

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
CITY COUNCIL
PUBLIC SPEAKING SESSION
MONDAY, JANUARY 6, 2014
6:30 PM**

ATTENDANCE: Council members: Brannelly, Torres, Banta, Taylor-Moye, Halstead, Swain, McCarthy, McBride-Lee, Salter, DeJesus, *Castillo, Martinez, Feliciano, Marella, Paoletto, Martinez-Walker

ABSENT: Council members: Austin, Lyons, Vizzo-Paniccia, Holloway
*= arrived late

Council President McCarthy called the public speaking session to order at 6:40 pm.

The city clerk took the roll call and announced there was a quorum.

Council President McCarthy announced that the following Council members were absent:

- o Vizzo-Paniccia had a pipe burst in her home; Lyons had a family emergency; Holloway had a previous engagement

THE FOLLOWING NAMED PERSON HAS REQUESTED PERMISSION TO ADDRESS THE CITY COUNCIL ON MONDAY, JANUARY 6, 2014 AT 6:30 P.M., IN THE CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL, 45 LYON TERRACE, BRIDGEPORT, CT.

Please go to [www. SoundviewTV.org/Bridgeport](http://www.SoundviewTV.org/Bridgeport) to view or listen to the detailed comments that the speakers below addressed to the City Council on January 6, 2013.

❖ *Statements were submitted to the city clerk's office.*

NAME

SUBJECT

Ethan Book
144 Coleman Street
Bridgeport, CT 06604

Continuation of observed defects of the recent election process and a "to do" list stemming from that process

Mr. Council President, Members of the City Council and public:

I am Ethan Book, a recent candidate for this City Council to represent the important 131st District

In my previous comments given here on December 16th, I explained that the incumbent Council members for the 131st District ran a campaign based on a hidden agenda. In part, that pertained to their failure to participate in a South-End Community Forum arranged for South End residents and in part on the fact that they presented no articulate written

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platform until the day of the November election. Following those public comments, on December 1, I sent to Ms. Denese Taylor-Moye and Mr. Jack Banta an e-mail. That included the following:

Was there an agreement between you (either implicit or explicit) to not respond to the invitation to participate in the South End Community Group Forum in late October? [Or] was your observed non-participation suggested by another person? [Or] was such non-response part of an established practice or custom? Could it be said that your non-response was indicative of deliberate indifference and/or a conspiracy of silence?

To this date, I have received no response from either Ms. Moye or Mr. Banta to this important inquiry of public interest. This situation is particularly significant in that I have observed and can provide information (including some information that I presented on December 16th regarding patterns of conduct of city attorneys) that there is a broad pattern of deliberate indifference among City officials and employees. Fortunately, this situation is not absolute; nonetheless it is a broad pattern of attitude and conduct.

I now come to another important aspect for public attention. During my recent campaign for the position of City Council representative for the 131st District, over a period of an excess of three months, I did a considerable amount of campaigning including of door-to-door campaigning. I received valuable feedback on issues of public concern. I list here key issues.

1. There is the issue of taxes, taxes, and taxes.
2. There is concern about jobs
3. There is concern about the quality of education.
4. A reported City practice of discriminating against employment of persons with criminal records.
5. There is concern about tree roots breaking up the sidewalks on Black Rock Avenue and on Lewis Street.
6. There is concern of poor roadway on Vine Street.
7. There is concern of a lack of nets on the basketball rims at Marina Village.
8. There is concern of the conduct of city attorneys.
9. And again there is the issue of taxes, taxes, taxes and taxes.

These are the highlighted issues which were communicated to me.

In addition, there is another important issue which I add as a result of both comments which I have received and also matters which I have experienced. It is clear that there are some political and legal skeletons regarding legitimate civil claims again the City which individuals have presented to appropriate court forums yet for expected court biases which city attorneys have both helped to create and further to expect, the city attorneys made extreme and unprofessional arguments clearly in an attempt to evade reasonable responsibility and liability. In a manner which, in such a context, may not be unexpected though it is clearly not justified, the Courts have responded favorably to such extreme

arguments to rule in favor of the City. Such a contrived pattern of legal and judicial errors does not absolve the City of its constitutional and moral responsibility and liability. I refer particularly to matters of Cecil Young, of the late Adelaida Coriano and of myself. This body should be in a position to receive information and petitions to thereupon refer such matters to the City Council Committee on Miscellaneous Matters for complete and serious review and recommendations.

This point leads me yet to another important consideration. I believe that the two major civil rights movements in our great nation were of legitimate public purpose. Those, of course, were of racial foes. While there has been some benefit from those movements, the underlying purposes for which they were initiated have yet to be fully addressed and resolved. It is my opinion that remaining racial issues have logically combined with related legitimate class issues such that the next major social movement in our nation will not be primarily racially focused but rather will be class focuses. There has evolved in our nation a system of elitism, and oligarchy or an establishment which allows sufficient control of the governmental process including of the legislative and judicial functions that a few persons for a few groups tend to rule or to influence governmental functions in manners that primarily benefit those limited groups, all at the expense of the general public. As the two mentioned civil rights movements essentially began in Black churches, appropriately, so, the impending movement which I foresee likely will also be initiated in churches. We are a Judeo-Christian nation.

I close with the words of President John Kennedy:

A revolution is coming: a revolution which will be peaceful if we are wise enough, compassionate if we care enough, successful if we are fortunate enough – but a revolution which is coming whether we like it or not. We can affect its character; we cannot alter its inevitability.

Those sentiments were recently reaffirmed in the 2012 book The Coming Revolution – “Signs from America’s Past that Signal Our Nation’s Future”, by Dr. Richard G. Lee, an Atlanta-based pastor.

May God bless the City of Bridgeport, the State of Connecticut and our great nation!

Ethan Book

Cecil C. Young
99 Carroll Avenue
Bridgeport, CT 06607

Follow-up on civil rights violations by city and state officials

Mr. Young spoke about being a whistle blower, regarding the piles of dirt that sit dormant next to the health department building.

He went on to speak about spending thousands of dollars to hire lawyers to seek justice about the matter of his unjust termination. He relayed that he never wanted

special privileges, but he has gone to extremes to get justice. He emphasized that it is a shame and a disgrace that he received a letter on March 6, 2006 that indicated he had been terminated and subsequently, his benefits were denied to him and his family. He stressed that his complaint is that no one ever looked into the allegations to find out the truth and he has never heard any response. Overall, he said he felt that fraud was committed and his civil rights were violated – *he referred to a report he distributed from the labor board*. He further emphasized his dissatisfaction of his claim being continuously ignored and once again, he asked that the city council look into the allegations, noting that the matter is about right and wrong. He made another request that these allegations be investigated. *He concluded to remind everyone that they can go to his website www.cecilyoung.com for more information.*

The following speakers signed up to address the City Council prior to the public speaking session:

John Marshall Lee
30 Beacon Street
Bridgeport, CT 06605

Council members, good evening.

A New Year is upon us. For many it is a time of reviewing our lives, responsibilities and duties. Perhaps after taking a look, we decide that a change is indicted? When we go further and put that desire into a resolution we feel good about it...what is most wonderful is that sometimes we follow our resolve and form a new habit.

What would that look like if you used that process relative to your service as Council persons to the community? Perhaps you have reflected on your Council duties? Where would you look for guidance as to what duties are yours specifically? Those duties are not listed in the City Charter. Neither are they in the State of CT. Constitution that you pledged to uphold at your installation. They are not in the City Council rules. There is more than one reference to Council duties when the subject of stipends occurs but “duties”, for which you can expect financial reimbursement in pursuit of your duties, as such are not listed.

How will you measure your effectiveness in serving the public, if you are not aware of your specific duties? Is that a reasonable question? Let’s look at finances, for example.

It is clear that the Charter indicates a budget review process when the annual operating budget is delivered to you by the Mayor. Last year that occurred on April 2, 2013. What activity relative to understanding the adequacy of budgeted revenues would seem to be a duty for you? Would it have included checking on whether Federal, State and other identified sources were on target year to date? How about understanding whether adjustments to reduce the operating budget from labor givebacks is on tract? Has one or more of your committees pursue such activity? To what result?

Expenses are the other side of the operating budget that you approve in the spring each year. Where is oversight on cost overruns like OVERTIME carried out as a normal duty of the Council? The Comprehensive Annual Financial Report showed twice as many categories overspent at fiscal year end 2012 as 2011, for more than twice the amount Why? Is it likely that there is no real oversight on this subject? Would you need to see reports that would call that attention immediately to your eye? Would the reports need to be more timely than those you receive today?

The taxpayers of the City would be pleased, I think, if you were able to show them budgets that were balanced at lower appropriation levels than today. Do you have a way of looking at the City budget across all departments to see more specifically where money is being spent and on what services and activities? Are you looking at those budget items that slowly build resources for the future to fulfill promises made to employees or others? What do you understand about our position today? Are we prepared to fund public safety retirement plans where the opportunity to receive doubled benefits has been created by recent labor contract? It is your watch, a new year, and we are talking about your duties. Are you prepared for this responsibility? If not, why not? Time will tell.

John Marshall Lee

David Goodwin

Mr. Goodwin stated that he was a city sheriff. He spoke about the city going after taxpayers and losing businesses because of rising tax costs. He emphasized that kids are suffering, people are suffering and living on the streets and no one is helping them. He mentioned that every day, he has to serve papers to someone in arrears of taxes and he feels bad, because there are some people that really need help. He relayed that as council members, they need to do something as a city and help one another. He went on to say through all these problems, he has observed others that work for the city keep getting salary raises. He further spoke about the problem with fighting one another instead of working together.

The public speaking session ended at 7:05 pm.

CITY OF BRIDGEPORT

CITY COUNCIL MEETING

MONDAY, JANUARY 6, 2014

7:00 PM

City Council Chambers, City Hall - 45 Lyon Terrace

Bridgeport, Connecticut

ATTENDANCE: Council members: Brannelly, Torres, Banta, Taylor-Moye, Halstead, Swain, McCarthy, McBride-Lee, Salter, DeJesus, *Castillo, Martinez, Feliciano, Marella, Paoletto, Martinez-Walker

ABSENT: Council members: Austin, Lyons, Vizzo-Paniccia, Holloway

Mayor Finch called the meeting to order at 7:10 pm.

Prayer - Council member Feliciano offered the prayer.

Pledge of Allegiance - Council member Salter led the pledge of allegiance.

Roll Call - the city clerk took the roll call and announced there was a quorum.

Mayoral Proclamation: In Honor of Nick Maniero for his valor during World War II and his continued support and hard work to preserve our State's Aviation History.

Mayor Finch expressed that they often celebrate those among us and the great things they do in the city. He stated that it was an honor to pay respect and homage to a real hero who performed in a heroic fashion. He called for Nick Maniero his family and friends to come forward to accept the citation. *The following council members came forward to present the citation: Council President McCarthy, Council members: Taylor-Moye, Martinez and Marella.*

Council President McCarthy expressed that it was nice to recognize positive things going on in the city and the actions they take; such as a war hero Nick Maniero who was a true hero during WWII. He shared that Mr. Maniero flew a plane despite being attacked by the

enemy numerous times, but he continued his duty and completed the entire operation. He stated that this truly sums up the courage and heroics of a fearless war hero.

Mayor Finch acknowledged how well Nick Maniero looked at 95-years old – *he read the proclamation that outlined Nick Maniero’s extraordinary achievement during WWII.*

City Council Citation: In Honor of Nick Maniero for his valor during World War II and his continued support and hard work to preserve our State’s Aviation History.

Council President McCarthy read the citation that honored Nick Maniero’s valor in combat during WWII.

He went on to express on behalf of the City of Bridgeport and the entire city council how all those present with Mr. Maniero tonight have all dedicated their time and energy as volunteers to help restore the Corsair aircraft. And he thanked them on behalf of the city for all they’ve done.

Mayor Finch reiterated how proud the City of Bridgeport was of Mr. Maniero and for this contribution to the world.

MINUTES FOR APPROVAL:

Approval of City Council Minutes: December 2, 2013

**** COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES**
**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT McCARTHY SECONDED**
**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

COMMUNICATIONS TO BE REFERRED TO COMMITTEES:

13-13 Communication from City Attorney re: Proposed Resolution concerning a Ground Lease with United Illuminating Company to facilitate the construction of a Solar Electricity-Generating Facility on the Landfill near Seaside Park and the construction of a Fuel Cell Facility on Adjacent Land, referred to Contracts Committee.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO MOVED TO REFER COMMUNICATIONS TO BE REFERRED TO COMMITTEES**
**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ SECONDED**
**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

ITEMS FOR IMMEDIATE CONSIDERATION:

14-13 Communication from City Attorney re: Legal Discussion concerning Pending Litigation with Tamala Jones FOR IMMEDIATE CONSIDERATION.

Council President McCarthy stated that he would like City Attorney Mark Anastasi to give an explanation of the timing about this item, noting that they would then motion to go into executive session to discuss the matter.

City Attorney Anastasi stated that the matter was scheduled for a jury trial. He explained that in order to accommodate the court calendar and then proceed to binding arbitration; they needed to report back to the court as soon as possible. He noted that two attorneys (Chris Meyer and Eroll Skyers) would join the executive session to explore the matter further.

Council member Taylor-Moye stated that she would abstain from attending the executive session. She stated the reason was because she knows the litigant from working with her on the Board of Directors of the Unique and Unified program.

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT McCARTHY MOVED TO ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARELLA SECONDED**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

*****Let it be noted that the following persons also attended the executive session: Attorney Eroll Skyers, Attorney Chris Meyer, City Attorney Mark Anastasi, Andrew Nunn and Mayor Finch.***

The city council and the above named persons entered into executive session at 7:30 pm. The city council members and the above named persons came out of executive session at 7:50 pm.

Mayor Finch reconvened the meeting at 7:52 pm. He returned to item 14-13 Communication from City Attorney re: Legal Discussion concerning Pending Litigation with Tamala Jones FOR IMMEDIATE CONSIDERATION.

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT McCARTHY MOVED TO AUTHORIZE CITY ATTORNEY MARK ANASTASI TO CONTINUE ARBITRATION AS IT RELATED TO ITEM 14-13 Communication from City Attorney re: Legal Discussion concerning Pending Litigation with Tamala Jones FOR IMMEDIATE CONSIDERATION.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO SECONDED**

**** MOTION PASSED WITH FIFTEEN VOTES IN FAVOR AND ONE ABSTENTION (COUNCIL MEMBER TAYLOR-MOYE)**

*****(4) COUNCIL MEMBERS WERE ABSENT FROM THE VOTE.***

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

*04-13 Contracts Committee Report re: Greater Bridgeport Regional Solid Waste Interlocal Agreement.

** **COUNCIL MEMBER DeJESUS MOVED TO SCHEDULE A PUBLIC HEARING**
** **COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO SECONDED**
** **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

** **COUNCIL MEMBER DeJESUS MOVED TO TABLE ITEM *04-13 BEFORE THE FULL CITY COUNCIL**
** **COUNCIL PRESIDENT McCARTHY SECONDED**
** **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

Other business:

Council member Torres referred to item 13-13 Communication from City Attorney re: Proposed Resolution concerning a Ground Lease with United Illuminating Company to facilitate the construction of a Solar Electricity-Generating Facility on the Landfill near Seaside Park and the construction of a Fuel Cell Facility on Adjacent Land, referred to Contracts Committee. He commented that this item pertained to a fuel cell located in the south end. He said that he thought it was important to know what's involved before the item goes to committee, for the purpose of making a proper decision. He requested that any city officials such as the Mayor and Council President McCarthy should provide all the necessary information related to the item that will assist the committee members in making a decision.

Council member Halstead commented about item 13-13, noting that the packet showed the solar panels that will be constructed. He stated that it will be important to see what they will visually look like before a decision is made.

New business:

** **COUNCIL MEMBER BANTA MOVED TO SUSPEND THE RULES FOR THE PURPOSE OF REFERRING AN ITEM TO COMMITTEE**
** **COUNCIL MEMBER MARELLA SECONDED**
** **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

** **COUNCIL MEMBER BANTA MOVED TO REFER RE: STATE OF CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION: AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL GRANT TO THE ECONOMIC COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE**
** **COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO SECONDED**
** **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY (ITEM #15-13)**

Council President McCarthy clarified the date of the public hearing for item 04-13 will be scheduled at the next scheduled city council meeting.

Announcements:

Council member Martinez reminded everyone that it's a tradition for Latinos to celebrate "Three Kings Day". She invited the council members to join them in the back after the meeting.

Mayor Finch acknowledged the Latino council members and leaders of the Latino community for a great celebration, noting it was a job well done!

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARELLA MOVED TO ADJOURN
** COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO SECONDED
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Graham
Telesco Secretarial Services