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THE CITY OF CRANSTON

**RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL
EXPRESSING A COMPLETE LACK OF CONFIDENCE IN MAYOR
FUNG'S ABILITY TO CONTINUE TO LEAD THE CITY OF CRANSTON**

No.

Passed:

John E. Lanni, Jr., Council President

Resolved that,

WHEREAS, on November 14, 2013, members of the Cranston City Council Finance Committee met and voted on a proposed tentative agreement with the International Brotherhood of Police Officers, Local 301. At that meeting, the Finance Committee rejected the tentative agreement by a vote of 4 to 3. Early on the morning of Friday, November 15, 2013, members of the Cranston Police Department issued 112 parking tickets, of which 106 were for violations of the overnight parking ordinance. Additionally, during the early morning hours of Saturday, November 16, 2013, the Cranston Police Department issued another 34 parking tickets of which 31 were for violations of overnight parking ordinance. The majority of these tickets were issued in the Arlington and Edgewood sections of the City of Cranston in Wards 1 and 3; and

WHEREAS, on Sunday, December 1, 2013, City Council member Steven Stycos and Paul Archetto, who represent Ward 1 and Ward 3 of the City of Cranston, respectively, filed a complaint with the Cranston Police Department's Professional Standards unit. Both Council members had voted against the proposed police union employment contract on Thursday, November 14, 2013 because they felt that the contract was excessively lucrative to ranking members of the Cranston Police Department, and that if the contract were passed, it would be financially burdensome to the residents of the City of Cranston; and

WHEREAS, on January 7, 2014 Council President Lanni called for special meeting of the Cranston City Council which was scheduled for January 9, 2014. As part of the posted agenda, the City Council anticipated discussing a resolution requesting that the Rhode Island State Police investigate the alleged Cranston ticketing scandal. On January 8, 2014 Mayor Fung received a preliminary report from then Colonel Palombo regarding the findings of the internal investigation into the issuance of the parking tickets. January 9, 2014, a Notice of Discipline was drafted by Colonel Palombo and addressed to Captain Antonucci advising that the Office of Professional Standards Unit within the Cranston Police Department had determined that there

45 were a total of 128 tickets issued in Ward 1 and Ward 3 in the days following the Finance
46 Committee meeting in which the tentative contract agreement was voted down. The investigation
47 uncovered compelling evidence to suggest that this aggressive ticketing was directed by Captain
48 Antonucci and coordinated through his subordinate officer. On that same day, January 9, 2014,
49 Mayor Fung contacted Colonel O'Donnell of the Rhode Island State Police and asked the Rhode
50 Island State Police to assume control of the Cranston internal investigation. Mayor Fung had
51 placed Colonel Palombo on paid administrative leave from the Department. Mayor Fung further
52 requested that the State Police oversee the day-to-day operations of the Cranston Police
53 Department, review several disciplinary issues and allegations of mismanagement within the
54 Cranston Police Department, as well as conduct a thorough assessment of the department.
55

56 **WHEREAS**, the assessment of the Cranston Rhode Island Police Department for the
57 period 2014 – 2015 was conducted by the Rhode Island State Police pursuant to a request by
58 Mayor Fung; and
59

60 **WHEREAS**, in late July 2015, the Rhode Island State Police made public a partially
61 redacted version of their Assessment of the Cranston Police Department; and
62

63 **WHEREAS**, the Rhode Island State Police completed a thorough and voluminous report
64 on their Assessment of the state of the Cranston Police Departments. The report was 182 pages
65 long and contained a series of findings on a number of topics as well as conclusions and
66 recommendations.; and
67

68 **WHEREAS**, in the Assessment by the State Police, the State Police concluded that most
69 of the Department's troubles can be attributed to the poor leadership of the Department's top
70 officers, political interference and influence by Mayor Fung and members of his administration.
71 The report also details Mayor Fung's unwillingness to take decisive actions to correct serious
72 problems when they were brought to his attention. Those individuals within the Police
73 Department who felt targeted believed that they had nowhere to turn for help because they
74 perceive that the Police Chief, Mayor, and President of the Departments Police union often seem
75 to be working as a team to quash dissent and reject legitimate grievances and complaints. The
76 assessment concluded: "Mayor Fung was aware of many of the problems within the Department,
77 including unwarranted disciplinary actions taken against specific officers, the intimidation of
78 civilians and attempts by Colonel Palombo and his top ranking officers to interfere with the
79 promotional testing process. Yet he took no action and fail to rectify many of the significant
80 issues brought to his attention concerning Colonel Palombo's erratic behavior." The report also
81 concluded that Mayor Fung and members of his administration interfered and unduly influence
82 the Department's operations when it suited their purpose. It further concludes that Mayor Fung
83 privately sought to substantially reduce the discipline against Captain Antonucci who had
84 supported Mayor Fung's campaigns for Mayor and for Governor.
85

86 **WHEREAS**, the Cranston City Council reviewed the State Police Assessment report in
87 its entirety and held a special meeting of the City Council to question the Mayor concerning the
88 findings of this report and Assessment. While the Mayor answered questions at that meeting
89 from citizens and the City Council, he failed to provide clear and accurate reasons and rationales
90 for the decisions he had taken with regard to the Police Department; and

91 **WHEREAS**, the Cranston City Council is grateful to the efforts of the Rhode Island State
92 Police and Colonel O'Donnell and it accepts as true the findings of the Rhode Island State Police
93 Assessment that in essence the Cranston Police Department was grossly mismanaged under the
94 leadership of Mayor Fung.

95
96 **NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the City Council specifically and
97 affirmatively expresses that it has no confidence in Mayor Fung to continue to lead the City of
98 Cranston as its Mayor.

100
101 Sponsored by Council President Lanni, Council Vice-President Santamaria, Councilman Aceto