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COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

3

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

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Room 400, City Hall

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

6

Thursday, November 20, 2008

1:10 p.m.

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9 PRESENT:

10 COUNCILWOMAN MARIAN B. TASC0, CHAIR

COUNCILMAN FRANK DiCICCO

11 COUNCILMAN W. WILSON GOODE, JR.

COUNCILMAN BILL GREEN

COUNCILMAN WILLIAM GREENLEE

12 COUNCILMAN JAMES F. KENNEY

COUNCILMAN BRIAN J. O'NEILL

13 COUNCILWOMAN BLONDELL REYNOLDS BROWN

14

BILL 080626 - An ordinance amending Title 13
of The Philadelphia Code, entitled "Water and
Sewer"...

16

BILL 080746 - An ordinance amending Section
17-104 of The Philadelphia Code, relating to
"Prerequisites to the Execution of City
Contracts"...

18

19 BILL 080851 - An ordinance amending Section

19-203 of The Philadelphia Code, entitled

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"Payroll Deductions"...

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V A R A L L O Incorporated

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Litigation Support Services

Eleven Penn Center

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Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103

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COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: Good

3

afternoon. I'd like to call the

4

Committee on Finance to order, and I'd

5

like to recognize a quorum in the

6

presence of Councilman O'Neill,

7

Councilmen Green, Goode, Greenlee, Kenney

8

and DiCicco and Councilwoman Blondell

9

Reynolds Brown, the other skirt.

10

Good afternoon. We are going

11

to hold Bill 080626 and Bill 080746.

12

We'll now ask the Clerk to read

13

Bill 080851.

14

THE CLERK: Bill No. 080851, an

15

ordinance amending Section 19-203 of The

16

Philadelphia Code, entitled "Payroll

17

Deductions," to add the Philadelphia

18

Police and Fire Association for

19

Handicapped Children and the Philadelphia

20

Fire Department Historical Corporation,

21

trading as Fireman's Hall Museum, to the

22

list of designated payees to whom an

23

employee may direct payroll deductions;

24

all under certain terms and conditions.

25

COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: Thank you

1 11/20/08 - FINANCE - BILL 080851

2 very much.

3 The Chair calls on

4 Ms. Catherine Paster, who represents the

5 Finance Department.

6 (Witnesses approached witness
7 table.)

8 MS. PASTER: Good afternoon.

9 My name is Catherine Paster. I'm the
10 First Deputy Director of Finance for the
11 City of Philadelphia, and I'm here today
12 to testify in support of Bill No. 080851,
13 which would amend Section 19-203 of The
14 Philadelphia Code pertaining to "Payroll
15 Deductions."

16 This bill would permit City
17 employees to authorize payroll deductions
18 to be paid to the Philadelphia Police and
19 Fire Association for Handicapped Children
20 and Philadelphia Fire Department
21 Historical Corporation, trading as
22 Fireman's Hall Museum.

23 Section 19-203 of The
24 Philadelphia Code, as approved by
25 Council, authorizes the Director of

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2 Finance to deduct from salaries such sums
3 as employees may request. The Code lists
4 specifically those entities for which
5 payroll deductions may be made. Any
6 authorization for a payroll deduction is
7 made voluntarily by the employee and may
8 be revoked by the employee at any time.

9 This concludes my testimony. I
10 would be happy to answer any questions
11 that you may have.

12 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: Thank you.
13 We'll proceed with the other witnesses
14 and then we'll open up the panel for
15 discussion.

16 Next?

17 MR. KEARNEY: Madam Chairwoman,
18 Committee members, my name is David
19 Kearney and I am here to represent the
20 Fireman's Hall Museum, the Philadelphia
21 Fire Department Historical Corporation.
22 I am the Assistant Curator of the Museum,
23 and I do that on a volunteer basis. I'm
24 here to ask the Committee to please pass
25 the bill.

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2 The Fireman's Hall Museum was
3 opened in 1977, and the Philadelphia Fire
4 Department Historical Corporation was
5 founded as a 501(c)(3) charity to support
6 the efforts of the Museum in areas of
7 fire education, the history of the Fire
8 Department and fire prevention
9 activities.

10 Passing this bill would allow
11 members of the Fire Department, as well
12 as other City employees, to make
13 charitable contributions to the
14 501(c)(3), and during these tough
15 economic times, they would be able to
16 split those up as payroll deductions as
17 opposed to writing a large one-time
18 check.

19 I would ask that the Committee
20 please pass this bill.

21 Thank you.

22 COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: Thank you
23 very much.

24 Next?

25 MR. MAGEE: Good afternoon,

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2 Madam Chairwoman and Committee members.

3 My name is Henry Magee and I am the
4 President of the Philadelphia Police and
5 Fire Handicapped Association.

6 The Police and Fire Association
7 for Handicapped Children formed in 1979
8 to assist uniformed member City personnel
9 who have family members with
10 disabilities. Challenges they faced
11 include shift work scheduling, needed
12 non-school activities, supervision,
13 scarcity of competent caregivers and
14 respite needs, coupled with the stress of
15 work-related dangers. For years, we
16 provided 80 families with multiple
17 therapies, tutoring and socialization.

18 During that period, Police and
19 Fire personnel made us the largest United
20 Way donor option recipient, giving nearly
21 85,000 of an approximate \$95,000 budget,
22 which even then was small for the
23 services provided. When its support from
24 City personnel largely evaporated, those
25 donations did as well. As a result, the

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2 Association can now serve but a few
3 families, and then only at a subsistence
4 level, which may also have to be reduced.

5 We are in the process of
6 rebuilding our Association, hopefully
7 into what it once was. We hope to expand
8 our services to address the rapidly
9 growing problem of autism. If you will
10 help us, we can make this endeavor a
11 success.

12 The implementation of direct
13 payroll deductions will make it much
14 easier to support our organization and
15 will increase our membership.

16 Thank you for giving me the
17 opportunity to present this request to
18 you. If you have any questions, I'll
19 certainly answer them.

20 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: Thank you
21 very much.

22 Sir, are you going to testify?

23 MR. TITTERTON: I'm the
24 Association's counsel. I'm simply here
25 in a support role.

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2 As I'm sure many of you know,
3 most non-profits have a base from which
4 they can draw contributions, and the
5 Police and Fire personnel and other City
6 personnel are really this organization's
7 base, but they don't have the financial
8 capacity to write one-time large checks
9 each year, and this would in fact, if we
10 allow, the Association to raise its own
11 funds, but do so over the course of the
12 entire year. So that its support will be
13 able to do that as they did for years
14 with the United Way.

15 Thank you.

16 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: But you
17 didn't tell us who you are.

18 MR. TITTERTON: I'm sorry.
19 Edward Titterton, T-I-T-T-E-R-T-O-N, and
20 I'm counsel to the Association.

21 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: Thank you
22 very much.

23 Are there members of the
24 Committee who have any questions?

25 (No response.)

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2 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: I think
3 this is fairly easy. You don't have any
4 opposition, and I think we all understand
5 the wonderful purposes of these two
6 programs.

7 I'll ask if there's anyone else
8 here to testify on this bill.

9 Would you come forward, please,
10 and state your name.

11 (Witness approached witness
12 table.)

13 MR. GOWA: Good afternoon,
14 Madam Chairwoman. My name is Andrew
15 Gowa, G-O-W-A. I'm First Vice-President
16 of the Philadelphia Fire Department
17 Historical Corporation, and I
18 unfortunately arrived here a little bit
19 late, and I know Dave spoke on our
20 behalf. I just wanted to further support
21 the resolution that would permit payroll
22 withholdings from those City employees
23 that wanted to donate money to the
24 Philadelphia Fire Department Historical
25 Corporation, which operates Fireman's

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2 Hall Museum in a restored old firehouse
3 immediately behind Elfreths Alley in Old
4 City. This resolution would, of course,
5 permit us more support at a time when all
6 of the philanthropic organizations in the
7 City are struggling for donations.

8 The Historical Corporation was
9 formed in 1974. It is a 501(c)(3) and it
10 operates the museum Fireman's Hall. Just
11 this morning we were delighted to
12 announce to the press that the Federal
13 Emergency Management Administration
14 awarded the Corporation a grant of more
15 than \$291,000 to purchase coloring books,
16 fire safety cubes and a fire safety
17 trailer, which actually replicates part
18 of a home that we, through the Fire
19 Department, take from school to school
20 throughout the City and from rec center
21 to rec center to demonstrate fire safety,
22 evacuation in the case of an emergency,
23 how to call for fire and police and EMT
24 help. And these are the kinds of
25 programs, in addition to running the

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2 Museum, that the Historic Corporation
3 operates and promotes.

4 The Historic Corporation also
5 disseminates information at its monthly
6 informational programs that's available
7 to the public. We hold the annual
8 Fireman's Hall Muster and Fire Safety
9 Expo at the Fire Academy every fall.
10 This year we had over 5,000 visitors. We
11 honor the firefighter and paramedic of
12 the year by giving them awards and a
13 financial incentive and recognizing their
14 good deeds, because they are the heroes
15 of today and the legends for tomorrow.

16 We have an extensive collection
17 of firefighting artifacts, including some
18 that we recently received from the
19 Smithsonian Institution. We're having a
20 little bit of trouble raising the funds
21 right now to construct the showcases.
22 We've just completed a matching grant
23 with one of the private insurance
24 companies in the City to do that. But
25 money is tight.

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2 I would point out that
3 admission to the Fireman's Hall Museum is
4 free. It is open to everybody. Each
5 year we get thousands and thousands of
6 visitors and tourists from all around the
7 country, as well as our own firefighters
8 who look to the Museum as its spiritual
9 as well as historic focal point for
10 firefighting in the City and in the
11 region.

12 We very much support this
13 resolution. We hope it will pass, and I
14 appreciate the opportunity to speak in
15 support.

16 COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: Thank you
17 very much for your testimony and thank
18 you very much for the information.

19 There being no questions, we
20 will adjourn the public hearing and go
21 into the public meeting.

22 The Chair calls on Councilman
23 Kenney for a motion to move Bill 080851.

24 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Thank you,
25 Madam Chairperson. I move that Bill No.

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2 080851 be reported out of this Committee
3 favorably and a request made for rules
4 suspension to allow for first reading at
5 our next Council session.

6 (Duly seconded.)

7 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: It has
8 been moved and seconded that Bill 080851
9 be reported out of Committee with a
10 favorable recommendation and with a
11 request for the rules of Council to be
12 suspended so this bill can be heard at
13 Council's next session.

14 All in favor will say aye.

15 (Aye.)

16 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: Is there
17 opposition?

18 (No response.)

19 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: None. If
20 there were, we'd hit them on the head.

21 Thank you all very much. The
22 bill is passed. Thank you.

23 MR. MAGEE: Thank you very
24 much.

25 (Committee on Finance adjourned)

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2 at 1:20 p.m.)
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CERTIFICATE

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the
proceedings, evidence and objections are
contained fully and accurately in the
stenographic notes taken by me upon the
foregoing matter on November 20, 2008, and
that this is a true and correct transcript of
same.

MICHELE L. MURPHY
RPR-Notary Public

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