

C I T Y O F P R O V I D E N C E  
R H O D E I S L A N D



C I T Y C O U N C I L

JOURNAL OF PROCEEDINGS

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No. 85 City Council Special Meeting, Monday, January 28, 2002, 7:30 o'clock P.M. (E.S.T.)

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PRESIDING

COUNCIL PRESIDENT

JOHN J. LOMBARDI

ROLL CALL

IN CITY COUNCIL  
MAR 9 2002

APPROVED:

Present: Council President Lombardi,  
Councilmen Allen, Aponte, Butler, Clarkin,  
DeLuca, Councilwoman DiRuzzo, Council-  
men Hassett, Igliozi, Jackson, Mancini,  
Councilwomen Nolan, Romano, Williams  
and Young—15.

Absent: None.

Also Present: Michael R. Clement, City  
Clerk, Barbara A. Poirier, First Deputy City  
Clerk, Anna M. Stetson, Assistant Clerk,  
Charles Mansolillo, City Solicitor and Ralph  
Guglielmino, City Sergeant.

## INVOCATION

The Invocation is given by REVEREND  
VIRGIL WOOD.

## PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

COUNCILWOMAN PATRICIA K. NOLAN  
leads the members of the City Council and  
the Assemblage in the Pledge of Allegiance  
to the Flag of the United States of America.

## CALL FOR SPECIAL MEETING COMMUNICATION FROM COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHN J. LOMBARDI

Request, filed with the City Clerk, dated January 23, 2002, requesting a Special Meeting of the City Council be called on the 28th Day of January, 2002 at 7:30 o'clock P.M. (E.S.T.).

January 23, 2002

Honorable Michael R. Clement  
City Clerk  
City Hall  
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Mr. Clement:

In accordance with the Provisions of Section 406 of the Providence Home Rule Charter of 1980, I am, this day calling a Special Meeting of the Providence City Council to be held on Monday, the 28th day of January, 2002 at 7:30 o'clock p.m. in the City Council Chamber, City Hall for the purpose of acting upon the following:

Communication dated January 4, 2002, Informing the Honorable Members of the City Council that pursuant to Sections 302(b) and 701 of the Providence Home Rule Charter of 1980, he is this day appointing Mr. Makna Men of 80 Dorchester Avenue, Providence, Rhode Island 02909, as a Member of the Providence School Board for a term to expire on the first Monday in January, 2005, and respectfully submits the same for your approval. (Mr. Men will replace Mr. Juan Lopez, Jr., whose term has expired.)

Communication dated January 7, 2002, Informing the Honorable Members of the City Council that pursuant to Sections 302(b) and 701 of the Providence Home Rule Charter of 1980, he is this day appointing Mr. Leonard Lopes of 343 Broadway, Providence, Rhode Island 02909, as a Member of the Providence School Board for a term to expire on the first Monday in January, 2005, and respectfully submits the same for your approval. (Mr. Lopes will be replacing Ms. Gertrude Blakey whose term has expired.)

Communication dated January 4, 2002, Informing the Honorable Members of the City Council that pursuant to Sections 302(b) and 701 of the Providence Home Rule Charter of 1980, he is this day reappointing Ms. Mary E. McClure of 15 Rose Court, Providence, Rhode Island 02906, as a Member of the Providence School Board for a term to expire on the first Monday in January, 2005, and respectfully submits the same for your approval.

Sincerely,

JOHN J. LOMBARDI  
*City Council President*

Received.

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## WARRANT FOR SPECIAL MEETING

**Warrant of the City Clerk to the City Sergeant with return certification that he has notified each member of the City Council of the Special Meeting called for the 28th day of January, 2002 at 7:30 o'clock P.M. (E.S.T.) in the Chamber of the City Council, City Hall.**

January 23, 2002

*To Ralph Guglielmino, City Sergeant:*

*Whereas, Council President John J. Lombardi has, pursuant to Section 406 of the Providence Home Rule Charter of 1980, requested the City Clerk, in writing, to call a Special Meeting of the City Council to be held on the 28th day of January, 2002 A.D., at 7:30 o'clock P.M. (E.S.T.) for the purpose of enacting the following:*

Communication dated January 4, 2002, Informing the Honorable Members of the City Council that pursuant to Sections 302(b) and 701 of the Providence Home Rule Charter of 1980, he is this day appointing Mr. Makna Men of 80 Dorchester Avenue, Providence, Rhode Island 02909, as a Member of the Providence School Board for a term to expire on the first Monday in January, 2005, and respectfully submits the same for your approval. (Mr. Men will replace Mr. Juan Lopez, Jr., whose term has expired.)

Communication dated January 7, 2002, Informing the Honorable Members of the City Council that pursuant to Sections 302(b) and

701 of the Providence Home Rule Charter of 1980, he is this day appointing Mr. Leonard Lopes of 343 Broadway, Providence, Rhode Island 02909, as a Member of the Providence School Board for a term to expire on the first Monday in January, 2005, and respectfully submits the same for your approval. (Mr. Lopes will be replacing Ms. Gertrude Blakey whose term has expired.)

Communication dated January 4, 2002, Informing the Honorable Members of the City Council that pursuant to Sections 302(b) and 701 of the Providence Home Rule Charter of 1980, he is this day reappointing Ms. Mary E. McClure of 15 Rose Court, Providence, Rhode Island 02906, as a Member of the Providence School Board for a term to expire on the first Monday in January, 2005, and respectfully submits the same for your approval.

You are therefore, hereby commanded and required to summon each Member of the City Council to that Special Meeting, as Called.

*Hereof, Fail Not, and make a true return of this Warrant, with your doings thereon.*

Given under my Hand and Official Seal of the City of Providence, State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations this 23rd Day of January, 2002 A.D.

MICHAEL R. CLEMENT  
*City Clerk*

I, Ralph Guglielmino, City Sergeant, do hereby certify that I have notified each Member of the City Council of the Special Meeting scheduled to be held on Monday, January 28, 2002 at 7:30 o'clock P.M., (E.S.T.) in the Chamber of the City Council, City Hall, Providence, in accordance with the subject warrant by delivering to each member, a copy thereof.

RALPH GUGLIELMINO  
*City Sergeant*

January 24, 2002

Received.

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## REPORT FROM COMMITTEE

### COUNCILWOMAN KEVIN JACKSON, Chairman COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Transmits the following with recommendation the same be Denied:

Communication dated January 4, 2002, Informing the Honorable Members of the City Council that pursuant to Sections 302(b) and 701 of the Providence Home Rule Charter of 1980, he is this day appointing Mr. Makna Men of 80 Dorchester Avenue, Providence, Rhode Island 02909, as a Member of the Providence School Board for a term to expire on the first Monday in January, 2005, and respectfully submits the same for your approval. (Mr. Men will replace Mr. Juan Lopez, Jr., whose term has expired.)

Read and Denied, on motion of COUNCILMAN ALLEN, seconded by COUNCILWOMAN WILLIAMS, by the following Roll Call Vote:

**Ayes:** Council President Lombardi, Councilmen Allen, Aponte, Butler, DeLuca, Jackson, Councilwomen Williams and Young—8.

**Nays:** Councilman Clarkin, Councilwoman DiRuzzo, Councilmen Hassett, Igliazzi, Mancini, Councilwomen Nolan and Romano—7.

**Absent:** None.

The motion to Deny is Sustained.

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## PERSONAL EXPRESSION

**COUNCILWOMAN DiRUZZO Requests the privilege of the floor to speak on a point of personal expression and states:**

"It is truly unfortunate that we are faced with the dilemma that we are faced with that has been presented to us this evening. I am sorry this is happening, and my vote has nothing to do with voting for Gertrude Blakey or against Gertrude Blakey. Because her name has come up this evening, I need to express my thoughts. First of all, I love Gertrude Blakey. I have admired her work and I have the highest respect for this woman. It is unfortunate that she has been brought into this. Why the Mayor is not re-appointing her, I will never know. It is unfortunate because she has served the people of Providence in an outstanding manner. I want to make it abundantly clear . . . my vote this evening has nothing to do with Gertrude because that is a different situation. When you are appointed to a position, you always face the disappointment of not being re-appointed. I am a product of having been appointed by a previous Mayor to the Providence School Committee in 1972 when I was president of the Webster Avenue PTA, and was a single parent with four children to educate. I became very involved in the community, and as a result, I was asked by my two council people at the time, former Councilman Pisaturo and former Councilman Almagno if I would be interested in serving on the Providence School Committee. At the time, I was overwhelmed, but I thought that I would try it because I wanted to be on the other side of the fence. Instead of fighting, I wanted to be a person who would now be able

to make decisions for the children in the Providence schools, so I accepted the appointment. Then Mayor Doorley appointed me to the Providence School Committee, but my appointment was for three years and so was Tommy O'Connor, former councilman. We were appointed at the same time. I told this story at the Finance Committee the other night, but many people were not there, and I think it is important that you understand what is going on here. When my three years was over, I started shaking because I didn't know if I would get reappointed as diligently as I worked, and as interested and involved that I was, to the point where many of my colleagues, the school board members, were upset with me because the job of school board is to set policy, but I wasn't there just to set policy, I was there to make a difference, so I got very involved, like Gertrude has. We then had a new Mayor and that was Mayor Cianci and I was not reappointed at that time. I served at the pleasure of the Mayor, until two or three years later I then became re-appointed and I subsequently became the first female chairperson of the Providence School Committee in its history. Gertrude followed in my footsteps. She is the second female chairperson, and she is also has been very active with the Rhode Island Association of School Committees, as I was. The only thing I don't know if she has done is become the national delegate, as I did, from the State of Rhode Island. So I served on the School Committee and loved my job. I know how she is feeling and I sympathize with her, I truly do. If there is anything I can do, I would do it, but this is not the way to do it. The Mayor, at the

time there was no process as there is now. I don't even like the process they have now, and please don't get excited about that, because there have been many instances when this committee that is supposed to be presenting names to the Mayor when they send out the application . . . I have encouraged people from my neighborhood to apply that have had high credentials and they have always been rejected by this commission, so I have been totally unimpressed with the work that they have done. Therefore, I am more likely to go along with the Mayor's appointment, which he has the full authority to do, and as a result when saw these two candidates the other night, I was truly impressed with their credentials and truly impressed with their eagerness to serve on the School Committee. They have a lot to offer. I

also have a large Cambodian constituency which I represent. I feel that there are enough Cambodian children in the system to allow them to have representation on the school committee. Many years ago I used to see Cambodian children go to their classrooms and sit there in silence because no one understood their language . . . if they didn't understand their language, how could they teach the children, how could the children learn? So it is time now and therefore, I am proud to have voted for these two people, but I want to make abundantly clear that this has nothing to do with Gertrude Blakey. Thank you very much for your time."

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## REPORT FROM COMMITTEE

### COUNCILWOMAN KEVIN JACKSON, Chairman COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

**Transmits the following with recommendation the same be Denied:**

Communication dated January 7, 2002, Informing the Honorable Members of the City Council that pursuant to Sections 302(b) and 701 of the Providence Home Rule Charter of 1980, he is this day appointing Mr. Leonard Lopes of 343 Broadway, Providence, Rhode Island 02909, as a Member of the Providence School Board for a term to expire on the first Monday in January, 2005, and respectfully submits the same for your approval. (Mr. Lopes will be replacing Ms. Gertrude Blakey whose term has expired.)

**Read and Denied, on motion of COUNCILMAN ALLEN, seconded by COUNCILWOMAN WILLIAMS, by the following Roll Call Vote:**

**Ayes: Council President Lombardi, Councilmen Allen, Aponte, Butler, DeLuca, Jackson, Councilwomen Williams and Young—8.**

**Nays: Councilman Clarkin, Councilwoman DiRuzzo, Councilmen Hassett, Igliozzi, Mancini, Councilwomen Nolan and Romano—7.**

**Absent: None.**

**The motion to Deny is Sustained.**

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## PERSONAL EXPRESSION

**COUNCILWOMAN YOUNG Requests the privilege of the floor to speak on a point of personal expression and states:**

"I decided not to say anything this evening, but when Councilman Allen reminded us about the vote a couple of weeks ago of how a process was not followed and we were certainly reprimanded, and then tonight it is a different story. Folks, you can't speak out of both sides of your mouth at the same time. You have to be clear what you are talking about. Either we have a process tonight or we don't, either we had a process a few weeks ago at a council meeting, or we don't. You can't have it both ways. What really disturbs me is that we are missing the whole issue here. The Mayor has an executive order out there that he should be following, otherwise get rid of it. Don't mislead the people again and again. We wonder why we got to this place where people are pitted against one another, because your Mayor did this to us. Put the blame where it should be. It is not about who the council is going to vote for, or who we are going to vote against. It is about a Mayor who continues to put us in a situation where we have to fight each other, not speak to each other for a few weeks or a few months, get upset with each other. For what reason? So he can sit back there and gloat and laugh at us? We need to get tired of him. We have so many important things to do. I don't want to be here

against anyone or for anyone. I am for the Providence school system. I am a product of that system. This is my city and town. I was born and raised here and I am here for the children. That is what we should be all about, but we start looking at the wrong thing. We don't like this one, we don't like that one. This is divide and conquer. What we need to do is send a message back to the Mayor. If you play these games with our children's education and their life, we will stop you. That is the message. That is the message we need to be sending him. That is why I am going to be denying when it comes to vote on this one again. Because the message needs to be very clear. He can pull anybody he wants to, but there is a process there. A process that we have followed as well as we can follow a process. Had they began the nomination process and submitted their name, it would be another story. They did not. They did not. You can justify any way you choose to to make you feel good about what happened here tonight, or what is going to happen, or what happened already. The fact remains. It is like the little boy who takes the rock, breaks somebody's window then hides the hand. That is the Mayor. He is that little boy. He created this chaos and unfortunately, or fortunately, it is us adults, the council members who have to straighten it out. We will do that tonight."

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## REPORT FROM COMMITTEE

### COUNCILWOMAN KEVIN JACKSON, Chairman COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

**Transmits the following with recommendation the same be Approved:**

Communication dated January 4, 2002, Informing the Honorable Members of the City Council that pursuant to Sections 302(b) and 701 of the Providence Home Rule Charter of 1980, he is this day reappointing Ms. Mary E. McClure of 15 Rose Court, Providence, Rhode Island 02906, as a Member of the Providence School Board for a term to expire on the first Monday in January, 2005, and respectfully submits the same for your approval.

**Read and Passed, on motion of COUNCILMAN ALLEN, seconded by COUNCILWOMAN WILLIAMS, by the following Roll Call Vote:**

**Ayes: Council President Lombardi, Councilmen Allen, Clarkin, Hassett, Igliozzi, Jackson, Mancini, Councilwomen Romano and Williams—9.**

**Nays: Councilman Aponte, Butler, DeLuca, Councilwomen DiRuzzo, Nolan and Young—6.**

**Absent: None.**

**The motion for Passage is Sustained.**

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## ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, on motion of COUNCILMAN ALLEN, seconded by COUNCILWOMAN WILLIAMS, it is voted to adjourn at 8:30 o'clock P.M. (E.S.T.) to meet again on THURSDAY, February 7, 2002 at 7:30 o'clock P.M. (E.S.T.).

*Michael R. Clement*

City Clerk

