept from his daughter picking her up from dismissal from George Peters Elementary in 2019. Since then, it has been a whirlwind of corruption and misery trying to deal with the Cranston School Department as well as the Cranston Police Department. They have forcibly kept him away from his daughter, her School and public buildings with malicious and erroneous trespasses which they had violated him on. This panel as well as many people amongst Rhode Island have received emails from him and many others trying to have this matter addressed. It has still fallen on deaf ears, however, they are not done seeking the investigation they request of the situation that took place at his daughter's School and subsequently within the Cranston School Department. While they are here requesting numerous funds and numerous favors, yet they fail numerous times to advocate for the children and the parents, the parents and the children to which they have the custody of. He is one of the parents and he is looking to this body, this panel, as well as the other Officials that hold an Oath in the City to do the right thing and make justice finally happen for his family and his daughter.

Dan Wall, 27 Sagamore Rd., Chairman of School Committee, appeared to speak and thanked Council Vice-President Ferri for placing the item of TopGolf update for his communications this evening. He does not cast any dispersions or any shade on TopGolf development. He knows it is passed, he knows it is coming to fruition, he realizes it is going to be groundbreaking very soon he does not believe it is a zero sum game between the interests of development like TopGolf and the interest of the people living in the neighborhood, like in this case, Garden City, however, he has had an occasion to walk through the neighborhood of Garden City and talk to some of the constituents and heard some of the concerns. He is being told and getting conflicting opinion. He knows there was a traffic study done and some of the neighborhood people are not sure how that traffic study was done, what the results were

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and also the timeframe when it was done. The other thing is, because it is going to be in a pretty congested area, especially Sockanosset Crossroad and Pontiac Ave., which are rather narrow streets and heavily traveled, is there any plans to maybe widen sections of it in case of traffic? Another thing expressed to him was Route 37, there is rumor that there would be an onramp or offramp to service TopGolf right from there and that may help some of the potential traffic congestion that could happen.

VI. ELECTION AND/OR APPOINTMENT OF CITY OFFICIALS

ARTS COMMISSION:

- ***RE-APPOINTMENT OF NANCY VITULLI FOR TERM TO EXPIRE ON JULY 25, 2025***

On motion by Council Vice-President Ferri, seconded by Councilwoman Germain, it was voted to re-appoint Nancy Vitulli as a member of the Arts Commission. Motion passed on a vote of 7-0. The following being recorded as voting “aye”: Councilwomen Marino, Renzulli, Vargas, Germain, Councilman Campopiano, Council Vice-President Ferri and Council President Paplauskas -7. Councilman Donegan recused.

- ***RE-APPOINTMENT OF DANIELLE IZZI AS SECOND ALTERNATE MEMBER FOR TERM TO EXPIRE ON JULY 25, 2025***

On motion by Council Vice-President Ferri, seconded by Councilwoman Renzulli, it was voted to re-appoint Danielle Izzi as the Second Alternate Member Arts Commission. Motion passed on a vote of 8-0. The following being recorded as voting “aye”: Councilwomen Marino, Renzulli, Vargas, Germain, Councilmen Donegan, Campopiano, Council Vice-President Ferri and Council President Paplauskas -8.

TAX ASSESSMENT BOARD OF REVIEW:

- ***APPOINTMENT OF STEPHANIE SOSCIA FOR TERM TO EXPIRE ON JULY 25, 2025***

On motion by Council Vice-President Ferri, seconded by Councilman Campopiano, it was voted to appoint Stephanie Soscia as a member of the Tax Assessment Board of Review. Motion passed on a vote of 8-0. The following being recorded as voting “aye”: Councilwomen Marino, Renzulli, Vargas, Germain, Councilmen Donegan, Campopiano, Council Vice-President Ferri and Council President Paplauskas -8.

BUILDING APPEALS BOARD:

- ***RE-APPOINTMENT OF JOHN PHILLIPS FOR TERM TO EXPIRE ON JULY 25, 2027***

On motion by Councilman Donegan, seconded by Council Vice-President Ferri, it was voted to re-appoint John Phillips as a member of the Buildings Appeal Board. Motion passed on a vote of 8-0. The following being recorded as voting “aye”: Councilwomen Marino, Renzulli, Vargas, Germain, Councilmen Donegan, Campopiano, Council Vice-President Ferri and Council President Paplauskas -8.

JUVENILE HEARING BOARD:

- ***RE-APPOINTMENT OF RAYMOND COIA FOR TERM TO EXPIRE ON DECEMBER 1, 2025***

On motion by Councilwoman Renzulli, seconded by Councilwoman Marino, it was voted to re-appoint Raymond Coia as a member of the Juvenile Hearing Board. Motion passed on a vote of 8-0. The following being recorded as voting “aye”: Councilwomen Marino, Renzulli, Vargas, Germain, Councilmen Donegan, Campopiano, Council Vice-President Ferri and Council President Paplauskas -8.

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- ***RE-APPOINTMENT OF JOSEPH MAROCCO FOR TERM TO EXPIRE ON DECEMBER 1, 2025***

On motion by Councilman Donegan, seconded by Councilwoman Renzulli, it was voted to re-appoint Joseph Marocco as a member of the Juvenile Hearing Board. Motion passed on a vote of 8-0. The following being recorded as voting "aye": Councilwomen Marino, Renzulli, Vargas, Germain, Councilmen Donegan, Campopiano, Council Vice-President Ferri and Council President Paplauskas -8.

ZONING BOARD OF REVIEW:

- ***RE-APPOINTMENT OF CHRISTOPHER BUONANNO FOR TERM TO EXPIRE ON JULY 25, 2027***

On motion by Council Vice-President Ferri, seconded by Councilwoman Renzulli, it was voted to re-appoint Christopher Buonanno as a member of the Zoning Board of Review. Motion passed on a vote of 8-0. The following being recorded as voting "aye": Councilwomen Marino, Renzulli, Vargas, Germain, Councilmen Donegan, Campopiano, Council Vice-President Ferri and Council President Paplauskas -8.

AUDIT COMMITTEE:

- ***APPOINTMENT OF COUNCILMAN RICHARD D. CAMPOPIANO FOR TERM TO EXPIRE ON JANUARY 2, 2023***

On motion by Councilwoman Vargas, seconded by Councilwoman Germain, it was voted to appoint Councilman Richard D. Campopiano as a member of the Audit Committee. Motion passed on a vote of 7-0. The following being recorded as voting "aye": Councilwomen Marino, Renzulli, Vargas, Germain, Councilman Donegan, Council Vice-President Ferri and Council President Paplauskas -7. Councilman Campopiano recused.

MUNICIPAL COURT:

- ***APPOINTMENT OF ELISABETH BETTIS AS COURT ADMINISTRATOR/CLERK OF THE COURT***

On motion by Councilwoman Renzulli, seconded by Council Vice-President Ferri, it was voted to appoint Elisabeth Bettis as Municipal Court Administrator/Clerk of the Court. Motion passed on a vote of 8-0. The following being recorded as voting "aye": Councilwomen Marino, Renzulli, Vargas, Germain, Councilmen Donegan, Campopiano, Council Vice-President Ferri and Council President Paplauskas -8.

VII. REPORT OF CITY OFFICERS

None.

VIII. EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS

LEGAL EXPENSE ANALYSIS REPORT FROM 7/1/21-6/30/22 AND LEGAL EXPENSE ANALYSIS FROM 7/1/2022-7/19/2022

No discussion was held.

Director Moretti stated that as everyone knows, we are pretty disappointed at the Finance Committee meeting with the outbursts of School Committeeman Sears. Director Moretti stated that he has to defend Solicitor Millea. Comments made by School committeeman Sears were extremely inappropriate especially the vulgarities. He knows Councilman Ferri did everything he could to contain that, but we just cannot have that and by being responsible for the Administration, he just has to defend the Department Heads that were not treated with that level of profanity and disrespect, otherwise, frankly, the Mayor will not allow us to present ourselves should that continue.

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Council President Paplauskas stated that, obviously, Council Vice-President Ferri did a great job running the meeting last week at Cranston High School East. We will do our best to make sure that we have decorum and civility moving forward.

IX. COUNCIL PRESIDENT COMMUNICATIONS

Council President Paplauskas congratulated St. Mary's Feast Society for putting on a great event with no problems.

X. COUNCIL MEMBER COMMUNICATIONS

COUNCIL VICE-PRESIDENT FERRI:

- ***EXPLANATION FROM THE SOLICITOR'S OFFICE ON THE STATUS OF THE NET METERING CONTRACT BETWEEN THE CITY AND REVITY ENERGY. (Dates, Participants, Benefits to the City, Discount Rate etc.)***

Council Vice-President Ferri asked that this item be placed on the Finance Agenda.

- ***UPDATE ON TOP GOLF, WITH AN EMPHASIS ON THE TRAFFIC STUDY***

Council Vice-President Ferri asked Administration for an update on TopGolf and if there is any new information about traffic.

Director Moretti stated that all approvals were gained several years ago under previous Council and previous Administration and approved by RIDOT with their plans, DEM and Planning Board at the time. Carpianto Group has with the owners of TopGolf plans for a press conference this Wednesday to do a formal groundbreaking announcement. We do not have any further details, but the Carpianto Group wishes that we defer to them and let them address whatever they would like to present, but he thinks it is a very positive thing. Site work has begun as we all know. As to traffic, anecdotally coming from some of those reports back then, Citizens Bank, the prior employer at that facility at 100 Sockanosset Crossroad, employed 2000 employees, so it had parking for 2000 employees. So, between the hours of 7-9 and 3-6, peak hours, they're expected to have had a greater amount of traffic during those peak hours than TopGolf is planning or anticipates having during those hours. There is an exit ramp directly into the TopGolf facility and that will alleviate some of the traffic from Route 37. He also stated that Doug McLean from the Planning Department is present if there are any other questions.

Doug McLean, Principal Planner, appeared to speak and stated that from a high-level perspective, Director Moretti nailed it. The project essentially was a reduction in traffic compared to the previous use of that site. There was a traffic study that documented that. There were conversations at that point that there is a lot of development happening in that area and potential new development particularly where that proposed Costco site and it was understood and agreed that when that next phase of development came in we would take a broader more comprehensive look at traffic in the area that also tied in with some of the improvements through the Tiger Grant through the State.

Council Vice-President Ferri stated that he felt very comfortable that with his conversations with Director Pezzullo today that if there is another major development that should happen to be there in the future, that that would be taken care of at that time. He truly believes that TopGolf is actually a traffic reduction compared to when Citizens was at its prime.

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COUNCILWOMAN VARGAS:

- ***OAKLAND (BROAD ST.) CEMETERY***

Councilwoman Vargas asked for an update in terms of the two cases. One in Superior Court and the other that is in Municipal Court and whether or not we are able to, as a City, send out a letter to the private cemeteries to provide information as to what is noted in the Ordinance that was passed earlier this year to the City Clerk. She does not think that has happened. She stated that Director McAuley has reached out to her in terms of a few things that have been going on with the Cemetery lately. There was a couple of cleanups that the City also did and she hopes that there is some sort of lien or something against that dollar amount to the Revocable Trust that is on there.

Solicitor Millea stated that he can't speak to the dollar amount, but there were a couple of cleanups apparently with volunteers. The City went in and removed two truckloads of garbage and debris using a front loader. There was a meeting today between Director McAuley and the Administration and one of the neighbors and there is a push for a nonprofit that is being attempted to be created for the sole purpose of keeping the Oakland Cemetery not only clean but maintained through the future. Apparently, there are some legal documentation in Superior Court and there is one corresponding matter in the Municipal Court based on our housing. He has had conversations with the Cemetery's Attorney addressing the second concern. He sent him a letter recently in which he had been notified by him and his Office after July 1st to provide the documentation and the data that Councilwoman Vargas is asking for based on the Ordinance. It is going to take a little time to get that. He will be happy to share that correspondence from the Attorney with the City Council. There was also a conversation about having the owner of the Oakland Cemetery allow for a new Trustee, which would allow not only for the cleanup, but for the maintenance of the Cemetery. There are funds involved in it. The current Trustee, it is felt, is not fully doing everything that we, as a City, would like to see. He has been in contact with the Cemetery's Attorney and they are in agreement in maybe getting a Consent Order in Superior Court to allow some movement on the Trustee issue. He has also reviewed that with Municipal Court Judge Forte who is overseeing the Housing matter and he would be happy to give a little more briefing in private based on the fact that there are some legal things going on. He reached out to the Attorney and sent him a copy of the Ordinance that this Council has passed recently informing him of his obligations under our Ordinances to provide data to the City specifically to the City Clerk's Office. The Attorney indicated back that it is going to take a little bit of time, but he will respond on that.

Councilwoman Vargas asked if the City is placing any liens in terms of the cleanup. Solicitor Millea stated that as far as the liens, he will leave that to Municipal Court Judge. That is not his area, that is the Court's jurisdiction. As far as this nonprofit, it has been explained to him that there is an attempt by neighbors to create a nonprofit with the sale for the purpose of maintaining that private cemetery. This is a privately owned property. There is very limited ability for the City to do anything except to enforce our Ordinances and we are doing that. If there is a change in the Trustee, they would have the obligation to live up to the basis of the Trust.

Councilwoman Vargas stated that she would like to add this item to Executive Session, if possible, for next month for status update.

- ***CRANSTON SEWAGE OVERFLOW/CLOGGED SEWER LINE PROCESS AND CLEAN UP***

Councilwoman Vargas stated that she is not sure if any other Council Members have received an e-mail from a constituent on Clifden Ave. This is the second person that she knows now who has reached out to her not within the same neighborhood in two different Wards about the sewage cleanup. The e-mail she received, the person had an overflow of sewer backup and entire basement was filled with raw sewage. She asked what the process is in terms of sewage overflow. Director Moretti stated that specific to any constituent, he asked that the Council feel free to pass the information along to Gina Capuano or Paul McAuley in the Mayor's Office. He stated that if there is a backup that occurs and there is a cleanout available from the property line to the main on the street, Veolia will be called and at no cost, will check it out. All that information is provided on the City's website on the DPW website and there is a phone number for Veolia that residents should probably call first. If the problem is

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between the house and the property line that will be the issue of the homeowner in which case, if Veolia fails to find anything, then the next step would be to have someone call their plumber to take care of the issue. Councilwoman Vargas stated that she believes that they did call the company and were told it was on the City property. She will be happy to forward the information she was sent to Director Moretti and maybe someone from Public Works can take a look at it to see if it is on the City end or not.

- ***UPDATE ON MAYOR'S PROPOSED 3% SALARY INCREASE FOR CRANSTON DIRECTORS IN HIS FY23 BUDGET***

Councilwoman Vargas asked if the Mayor has backed from his decision on giving the Directors within the Administration the 3% increase given the fact that there have been recent layoffs in the City and a tax increase. Director Moretti stated that the Mayor has been holding off on this and given it a lot of thought. There are various arguments to this. Obviously, there are approximately 1800 employees between the School Department and the City side. With the exceptions of the 24 Administrative personnel, everyone is receiving or have been receiving raises and will be receiving raises. As everyone knows, we are losing people due to non-competitive wages. The Mayor is recognizing that. He recognizes that just because they are his appointments or Administrative people, they are still people. They are managing departments with less people working even harder than they did before. In recognizing both arguments and not being political, he is thinking a 2% increase would be a fair increase considering the last ten years there may have been two or three increases for the Administrative side. Councilwoman Vargas asked when this increase will start. Director Moretti stated that it could be made retro to July 1st or the next pay period, but he will be happy to share that information. Councilwoman Vargas asked what the 2% salary increase will amount to. Director Moretti stated approximately \$35,000 for all 24 people.

COUNCILWOMAN GERMAIN:

- ***DISCUSSION ABOUT THE ISSUES WITH WASTE MANAGEMENT HANDLING TRASH PICK UP***
- ***DAMAGE BARRELS AND REPLACEMENT BARRELS***

Councilwoman Germain stated that she continues to receive complaints about the way Waste Management interacts with our residents. Lately, the most complaint she had, in her Ward particularly, is the way they handle the trash pickup. The issue is they damage the bins when they pick up the trash, they overflow on the street so there is no care about handling the bins. Also, when they damage the bins and we know we have a rodent problem and a lot of residents complain that they have holes in their bins and that is a shelter for rats and when they call for replacement, the way they handle the residents is unacceptable. She received a letter today from a resident stating that she is being told by Waste Management that they won't get a shipment of new bins until August, when we have people waiting since March. She realizes that Waste Management is not the City employee, but she questioned what can be done to address these issues. Director Moretti stated that the Administration will be more than happy to carry that information back to Waste Management and express those concerns. The Public Works Director and himself periodically meet with Waste Management and express the concerns of the City and he will carry this message. If there is a problem that a constituent has, Joe DiCarlo, who is our Clean City Coordinator, basically is the liaison for the City between DPW and Waste Management. He is a great troubleshooter and has the greatest bedside manners of anyone that he knows at being able to help solve problems. He is our go to person and people can speak to him if they have a problem. As to the availability of the bins, DPW has a budget for replacement bins and he was informed that it was the end of June, end of the budget year, that there was a delay because we ran out of budgeted funds and delay was approximately ten days where we held off purchasing the bins.

COUNCILMAN DONEGAN:

- ***STATUS OF SPLASH PAD PROJECT AT BAIN TRACK AND PROJECTED DATE OF COMPLETION***

Councilman Donegan stated that his understanding was that the hope was to get this operational this year. last time he spoke to Parks and Recreation Director Tessaglia, there was some delays in supply chain. He asked for an update.

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Director Moretti stated that Director Tessaglia is online. He also stated that as everyone knows, we were full steam ahead with design and implementation plans at the Stadium and neighbors did not want that so that added some time for it to go near Bain on Oak St. He deferred to Director Tessaglia for specifics.

Director Tessaglia appeared to speak via Zoom and stated that the latest update is the Hydraulic Engineer is currently designing the system for that specific site to Marin Construction so they can proceed with permitting, staging and construction. No one is more frustrated than him. Any specific questions, he thinks Marin Construction should be brought in to answer these questions, but he can state what he knows. Sometime in December, they determined the new location at Oak St. into December, there was all things going on with water line sizes, piping, what kind of electrical components we had. This went on well through into December and into January. There were some concerns because there was nowhere for the water to go. At that time, Director Mason stated that there was no way the drain pits are going to maintain that water that is going to be expelled out from the water park. After more discussions, he was informed that we could go from what they call a free-surface flow system, which where the water comes and just goes. Some water parks, it goes into the sewer. He believes Cranston does not have that capability and that is why we could not do it there if the area could not maintain the overflow of water, so we then have to go to what they call a recirculation system and that is a cycle which requires chlorination like you would have in a pool and also involve an underground tank that holds the water. That underground tank would have to be filled due to evaporation or whatever, periodically. At that point, he spoke with the Mayor about it and we questioned if this was the best site for this because there was also a concern that they had to dig and add more fill to maintain this tank and the surrounding area of the components going into the ground. He thought that the only way we would get it done is if we went forward with this system so it could get open for 2022. Sometime in March, changes to the system were confirmed with Purchasing Agent Marchesi and with that change in plans came some other costs that had to be added in and some were deleted. In April, we were still confident for 2022 and we were informed that there was a product delay not just for our site but for other existing jobs this company has. In June, he was again reiterated that there were supply delays and they were looking to start this up when they could. As of the last contact he had with the company, which was this weekend, the Engineer is developing the system for them to go in. Director Tessaglia stated that he is not happy that the fact we do not have it for this summer, but there is nothing else he can do or say about it. He would like to bring the company in, if the Council would like, and ask them specific questions.

Councilman Donegan thanked Director Tessaglia for the update and his persistence on this and continue to work on this.

- ***TRAFFIC CALMING MEASURES ON DYER AVE. AND CRANSTON ST.***

Councilman Donegan asked that this item be placed on the Public Works agenda.

COUNCILWOMAN MARINO:

- ***DISCUSSION ON STATUS OF STREET PAVING LISTS PER ORDINANCE 12.04.140 STREET PAVING***

Councilwoman Marino stated that she received an e-mail from the Administration with the list and at the end of the month, it is due to be posted on the City's website and she asked if this will occur. Director Moretti stated that he will follow up and request it to be added to the City's website.

XI. COUNCIL BUSINESS MATTERS CARRIED OVER

None.

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XII. INTRODUCTION OF NEW MATTERS BEFORE THE COUNCIL*

- 7-22-01 *ORDINANCE RATIFYING SCHOOL COMMITTEE’S COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT WITH THE RHODE ISLAND COUNCIL 94, AFSCME, AFL-CIO, CRANSTON PUBLIC SCHOOL EMPLOYEES, LOCAL 2044 (JULY 1, 2021 – JUNE 30, 2024). INTRODUCED PURSUANT TO CHARTER SECTION 11.02.1. REFERED TO FINANCE COMMITTEE AUGUST 1, 2022.***
- 7-22-02 *ORDINANCE RATIFYING THE IAFF (INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIRE FIGHTERS) CONTRACT, LOCAL 1363 (JULY 1, 2022 – JUNE 30, 2025). SPONSORED BY MAYOR HOPKINS. REFERRED TO FINANCE COMMITTEE AUGUST 1, 2022.***
- 7-22-03 *ORDINANCE IN AMENDMENT OF TITLE 10, CHAPTER 12, SECTION 210 OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF CRANSTON, 2005, ENTITLED ‘MOTOR VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC – THROUGH TRUCKING-PROHIBITED ON CERTAIN STREETS’ (CRESCENT AVE. AND HARMON AVE.). SPONSORED BY COUNCILMAN DONEGAN. REFERRD TO ORDINANCE COMMITTEE AUGUST 11, 2022.***
- 7-22-04 *ORDINANCE IN AMENDMENT OF TITLE 10, CHAPTER 32, SECTION 020 OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF CRANSTON, ENTITLED ‘MOTOR VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC – STOP INTERSECTIONS-ENUMERATED’ (KNOLLWOOD AND RIVERFARM). SPONSORED BY COUNCLIMAN DONEGAN. REFERRED TO ORDINANCE COMMITTEE AUGUST 11, 2022***

REQUEST FROM RHODE ISLAND ENERGY FOR POLE LOCATOIN AT KOUTSODIANE DR. REFERRED TO PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE AUGUST 11, 2022.

CLAIMS REFERRED TO CLAIMS COMMITTEE – THURSDAY, AUGUST 11, 2022.

- *Property Damage Claim:***
 - *Lori Nota from alleged incident on February 22, 2022.***
 - *Tamara Dickerson from an alleged incident on week ending April 23, 2022.***
 - *Raymond Brigidi from alleged incident on June 27, 2022.***

On motion by Councilwoman Marino, seconded by Councilwoman Renzulli, it was voted to refer the above new business to the respective Committees. Motion passed on a vote of 8-0. The following being recorded as voting “aye”: Councilwomen Marino, Renzulli, Vargas, Germain, Councilmen Donegan, Campopiano, Council Vice-President Ferri and Council President Paplauskas -8.

XIII. MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS ON CLERK’S DESK

AGREEMENT BY AND BETWEEN STATE OF RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND THE CITY OF CRANSTON FOR THE GRATIS TRANSFER FOR STREETLIGHT FACILITIES TO D.O.T.

Voted on earlier in the meeting

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OAKLAND CEMETERY:

**REQUEST DATED JUNE 7, 2022 FROM GRA (GM2, INC.) ON BEHALF OF
RHODE ISLAND PUBLIC TRANSIT AUTHORITY (RIPTA) TO CONDUCT WORK
AT OR NEAR TO THE OAKLAND CEMETERY**

Voted on earlier in the meeting

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 P.M.

/s/ Rosalba Zanni
Acting City Clerk

(See Stenographic Notes of Ron Ronzio, Stenotypist)