

DEPARTMENT OF CITY CLERK

CITY HALL

NOVEMBER 17, 1997

The Committee on Finance meets this day at 5:00 o'clock P.M., in Committee Room "A", City Clerk's Department, City Hall.

PRESENT: Chairwoman Patricia K. Nolan, Vice-Chairman John H. Rollins, Councilman Peter S. Mancini and Councilwoman Carol Romano.

ABSENT: Council President Evelyn V. Fagnoli.

Also present are Stephen Woerner, City Council Internal Auditor, Kathleen Moretti, Personnel Director, Patricia McLaughlin, Deputy City Solicitor, Thomas Deller, Deputy Director, Department of Planning and Development, Frank Spaziano, Director of Human Resources, School Department, Councilwoman Balbina Young, Barbara A. Poirier, Second Deputy City Clerk and Claire E. Bestwick, Assistant Clerk.

COMMUNICATION FROM MARY ELLEN RAPOSA, AN EMPLOYEE OF THE PROVIDENCE SCHOOL DEPARTMENT, DATED OCTOBER 20, 1997, REQUESTING A TEMPORARY WAIVER FOR THE 1997-1998 SCHOOL YEAR, OF THE RESIDENCY REQUIREMENT OF THE HOME RULE CHARTER, SECTION 1210, AS AN EMPLOYEE OF THE PROVIDENCE SCHOOL DEPARTMENT.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: Is Ms. Raposa here?

MS. RAPOSA: Yes.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: We may want to go into Executive Session on this matter. If everybody would like to just read the letter, has everybody had a chance, first of all, to read the letter to Councilwoman Fagnoli? I wish Patricia was here to advise us.

MRS. POIRIER: She is here.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: Is she here? Patricia, Ms. Raposa is asking for a temporary waiver of residency. Do you think we need to go into Executive Session?

MS. MCLAUGHLIN: Is it a personnel issue you mean?

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: Yes.

MS. MCLAUGHLIN: Is it a personnel issue that is requiring....

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: Well, just the residency rule.

MS. MCLAUGHLIN: If personal reasons are going to be discussed as to why she needs this temporary waiver. I don't know the reason why she is asking for the waiver.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: It is in this letter.

November 17, 1997

MS. MCLAUGHLIN: I don't think so, unless she has specifically requested it, the individual.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: You don't have any problem with speaking in front of everybody?

MS. RAPOSA: No.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: Let's go forward. Any questions from the Committee? You have read the letter.

COUNCILMAN MANCINI: What school do you teach at?

MS. RAPOSA: At Alfred Lima, the new school.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: We are not going to call this a waiver, by the way because we don't waive residency.

MS. RAPOSA: Okay.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: We could but we think it is very important and we usually don't waive. Probably, if any is granted, it would be an extension of the residency.

COUNCILMAN MANCINI: How long do we have to do this?

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: This is asking for the school year, the entire school year. You are starting September, right?

MS. RAPOSA: Right.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: September through June.

MS. RAPOSA: Exactly.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: And then by next September you will be back?

MS. RAPOSA: Right, in Providence.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: Do you own property in Providence?

MS. RAPOSA: No.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: You were renting.

MS. RAPOSA: I was renting, right, on Camp Street.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: On Camp Street. It is your intention to move into Providence?

MS. RAPOSA: Yes. It is just a temporary situation, you know, like I said in the letter, my brother got married, got a job in Maine, moved there. My other brother is in South America and there is no one else to take care of this property so it is just for this school year. My brother is coming back in April, hopefully, but if not then, you know, it is the understanding of my brothers that it can only be a temporary situation.

November 17, 1997

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: Do you have children in school?

MS. RAPOSA: No.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: Just yourself?

MS. RAPOSA: I have nothing.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: Okay, Kathy, what do you think about this?

MS. MORETTI: Well, I think that based on the circumstances, it is certainly worthy of consideration. It appears to be almost a suspension of the residency requirement. Ms. Raposa has been in Providence now for a while. It appears to be a unique family situation that won't go on for very long.

MS. MCLAUGHLIN: I don't know if you want to do a 6 month and then come back in again? I don't know if you want to go longer.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: We did one the other night, an extension, it was the school year, exactly the school year we did. I was concerned about the 6 months myself.

MS. MCLAUGHLIN: It is just that there is a 6 month requirement and then to go longer than the 6 months on an extension, not that you couldn't do it again, for 6 months, but 6 months would bring you to the end of the school year and then you could meet and reassess the situation.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: 6 months would bring us to the end of the school year, alright.

MS. MCLAUGHLIN: May, then you can look at it one more time if you want to do it until September, then you are not doing it longer.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: I think we might have set precedence the other night, although that was really extreme circumstances.

COUNCILMAN MANCINI: What do you teach?

MS. RAPOSA: I teach ESL, English as a second language.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: We need those teachers. What school do you teach in?

MS. RAPOSA: Alfred Lima.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: Okay.

VICE-CHAIRMAN ROLLINS: This rental property, 1, 2 or 3 family?

MS. RAPOSA: 3 family.

VICE-CHAIRMAN ROLLINS: Your brothers lived there?

MS. RAPOSA: No.

November 17, 1997

VICE-CHAIRMAN ROLLINS: They didn't live there?

MS. RAPOSA: Well, no. What happened was, both of my brothers lived together, one was at URI and one was working in Providence. My brother got married, graduated and moved to Maine. My other brother took off to South America so he wasn't living there at all but they were living in Bristol.

VICE-CHAIRMAN ROLLINS: They were living in Bristol but they weren't living in.....

MS. RAPOSA: No because we needed the income of the house.

COUNCILWOMAN ROMANO: When you move back here are you going to rent this out?

MS. RAPOSA: No, brother is going to move in. What happened was, when I started working in Providence, my brothers were here in the area, in Bristol and then I lived at home for whatever, the six months, and then I moved in to Camp Street and then my brother left to get married and do that stuff and my brother was still here so that when he left to go travel, I just took over his spot but I moved into the house because at that time he wasn't living at the house. So I took all his stuff, moved it in there so I am pretty much living in my brother's apartment, with all his stuff and my stuff too but most of his stuff.

VICE-CHAIRMAN ROLLINS: And that is to hold the apartment for him until he gets back?

MS. RAPOSA: Right because what happened was they weren't living there because they were living together. The apartments in the building are not that big so when my brother left and got married, it was this whole transition. I moved in and it is really too small for two people, I think so really, I am holding it for him. I have all of his stuff. It is not in storage. I will just move back. My intention is to move back into the city.

COUNCILMAN MANCINI: You are in a school, you have a classroom and kids that you have been with since, and if we weren't to do this, what would happen?

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: Kathy, if we didn't do this, what would happen?

MS. MCLAUGHLIN: You would enforce the residency requirement.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: 6 month extension and then review it at that time? Would that be acceptable to you?

November 17, 1997

MS. RAPOSA: Yes.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: Keeping in mind that the situation we dealt with the other night was a much more extreme situation. Frank?

MR. SPAZIANO: Beside the fact that this would provide continuity for kids, the second area is that since we have opened so many new classes in bilingual and ESL, ESL is one of the shortage areas so it would be difficult to fill with a certified individual.

VICE-CHAIRMAN ROLLINS: In a short period of time.

MR. SPAZIANO: Right.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: It is a beautiful school, too. I went over for the opening. Absolutely beautiful school.

MR. SPAZIANO: As a matter of fact, the principal asked if I was coming tonight. I said yes I am and she remarked about the teacher and what good job she is doing. Most of the teachers are doing a good job there. That whole complex is wonderful.

On motion of Vice-Chairman Rollins, seconded by Councilwoman Romano, it is voted to approve the following Resolution:

"Resolution authorizing the Providence School Department to grant a 6 month extension to the residency requirement to Mary Ellen Raposa, a Providence Public School Teacher."

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: Good luck Ms. Raposa.

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY COLLECTOR TO CAUSE THE TAXES TO BE CANCELED OR ABATED, IN WHOLE, ON THAT PROPERTY LOCATED ON ASSESSOR'S PLAT 45 LOT 535, 49-51 COMSTOCK AVENUE, SAME BEING IN THE AMOUNT OF FOUR THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED NINETY FOUR DOLLARS AND FORTY-FIVE CENTS (\$4,594.45) OR ANY TAXES ACCRUED INCLUDING 1997 TAXES, IN ACCORDANCE WITH RHODE ISLAND GENERAL LAWS SECTION 44-7-23, AS REQUESTED BY THE PROVIDENCE REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY, SAID PARCEL BEING SUBJECT TO EMINENT DOMAIN PROCEEDINGS.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: Are you here to speak on this?

MR. DELLER: Yes Councilwoman. The property at 49-51 Comstock was a derelict burnt out building that was deeded to the city by FDIC. It was one of about 15 copies that they were on the verge of walking away from that they deeded to the Redevelopment Agency. This property was so far gone through the fire that there was no way to re-hab. the property

November 17, 1997

and working with Councilwoman Young, the Redevelopment Agency demolished the property using proceeds of her Redevelopment Account and have contacted the adjacent property owners who was interested in the lots. These lots on this Comstock, approximately 3,200 square feet so what we are going to be doing is selling the full lot to the adjacent owner occupant, Teia Whetstone. She lives in the house next door. It is a single family home. She is going to take the property and use it as a sideway. We are running it through the special vacant lot program, which means we are selling it for \$0.25 a square foot and unless the taxes are abated, we really can't do anything about it but let the lot sit there as a vacant lot. As I said, this is one of the properties that FDIC was going to walk away from. We had 15 in the city that we took and 10 of them we have been able to get back on the tax rolls as renovated houses, the other 5 we ended up having to demolish them. 3 of them have come before you at this point and asked for abatements, this is the 4th one.

VICE-CHAIRMAN ROLLINS: Councilwoman Young is in accordance with this?

MR. DELLER: Yes, she is.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: You took a house down on, I think it is 60 ----- Street and we had abutting.....

MR. DELLER: Ramzi put that one down.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: And the abutting owner wants to buy that. What is the hold up on that? Can you find that out for me please?

MR. DELLER: I can tell you right now.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: It's been two years now.

MR. DELLER: I can tell you right now what the hold up is. That was one that you requested that would take ownership and someone was going to give us the deed and then that fell through so now, I will check on it and get back to you to make sure, but my memory is that we have to now amend the Washington Park Redevelopment Plan.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: Okay. That we can do. That is no problem.

MR. DELLER: I will check that.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: Yes, so we can acquire that because it is being used now, drug dealing, they park their cars there, in fact, if you are

November 17, 1997

not going to do something right away, I would like the PRA to surround it with something to keep the cars out and cut down on traffic please.

MR. DELLER: We'll see what we can do.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: Okay. I hate to keep coming back to these things but we do things and two years later we are still sitting with the same empty lot and the same problems that we had and it is frustrating. Everything is in order, I guess, Patricia? Did you look at it?

MR. DELLER: This is one of those properties, Councilman, the abatement is requested under the Section of the State Law that says where a property is condemned or with a derelict structure on it.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: Okay.

MS. MCLAUGHLIN: And you have the Resolution from them?

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: Yes.

MS. MCLAUGHLIN: No, you don't.

MR. DELLER: It is attached?

MS. MCLAUGHLIN: No.

MR. DELLER: He didn't attach it?

MS. MCLAUGHLIN: You do need that. That is one thing you need.

MR. DELLER: I will get that to you. I thought it was over here.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: Councilwoman, we are just taking up your Comstock Avenue property.

MR. DELLER: This is a vacant lot Councilwoman, next to Teia Whetstone.

COUNCILWOMAN YOUNG: Madam Chair, I do support this.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: You do support it.

On motion of Vice-Chairman Rollins, seconded by Councilwoman Romano, it is voted to Approve the foregoing Resolution, conditioned upon receiving the Resolution from the Providence Redevelopment Agency.

On motion of Vice-Chairman Rollins, seconded by Councilman Mancini, it is voted to adjourn at 5:35 o'clock P.M.

Clair Bestwick

Assistant Clerk

Barbara A. Fairies
Second Deputy City Clerk