

SAM ZURIER

November 28, 2011

Dear Fellow East Siders:

I hope you had an enjoyable Thanksgiving. This will be a busy week at the Council, with important hearings both tonight and tomorrow night, as well as a Council meeting on Thursday night.

- Tonight (November 28) at 5:30 p.m., the Pension Sustainability Subcommittee will listen to a presentation from Charles Mansolillo, former City Solicitor, who will provide some background about the City pension's outsized legacy costs, including the 6% cost of living adjustments that were approved for a class of retirees.
- Tomorrow night (November 29) at **5:00 p.m. (please note the new time)**, the Education Subcommittee will hear a presentation from representatives of Achievement First, which has applied to operate a "mayoral academy" charter school in Providence. Members of the City Council will ask questions, and the public will be invited to submit their questions on index cards for me to present to the panelists from Achievement First. We changed the time to 5:00 in order to accommodate parents and Council members who wish to attend a School Department meeting that night concerning a group of persistently low achieving ("PLA") schools. I regret this scheduling conflict, which will make it more difficult for working parents to come to the meeting; however, there was no other possible way to accommodate the PLA school parents. Tuesday's presentation will set the stage for three more hearings next week. Next Tuesday, December 6, the Education Subcommittee will hear the School Department's projection of the financial impact of the new charter school if it is approved. I am hopeful that these hearings will inform the discussion that will take place the following two nights (December 7 and 8) when the Rhode Island Department of Education conducts public hearings on the Achievement First charter school application.
- The Mayor's Office announced that the School Board Nominating Commission will accept applications for three School Board seats that will become open when the terms of three current School Board members expire. You can read about the application process by clicking <http://www.providenceri.com/schools/nominating-commission-application>. As described there in more detail, the Nominating Commission will hold an introductory meeting next Monday, December 5, and the filing deadline is **next Wednesday, December 7 at 4:00 p.m.** While the School Board's role changed this past summer, it is still extremely important. We on the City Council need a capable School Board to develop policy and to oversee the School Department's educational operations. I enjoyed tremendously my own work on the School Board ten years ago. Please feel free to send me an email or give me a telephone call (644-0925) if you are thinking of applying, and would like to discuss it further.

Sincerely,

