



Committee on Finance

February 25, 2013 – 7:30 PM – **Agenda**
City Hall, 133 William Street, City Council Chamber, Room 214

**** View Minutes ****

1. Written Motion, Councillors Gonsalves, Oliveira, Duarte, Council President Martins, Councillors Alves, Bousquet, Lawrence and Lopes, asking, that the City Council meet with Department of Inspectional Services Commissioner Romanowicz, a representative of the Mayor's Office and Assistant City Solicitor John Flor, relative to the Housing Task Force and how the inclusion of two building inspectors on that Task Force will affect operations in the Department of Inspectional Services going forward. (Ref'd 4/26/12)

INVITEES: Dan Romanowicz, DIS Commissioner; Attorney John Flor, Assistant City Solicitor; Representative of the Mayor

2. Written Motion, Councillor Alves, requesting, that before the City Council consider any substantial addition to the School Department Budget, that the City Council request a letter from our external auditor, as to where the proposed "Surplus in Health Fund Trust Monies" are coming from and what was the cause of this excess, in that if it is due to the change in the Health plan as implemented by former Mayor Lang, with the change in providers, and the fact that the surplus is actually due to an overpayment or over estimate to the employees as to their share of the cost, then should not those excess dollars be returned as a benefit to the City employees who in essence overpaid their portion of the (25% employee and 75% City) and because of their efforts created the excess in the fund through a credit to future payments or a rebate, it is my feeling that the reward should be to the benefit of the employees who paid into the fund and not to be used by the Administration as a way to cover school department excess spending. (Ref'd 5/24/12)

INVITEES: Peter Schmidt, City Auditor; Mary Sahady, Outside Auditor

3. Report, Committee on Ordinances, recommending that the City Council review the interest rates that Pawn Shops are allowed to charge in New Bedford versus other communities and determine whether or not the rates could be changed. (Ref'd 5/24/12)

INVITEES: Attorney David Gerwatowski

4. Written Motion, Councillors Lawrence and Bousquet, requesting, that the Committee on Finance meet with the Economic Development Council and City Auditor to discuss how the meals tax/and hotel tax is currently being used as it relates to Tourism in the City of New Bedford, the intent of said increase was to be used to promote Tourism; and further, that the City Council be provided with the amount collected so far along with the information on how this money collected is being separated and accounted for apart from the City's General Fund. (Ref'd 5/24/12)

INVITEES: Peter Schmidt, City Auditor; Matt Morrissey, EDC Director; Dagny Ashley, Tourism & Marketing Director

5. Written Motion, Councillor Lawrence, requesting that the City Auditor and a Representative from the Retirement Board appear before the Committee on Finance to explain why City of New Bedford retirees experienced a delay in receiving their December 2012, retirement checks. (Ref'd 12/20/12)

INVITEES: Peter Schmidt, City Auditor; Gerry Arnaudet, Executive Director Retirement Board

6. COMMUNICATION, Mayor Mitchell, to City Council, submitting a LOAN ORDER that authorizes and appropriates \$750,000.00 for the purpose of paying costs of a feasibility study for the potential construction of a new John Hannigan Elementary School, to be located at 33 Emery Street and also to pay schematic design costs associated with constructing a new John Hannigan Elementary School.

- 6a. LOAN ORDER,

INVITEES: Mike Shea, School Superintendent

7. COMMUNICATION, Mayor Mitchell, to City Council, submitting AN ORDER to amend the VACANT BUILDING REVOLVING FUND, the proposed changes would permit the use of monies in the Fund to be used to hire one full-time Building Inspector, rather than two part-time inspectors and a second change would allow monies in the Fund to be used to reimburse the Department of Public Facilities when its employees are occasionally tasked with the emergency board-up of a vacant building.

- 7a. AN ORDER,

INVITEES: Peter Schmidt, City Auditor; Dan Romanowicz, DIS Commissioner

8. COMMUNICATION, Mayor Mitchell, to City Council, submitting AN ORDER, for the TRANSFER of \$165,000.00 from WATER STABILIZATION FUND, to WATER, SUPPLIES & MATERIALS.

- 8a. AN ORDER,

INVITEES: Peter Schmidt, City Auditor; Ron Labelle, DPI Commissioner

Chair Suggests Taking No Further Action on the following:

9. Written Motion, Councillors Gonsalves, and Morad, requesting that Commissioner of Public Facilities Lawrence Worden, appear before the Committee on Finance to provide an update of monies expended and projects completed under the \$3,000,000.00 Loan Order granted at the July 16, 2009, City Council Meeting, for the purpose of remodeling, reconstruction and making extraordinary repairs to City-owned buildings. (Ref'd 2/25/10, 3/8/10 – rpf documents from Commissioner Worden, 5/24/10 – remain in Committee)

10. COMMUNICATION, Mayor Lang, to City Council, submitting AN ORDER that the \$77,097.00 of unexpended proceeds of the portion of the City's Municipal Purpose Loan of May 2000, originally issued for the **Normandin Middle School Project**, which are remaining following the completion of such project and are no longer needed for that purpose, are hereby appropriated, in addition to other amounts previously appropriated therefore, for the **Keith Middle School Project** (acquiring land for, constructing, equipping and furnishing). (Ref'd 6/24/10, 8/19/10 - RPF, and tabled)

- 10a. AN ORDER, (Ref'd 6/24/10, 8/19/10 - RPF, and tabled)

11. Written Motion, Councillors Alves, Coelho, Duarte, Gomes, Gonsalves, Lawrence, Martins, Morad, and Lopes, requesting that the Committee on Finance, meet with a member of the Administrations Finance Team to discuss in detail the current lease contracts for the tenants currently occupying the Quest

Center; and further that the Committee on Finance be providing with a detailed projecting of income and expenses by tenants for 2011. (Ref'd 8/19/10, 4/27/11 – tabled, 7/11/11 – tabled, Related Motion LM, letter to the Mayor, express disappointment that EDC Dir. did not show up)

12. Related Motion, Councillor Morad, requesting that the Administration, refer to the Committee on Finance, an explanation as to why a new position was required and why there was not a Transfer from one department to another, along with the Cemetery responsibilities. (Ref'd 8/18/11, 9/21/11 – tabled, 1/31/12 – Letter to Mayor Mitchell asking for a response after a consult with Bill Burns)
13. Written Motion, Council President Martins, regarding the course of action this Council took back in June, in approving One Million Dollars to the School Department, requesting, that Ms. Deborah H. Brown, Business Manager, New Bedford School Department, provide a full spreadsheet report to the Council, as we requested, explaining how the monies were used, as was the agreement that was made with this Council in the Committee on Finances; and further, that Ms. Brown be invited to the next Committee on Finance Meeting to explain and answer any questions this Council may have regarding how each dollar was spent and to ensure that the monies were used as was promised and that taxpayers are made aware how it was spent. (Ref'd 10/11/12)