

Â

New York City Council Stated Meeting Report

Every two weeks the New York City Council meets for its Stated Meeting to introduce and pass legislation. As a regular feature, Searchlight covers these meetings and posts a summary of the bills passed.

STATED MEETING - June 05, 2003

Quote of the Day:

"Today is the date that we were to have adopted a budget for the next fiscal year. We will not meet that goal today... there is still work to be done." - *Council Speaker Gifford Miller on missing the deadline for a new city budget.*

Meeting Summary:

According to the City Charter, Mayor Michael Bloomberg and the New York City Council were supposed to pass the 2004 budget by June 5. But with negotiations over the final details of the city's \$44.5 billion plan still underway, the City Council voted to extend the budget deadline by one week until June 12.

The city's fiscal year begins on July 1 and for the last few months Mayor Bloomberg and the City Council have been trying to close a \$3.8 billion budget gap - the largest since the 1970s.

The day before the June 5 deadline, Mayor Bloomberg announced that he would abandon \$90.2 million in proposed budget cuts. He said that government aid from Albany and Washington and permission to raise sales and income taxes made it possible to avoid the cuts.

The mayor promised to restore funding for:

- Park maintenance
- Senior citizen centers
- Programs at the Administration for Children's Services
- Libraries so they stay open five days a week
- Health programs on asthma and lead poisoning
- AIDS prevention

New York City Council STATED MEETING - June 05, 2003

by Gotham Gazette Staff

Thursday, June 05, 2003 12:00 AM

- A fourth Staten Island Ferry during rush hour
- 40,000 summer youth jobs
- Subsidies to cultural arts organizations
- Half of the \$200 allowance for teachers to purchase education materials
- Trash collections in outer boroughs.

The timing of the mayor's announcement was unusual since the City Council traditionally takes credit for such restorations at the end of the budget process when a final agreement is reached between the mayor and the council.

With little else on the Stated Meeting agenda, council members took the opportunity to praise the mayor for his decision, but also to push for more restorations. Some \$500 million in budget cuts have already gone into effect or are still being negotiated.

Council Speaker Gifford Miller vowed to continue to fight for funding for foster care, City University scholarships, and programs on health and infant mortality. And some council members continued to protest the closure of six firehouses.

"I think it's fair say that if it is possible to do \$90 million in restorations, then it is possible to come up with \$6 million to reopen the firehouses that have been shut," said Brooklyn Councilmember Bill deBlasio.

The next Stated Meeting is scheduled for June 12.