

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT  
CITY COUNCIL  
PUBLIC SPEAKING SESSION  
MONDAY, MARCH 3, 2014  
6:30 PM**

ATTENDANCE: Council members: Torres, Banta, Taylor-Moye, Halstead, Swain, McCarthy, Lyons, Vizzo-Paniccia, McBride-Lee, Salter, DeJesus, Castillo, Martinez, Feliciano, Marella, Paoletto, Martinez-Walker, Holloway

ABSENT: Council members: Brannelly, Austin

Council President McCarthy called the public speaking session to order at 6:45 pm.

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

Council President announced the following council members absent:

- Council member Brannelly was on vacation; Council member Austin had an emergency.

*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 March 3, 2014.*

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

THE FOLLOWING NAMED PERSON HAS REQUESTED PERMISSION TO ADDRESS THE CITY COUNCIL ON MONDAY, MARCH 3, 2014 AT 6:30 P.M., IN THE CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL, 45 LYON TERRACE, BRIDGEPORT, CT.

**NAME**

**SUBJECT**

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**Ethan Book**  
144 Coleman Street  
Bridgeport, CT 06604

Levels of city taxes.

*See city clerk for copy of statement or go to [www. SoundviewTV.org/Bridgeport](http://www.SoundviewTV.org/Bridgeport) to view or listen to the detailed comments.*

**Cecil C. Young**  
99 Carroll Avenue  
Bridgeport, CT 06607

Follow-up on unjust termination.

Mr. Young spoke about being terminated after twenty-seven years. He said it was a shame that they took action after him, when he had his doctor's backup. He referred to a copy of a letter, indicating that as of March 17, 2006; he didn't return to work and was therefore terminated. He had a timecard that indicated he did work on March 16, 2006, but he said he was only scheduled to work part-time hours that day. He recalled that the reason he wasn't at work on March 17, 2006 was because he went for a colon exam. He further recalled the hours he was scheduled to work on these days that he said were less than full-time hours. He stated that he was before the council to defend his rights, noting that it was a shame that no one has looked into this concerns. He stated that the matter is about him being a taxpayer and it was a shame and disgrace that everyone isn't treated equally. To date, he said he hasn't received any response about his complaints and he once again requested that the allegations be looked into. He emphasized that out of nineteen democratic council members, he felt that it was an injustice that only one republican council member was willing to look into the unjust termination and he thought his rights were being violated. He stressed that he was troubled that he can't get any response about the unjust termination.

**John Marshall Lee**  
30 Beacon Street  
Bridgeport, CT 06605

City financial concerns.

### **Comments to City Council – March 3, 2014**

Council President McCarthy, Council persons, interested member of the Bridgeport community. For the past two Council sessions I have addressed financial issues raised by the release of the June 30, 2013 Monthly Financial Report.

I have told you that this was a historically significant report because the Finance Office has failed to provide you with such for over 20 years. The Charter says 12 months of monthly reports but the City has not been doing that. In 2012 they posted a report for the 12<sup>th</sup> month and termed it a DRAFT, never issuing a final report. I believe that the Finance Office felt that you were not asking for such a document. And indeed, if none of your predecessors including the incumbent members of Budget & Appropriations asked for it, then they did not get one.

This year one of your members asked for the Final Report and you received it. Did you bother to read it? Have you heard any of the questions I have asked you during the past two sessions? I send you my comments by email after addressing you. I know you are busy, but the people who voted for you expect that you are the last watchdogs in the City. Are they wrong? When you are asked a question and know the answer, do you share that answer?

For instance I shared with you the surprise of discovering an entry in Controller's Department of \$510,000 between the June draft and the June final for a line item that expected \$50,000 for the year and had no positive revenue indicated right up to the June draft. Is that magic? I hope it is a good number, but who has asked for an explanation? What is the answer? If I am looking at these number and have questions, do you think I am the only one in the City looking to you to handle this responsibility? Can this entry for Line Item 41538 repeat again this year? Or is it a one time event? Or is it possibly an error? Errors occur in City fiscal reports you know and watchdogs need to review the material to catch them.....(Were you to reference this year's CAFR, the external audit prepared by Blum Schapiro and the Finance Office, you can find errors on page 60 and again on page 81 that should have been spotted by cursory proofreading. The first has to do with Firefighters Retirement Plan B, Column four where the same number repeats five years in a row. The second on page 81 where the data under 2010 has slipped a space. Do these errors affect the totals? Check them out. After all the Mayor and Chief Finance officer are pleased with the report getting a Transparency reward. Are there more serious errors included? How would you tell if you do not read, if you don't question, if ALL FISCAL REPORTS were put on the internet, just as you get them. That would be real transparency. And if the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report is not the subject of an annual public hearing with Q & A where all can listen and learn, why not?

Regarding Open practice, your Council rules prevent your committees from getting input at their meetings from the public. Are you pleased with that or proud of that? There are people in the community who can assist in helping the City strengthen its financial position, but you are not open to them. Why not? Is it because you believe you know everything, those of you who have sat on this body for years? It takes a community (if not a village) to share in the information, understanding and discussion that leads to wise long-term fiscal results. That has not been the City habit unfortunately.

Staying on the Revenue side of the June report is the surplus in 44691 Line Item of \$2,333,181. In the previous year we had received \$3.6 Million for Manufacturing Machinery and Equipment but when the 2013 budget was put together that was not to be. However, the City did receive it and managed to spend all of it when it might have been used to reflect a significant surplus along with the \$500,000.

In 2013 the City did manage to run \$8 Million of deficits for public safety employees. What is that number for the current year? Does anybody have that number handy? Lastly, in 2013 there was no budget for Attrition. Can you explain Attrition (it's found under Organization Code 01610 , Line Item 50700) but now it is showing in your current budget to the tune of \$2 Million. Can you explain what it is? Why is this number not changing through the year? What is happening to the furloughs and other employment adjustments each month and are the results showing in the reports presented to you?

One month from now you will begin your budget review for 2015. Will you handle this task the way it has been handled in recent years with staffing patterns that have allowed the City to shed \$3.5 to \$4 Millions of salary after one quarter? Taxpayers are looking at you. If you need help, independent assistance, get it on board quickly. Time will tell.

John Marshall Lee, 30 Beacon Street, Bridgeport, CT 06605

*The following speakers signed up to address the city council prior to the public speaking session:*

### **Clyde Nicholson**

Mr. Nicholson spoke about the Harding High School situation. He recalled that President George Bush went into Iraq because of the threat of there being chemical weapons. He stated that they spent millions fighting the war, but they never found any chemical weapons. He stated that they know in fact that there are chemicals in the soil at the Harding site. And although the Raybestos site was cleaned up; he said there aren't any kids playing football there. He questioned what will stop the site from being contaminated and he further questioned who will give the guarantee that the property will be safe and who will sign off on it, will it be GE, DEP or the City of Bridgeport? He further questioned who will be responsible and he stressed that all those that sit on committees should take some responsibility. He recalled other disasters such as the 911-World Trade Center incident that caused serious health issues. Overall, he thought that the matter was all about the mighty dollar and not education. He was adamant that this matter should be strictly about the kids lives and he said he hoped and prayed that this potential disaster and train wreck will stop before it happens.

### **Evette Brantley**

Ms. Brantley stated she was before the city council tonight to ask that they support item \*22-13 Economic and Community Development and Environment Committee Report re: Resolution Authorizing the Extension of a Tax Incentive Agreement for the Sycamore Place Apartments, An Affordable Housing Development located at 285 Maplewood Avenue located in the 132<sup>nd</sup> district. She relayed that she has been passionate about the seniors well being. She stated that the building was in dire straits years ago and she has been closely involved to resolve many of the problems related to the building. She emphasized that it's "our" responsibility to take care of the senior citizens, noting that there are some that have disability and emotional challenges. She urged support of the item.

The public speaking session ended at 7:10 pm.

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT**

**CITY COUNCIL MEETING**

**MONDAY, MARCH 3, 2014**

**7:00 PM**

**City Council Chambers, City Hall - 45 Lyon Terrace**

**Bridgeport, Connecticut**

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

**ABSENT:** Council members: Brannelly, Austin

Council President McCarthy called the meeting to order at 7:11 pm.

- Prayer - Council member McBride-Lee 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.

Presentation by Michael Moore, President and CEO of Bridgeport Downtown Special Services District (DSSD) regarding the organization's current initiatives and plans for the coming warm weather months of 2014.

Mr. Moore thanked the City Council for the invitation to speak tonight. He stated that he was the president and CEO of the Downtown Special Services District. He noted that the chairman, Mr. Markway of the Downtown Special Services District was also present. He acknowledged Council member Taylor-Moye for her involvement with the district.

He went on to say that warm weather was approaching and their mission is to maintain a clean, safe downtown district. He relayed that there are twenty-seven (27) open spaces downtown. He thanked the city staff and city departments for their assistance.

Mr. Markway, Chairman Downtown Special Services District stated that he was a volunteer for the district. He relayed that the district was started from the National Trust District Program that was formed in 1987 and comprised of (191) properties downtown. He stated that the real mission is to keep downtown safe and to attract and maintain businesses downtown. He mentioned that they are working with city government on many projects and plans are being prepared to put into place. He thanked the city council for their partnership with DSSD.

Mr. Moore referred to the renderings displayed that highlighted McLevy Green; Baldwin Plaza and the walkway to the historic arcade. He stated that an inventory has been prioritized for the open space downtown and they will actively work to beautify the spaces over the next five years. He urged everyone to visit the office of DSSD for additional information.

#### **MINUTES FOR APPROVAL:**

Approval of City Council Minutes: February 4, 2014 (Special Meeting)

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**COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES  
COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA SECONDED  
MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

#### **COMMUNICATIONS TO BE REFERRED TO COMMITTEES:**

Council President McCarthy requested a motion to combine and approve  
**COMMUNICATIONS TO BE REFERRED TO COMMITTEES and  
RESOLUTIONS TO BE REFERRED TO BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, ETC.**

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**COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO MOVED TO COMBINE and REFER  
COMMUNICATIONS TO BE REFERRED TO COMMITTEES and  
RESOLUTIONS TO BE REFERRED TO BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, ETC.**

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**COUNCIL MEMBER MARELLA SECONDED**

**41-13** Communication from Citi-Stat Department re: Proposed Amendments to the Municipal Code of Ordinances, amend Chapter 9.08 Offenses Pertaining to Property, referred to Ordinance Committee.

**42-13** Communication from City Attorney re: Twenty Day Notice to Settle Pending Litigation Pursuant to Municipal Code Section 2.10.130 with Marilyn Carroll and Carmen E.F. Vazquez, **ACCEPTED AND MADE PART OF THE RECORD.**

- 43-13** Communication from Mayor re: Appointment of Carlos A. Moreno (D) to the Planning & Zoning Commission, referred to Miscellaneous Matters Committee.
- 44-13** Communication from Tax Collector re: Assignment of Tax Liens for Fiscal Year 2014, referred to Contracts Committee.
- 45-13** Communication from Tax Collector re: State Reimbursement of Low and Moderate Income Housing Tax for the Grand List of 2012, referred to Miscellaneous Matters Committee.
- 46-13** Communication from Mayor re: Appointment of Rocco Guarnieri (D) to the Fire Commission, referred to Public Safety & Transportation Committee.
- 48-13** Communication from Finance Department re: Approval of General Obligation Bonds – To Authorize Certain Capital Improvement Projects, referred to Budget & Appropriations Committee.
- 49-13** Communication from Mayor re: Proposed Five-Year Capital Plan (CP) for Fiscal Years 2015-2019, referred to Budget & Appropriations Committee.

**RESOLUTIONS TO BE REFERRED TO BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, ETC.:**

- 47-13** Resolution presented by Council Member Torres re: The Coal Burning PSEG Plant in Bridgeport Harbor, referred to Economic and Community Development and Environment Committee.

**\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**MATTERS TO BE ACTED UPON (CONSENT CALENDAR):**

Council President McCarthy asked if there were any items to be removed from the consent calendar:

Council member Paoletto made a request to remove **\*37-13** Ordinance Committee Report re: Amendments to the Municipal Code of Ordinances, Chapter Section 15.08.010 Building Permit and Related Fees and Section 15.08.020 Building Permits to be Withheld Due to Delinquent Taxes and User Fees. *and* **\*39-13** Ordinance Committee Report re: Amendments to the Municipal Code of Ordinances, Amendments to the Municipal Code of Ordinances, Chapter 8.76 Anti-Blight Program, amend Section 8.76.020 Definitions, Section 8.76.040 Enforcement and amend to add New Section 8.76.052 Allocation of Capital Gain.

Council member Halstead made a request to remove **\*22-13** Economic and Community Development and Environment Committee Report re: Resolution Authorizing the Extension of a Tax Incentive Agreement for the Sycamore Place Apartments, An Affordable Housing Development located at 285 Maplewood Avenue.

The city clerk read the remaining consent calendar items into the record:

- \*37-13** Ordinance Committee Report re: Amendments to the Municipal Code of Ordinances, Chapter Section 15.08.010 Building Permit and Related Fees and Section 15.08.020 Building Permits to be Withheld Due to Delinquent Taxes and User Fees. - **removed**
- \*39-13** Ordinance Committee Report re: Amendments to the Municipal Code of Ordinances, Amendments to the Municipal Code of Ordinances, Chapter 8.76 Anti-Blight Program, amend Section 8.76.020 Definitions, Section 8.76.040 Enforcement and amend to add New Section 8.76.052 Allocation of Capital Gain. - **removed**
- \*09-13** Economic and Community Development and Environment Committee Report re: Resolution concerning the Disposition and Redevelopment of City-Owned Property located at 1752 Barnum Avenue.
- \*10-13** Economic and Community Development and Environment Committee Report re: Resolution concerning the Disposition and Redevelopment of City-Owned Property located at 431-435 & 445-449 Kossuth Street.
- \*17-13** Economic and Community Development and Environment Committee Report re: Grant Submission: National Fish and Wildlife Foundation for a Youth Coastal Stewardship & Conservation Grant Program.
- \*18-13** Economic and Community Development and Environment Committee Report re: Grant Submission: The Arbor Day Foundation's TD Green Streets Grant Program.
- \*19-13** Economic and Community Development and Environment Committee Report re: Grant Submission: National Council on the Aging for the Senior SNAP Enrollment Initiative Grant Program.
- \*21-13** Economic and Community Development and Environment Committee Report re: Resolution concerning the Donation of Surplus Equipment Acquired with a Federal Grant to another Clean Vessel Act Program within the State of Connecticut.

- \*22-13 Economic and Community Development and Environment Committee Report re: Resolution Authorizing the Extension of a Tax Incentive Agreement for the Sycamore Place Apartments, An Affordable Housing Development located at 285 Maplewood Avenue. – **removed**
- \*26-13 Miscellaneous Matters Committee Report re: Settlement of Pending Litigation with Gregory Jetter.
- \*30-13 Miscellaneous Matters Committee Report re: Appointment of John “Jack” Calcutt (R) to the Zoning Board of Appeals Commission.
- \*33-13 Miscellaneous Matters Committee Report re: Appointment of Mack Henry Allen Jr. (D) to the Ethics Commission.
- \*40-13 Miscellaneous Matters Committee Report re: Settlement of Pending Litigation with Orlando Lopez.

\*\* **COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO MOVED TO APPROVE**  
 \*\* **COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA SECONDED**  
 \*\* **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

Council President McCarthy returned to the items that were removed from the consent calendar:

- \*37-13 Ordinance Committee Report re: Amendments to the Municipal Code of Ordinances, Chapter Section 15.08.010 Building Permit and Related Fees and Section 15.08.020 Building Permits to be Withheld Due to Delinquent Taxes and User Fees. - **removed**

\*\* **COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO MOVED TO TABLE AND RETURN THE ITEM TO COMMITTEE**  
 \*\* **COUNCIL MEMBER MARELLA SECONDED**  
 \*\* **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

- \*39-13 Ordinance Committee Report re: Amendments to the Municipal Code of Ordinances, Amendments to the Municipal Code of Ordinances, Chapter 8.76 Anti-Blight Program, amend Section 8.76.020 Definitions, Section 8.76.040 Enforcement and amend to add New Section 8.76.052 Allocation of Capital Gain. - **removed**

\*\* **COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO MOVED TO TABLE AND RETURN THE ITEM TO COMMITTEE**  
 \*\* **COUNCIL MEMBER MARELLA SECONDED**  
 \*\* **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**\*22-13** Economic and Community Development and Environment Committee Report re: Resolution Authorizing the Extension of a Tax Incentive Agreement for the Sycamore Place Apartments, An Affordable Housing Development located at 285 Maplewood Avenue. – **removed**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER HALSTEAD MOVED TO TABLE AND RETURN THE ITEM TO COMMITTEE**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER TORRES SECONDED**

A roll call vote was requested by Council member Paoletto.

Council President requested clarification for the motion to return the item back to committee. Council member Halstead clarified the motion was to return the item back to committee.

*Council President McCarthy clarified that a **yes vote** would be to table the item and a **no vote** would be to leave the item on the floor.*

The city clerk took the roll call vote and she announced there were **4-yes votes; 14-no votes; and 2-absent votes**. Council President McCarthy announced that the vote to table the item dies.

\*A second motion was requested

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER MARELLA MOVED TO APPROVE**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO SECONDED**

Discussion:

Council member Torres stated that he voted to table the item based on the reason of seniors losing their homes due to WPCA. He said he felt that giving a private entity a tax break to profit from, when seniors are housed in what's suppose to be affordable housing is a problem. He said they should research further whether or not they are making a profit. He relayed that people in his neighborhood have been oppressed by WPCA and the foreclosures that have taken place. He stressed that they needed a better understanding of what the corporation is earning.

Council member Lyons asked Bill Coleman, OPED to address the city council about the item.

Bill Coleman stated that the deal is less considered a tax break as it is an incentive. He updated that the developer purchased the 118-unit affordable senior housing, noting that the disabled residents don't pay anymore than 30% of their income. He explained that they took a specific design to develop affordable housing and there was an agreement that the entity would take advantage of the incentive payment. He relayed that the city was receiving approximately \$50k from the state each year; however, that deal expires and the \$6 million in renovations have been done by the entity, noting the same type of agreement occurred for the Bishop Homes project. Overall, he stated that this was a good

deal for the city that went from receiving \$50k each year to receiving \$145k per year from the entity. He further explained that the deal with the developer was based on getting the best tax ceiling incentive available and at the same time, benefits the seniors that live in the affordable housing.

Council member Halstead asked what the appraised value was of the property. Mr. Coleman said the Assessor's value, not the appraised value was \$3.5 million. He said he wasn't sure of the appraised value, but the building was purchased by the developer at just under \$4 million.

Council member Halstead further questioned what the appraised value was. He commented that the deal doesn't benefit the seniors and it only benefits the developer. He said he didn't feel the item should be supported with taxpayers money; especially when there are seniors suffering all over the city. He further mentioned that the developer receives Section-8 subsidies every month, noting that he didn't think they should receive any more subsidies. Mr. Coleman emphasized that he didn't feel the seniors were being mistreated. Council member Halstead admitted that there have been improvements to the dwelling, but he reiterated that the structure of the tax break was geared more toward the developer and not the senior citizens. He repeated that the developer was already receiving a tax break by the Section-8 subsidies.

Council member Halstead stated his concern about receiving information related to an item right before a meeting, noting that there isn't enough time to absorb it.

Mr. Coleman reiterated that the tax incentive program is generally designed to encourage development in the city. He pointed out that the city will ultimately receive a 26% return on their investment and he thought the tax incentive was reasonable. He recalled that the item received a unanimous vote in committee with a vote of 4>0. He continued and briefly relayed other merits of approving the item.

Council member Halstead was persistent and stated that the matter should be looked into more.

Mr. Coleman said the initial request came in at 26%, then it was negotiated at 15% and they eventually settled on an 18% tax incentive. Overall, he felt the agreement was a pretty robust tax deal. He mentioned that he would be glad to review the matter again if required.

Council member Halstead repeated that he would still like to hear more of the particulars regarding the item or send it back to committee.

Council member Martinez-Walker commented that that she applauded the developer that came all the way from Maine to purchase the building. She emphasized that she didn't see any problem with the tax percentage agreed upon, because of the developer's track record of doing good work.

Council member Martinez reminded everyone that it's not only a building for the seniors to live, but that it also provides jobs for the people that go there to take care of the seniors.

**\*\* MOTION PASSED WITH SIXTEEN VOTES IN FAVOR AND TWO VOTES IN OPPOSITION (COUNCIL MEMBERS: HALSTEAD and SALTER)**

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

**13-13** Contracts Committee Report re: Resolution concerning 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.

Council President McCarthy stated that this item would be tabled.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO MOVED TO TABLE**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ-WALKER SECONDED**

**\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**ADDENDUM ADDED:**

**COMMUNICATIONS TO BE REFERRED TO COMMITTEES:**

**50-13** Communication from City Attorney re: Proposed Contract of Sale with the Boys and Girls Club of Bridgeport, Inc., referred to Contracts Committee.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO MOVED TO REFER COMMUNICATIONS TO BE REFERRED TO COMMITTEE**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER DeJESUS SECONDED**

**\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

*Council President McCarthy reminded everyone to come march in the St. Patrick's Day parade on March 17, 2014 that will begin downtown Bridgeport.*

**ADJOURNMENT**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO MOVED TO ADJOURN**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ SECONDED**

**\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

The meeting adjourned at 7:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Graham  
Telesco Secretarial Services

City of Bridgeport  
City Council Meeting  
March 3, 2014  
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