

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS
REGULAR MEETING
DECEMBER 8, 2014**

ATTENDANCE: Susan Brannelly, Co-Chair; AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia, Patricia Swain, Lydia Martinez, Denese Taylor-Moye, Council President
Thomas McCarthy

OTHERS: Council Member Enrique Torres, Council Member Milta Feliciano, Council Member Jack Banta, Jorge Garcia, Public Facilities Director; Robert Kennedy, Public Facilities, Thomas Sherwood, OPM Director; Anne Kelly-Lenz, Finance Director; John Cottell, Public Facilities; Joe Tiago, Public Facilities; Council Member Robert Halstead (6:33 p.m.); Atty. Mark Anastasi, City Attorney (6:44 p.m.); Eneida Martinez (6:50 p.m.); Mr. Peter Harris, WPCA; Atty. Michael J. Andreana, Pullman & Comley

CALL TO ORDER

Council Member Brannelly called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. A quorum was present.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF OCTOBER 14, 2014
(REGULAR MEETING)**

- ** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA MOVED THE MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 14, 2014 MEETING.**
- ** COUNCIL MEMBER TAYLOR-MOYE SECONDED.**
- ** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 14, 2014 MEETING AS SUBMITTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF OCTOBER 23, 2014
(INFORMATION SESSION)**

- ** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA MOVED THE MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 23, 2014 MEETING.**
- ** COUNCIL MEMBER SWAIN SECONDED.**
- ** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 23, 2014 MEETING AS SUBMITTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Council Member Halstead joined the meeting at 6:33 p.m.

GENERAL DISCUSSION RE: REVIEW OF THE MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT.

Ms. Kelly-Lenz came forward and said that most of the items were still on trend. The Police overtime budget is over due to retirements. However a City building (948 Main Street) was sold

and that has compensated for the overtime. Council Member Torres asked for some of the details of the sale. Ms. Kelly-Lenz reviewed the amount and details.

Council Member Halstead asked if the Council had approved the sale of the building. Ms. Kelly-Lenz and Mr. Sherwood said that the Council had approved this sale some time ago. Mr. Sherwood said that he would get the details on this sale. Council Member Halstead said that there used to be procedures for the sale of City property and that there should be an expiration date on the approval. Mr. Sherwood said that some time ago, the BOE moved in the third floor and this allowed the building to go on the market.

BUDGET UPDATE FROM CITY DEPARTMENT: PUBLIC FACILITIES.

Mr. Garcia said that the department was happy to be present to update the Committee.

ROADWAYS - Mr. Garcia said that the roadway department has moved forward with a number of initiatives, such as hot asphalt in place. The striping program is moving forward. There is analysis up on Main Street and parking lanes have been added in key places. The Pot Hole Killer worked well and if it is possible, the department would like to bring it back to stabilize the road. The department is working on the reclaiming machine, which will allow the City to have hot asphalt all year round. There is still some striping that needs to be done, but the work is moving forward.

SIDEWALKS - Mr. Garcia said that the department is working on dealing with trips and falls. When a claim comes on for a trip and fall, they inspect the sites and repair it. The main focus now is for high pedestrian areas, such as schools. A grinding machine is being used to level off many of the areas. There is now a dedicated patch team that also handle some milling repairs.

Atty. Mark Anastasi joined the meeting at 6:44 p.m.

ROADWAYS, CONT'D: Eighteen employees are now qualified for payloaders and backloaders. This will be a major improvement with snow removal. Nine of those operators can go on the roadway today, and the other nine are in the process of improving their skills. It is important to have in house staff because calling others in from elsewhere during a major snow event isn't possible.

More operators have been trained and the department is working with United Rental to have larger vehicles available during storms. The department also bought a new snow truck that has allowed the department to have an extra truck on the roads. The technology has been improved through the use of iPads and GPS locators.

Council Member Halstead asked about the repaving of Howard Avenue. Mr. Garcia said that it has held up really well. This has allowed the City to pave 30% more streets. Once a street is reconstructed, it needs to be maintained. Council Member Halstead said that it looks good.

Council Member E. Martinez joined the meeting at 6:50 p.m.

Mr. Garcia said that the department recently won a safety rodeo. Mr. Cottell said that they had competed in Connecticut Street and Highways competition and come in at third place.

THE MAINTENANCE GARAGE: Mr. Garcia said that they were working on the relocation of the maintenance garage. The designs are almost done, and it will have 9 bays plus a wash bay. The construction will start in the spring. The building has been designed to include the sanitation and other departments that are in trailers on site. Council Member Halstead asked what would happen with the old building. Mr. Garcia said that it was still under discussion.

ORDINANCE - While the potholes are being dealt with, the other problem will be utility cuts. This destroys the roadways faster than potholes. The department will be looking at the current ordinance and comparing it with local towns. Mr. Tiago reviewed the fees that neighboring towns for the street cuts and the permit fees. A permanent patch fee would help with reducing the amount of work that the City staff does in repairing these utilities. Council Member Torres asked for the details, which Mr. Tiago reviewed with the Committee.

Council Member Halstead left the meeting at 7:10 p.m.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that the utilities simply declare the situation an emergency and cut anyway. Having the City watching over the cuts will be a major benefit. She said that the hot patches were working well. Mr. Garcia said that the department was starting to see the benefit of the maintenance. Council Member Brannelly said that she had seen two utility cuts and they were well done.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked if the department had contacted CCM about the information. Mr. Garcia said that they had gathered some information first and will be contacting CCM soon.

Council Member Swain asked who updates the website to let the residents know when things like leaf collection or pot hold patching is scheduled. Mr. Garcia said that it was a weak area. PS said that it would help letting people know what they have accomplished. Mr. Garcia said that it was one of the goals of the department to be more pro-active.

BE CONNECTED - Mr. Garcia said that the staff was utilizing the site and the Citistat team will be meeting with the department in the next few weeks. The department is looking to produce a report so that the residents can see what is being done.

Council Member Feliciano said that she had asked for updates on complaints from her constituents. Mr. Garcia said that this was underway and he would be bringing this up. Council Member E. Martinez said that she calls the secretary and gives her the Cue number. Then the secretary emails her back with the status.

EDUCATION - This year there has been a major effort on Education. He said that they were tasked with reducing utilities. There will always be a challenge in the budget. There are a number of initiatives underway such as retro-fits, solar and a variety of different ideas. Mr. Cottell is working on a five year plan for the schools.

Council Member Feliciano and Council Member E. Martinez left the meeting at 7:17 p.m.

Council Member Brannelly asked about the parking meters. Mr. Garcia said that OPED had a plan but he was not sure which roll out plan had been chosen. One of the staff then gave an overview of the DSSD program. The study has been completed for about a year and a half. There will be new meters added in the downtown area.

Council Member Banta asked about the possibility of federal grants for parking meters. This will be looked into. Council Member Taylor-Moye said that she would like to be more involved in the DSSD. Mr. Garcia said that he would pass this along at the DSSD meeting tomorrow morning.

Council Member Banta asked if some of the funds for paving could be switched to sidewalks. Mr. Sherwood explained that technically the sidewalks are the responsibility of the property owners. Because of this, it is a much more difficult to handle the problems.

PAVING SCHEDULE - Mr. Kennedy said that he had revised the paving schedule. In the last five years, 140 miles of streets were paved and this is also what the City hopes to do, also. He said that he was looking to start the survey done by January 2nd. He would like the Council Members' concerns about specific streets by January 5th so that the contractors can be contacted in February. The targeted goal is to start paving by May. There are 362 miles of roadway in the City. Mr. Kennedy reviewed the details involved in the paving program.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked if the City could get the contractor using a better quality of asphalt because the patches were coming up a year after they are placed. Mr. Kennedy said that this was an asphalt joint issue. He gave the details and said that there was a joint meeting with the contractors about the paving work on a weekly basis during paving season. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that there were catch basins were caving in because of the poor paving. The WPCA uses many different contractors and since they are independent, they don't feel they are responsible.

187-13 Proposed resolution Affirming and Approving financing in the amount of \$90,370,000.00 for the design, rehabilitation, upgrading and construction of various renovations and improvements to the East Side and West Side WasteWater Treatment Plants.

Mr. Pete Harris from the WPCA came forward and said that the WPCA was not independent or private. He introduced Atty. Andreana from Pullman and Comley.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER TAYLOR-MOYE MOVED TO ADD THE DOCUMENT FROM THE WPCA AS EXHIBIT 187-13-A.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER SWAIN SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA MOVED TO AMEND THE DOCUMENT TITLE FROM "EXHIBIT 187-13-A" TO "EXHIBIT 187-13-A-12.08.14".**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER TAYLOR-MOYE SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mr. Harris then reviewed the details included in the document. During Hurricane Sandy, the plant came very close to having some serious electrical issues due to the high tides.

The DEEP requires the WPCA to have local authority to proceed with the project. He indicated where this would be covered in the Resolution approved on October 22, 2014.

He pointed out that the loan repayment schedule had been followed. The WPCA needs to have Council approval to go ahead and modify the resolution in order to submit this to the State. This will add a few sentences about the scope of the project. It is critical to protect the generators.

Atty. Andreana said that the agreement has been in place for a number of decades.

Council Member Banta left the meeting at 7:47 p.m.

He then proceeded to give a brief overview of the financing. The State has a limited pool of funding for these types of projects. The State will have to approve the financing and provide the loan.

Council Member Brannelly asked whether it would change the liability of City since they sign off with 'full faith and credit'. Mr. Sherwood said that the State would only look at City if the WPCA became defunct. Ms. Kelly-Lenz said that it would not be recorded on the City's books. Atty. Andreana said that there was a State Statute that prevents the City from being held liable. Mr. Sherwood said that the resolution was the original document, and the amendment was added at the top of page 4.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA MOVED AGENDA ITEM 187-13
PROPOSED RESOLUTION AFFIRMING AND APPROVING FINANCING IN THE
AMOUNT OF \$90,370,000.00 FOR THE DESIGN, REHABILITATION, UPGRADING
AND CONSTRUCTION OF VARIOUS RENOVATIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS TO
THE EAST SIDE AND WEST SIDE WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANTS.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER TAYLOR-MOYE SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

08-14 Proposed discussion, review and approval as appropriate of various statutorily authorized proposals and applications concerning Real Property Taxation.

Ms. Kelly-Lenz came forward to present the item. She distributed copies of the Application for Land Value Taxation to the Committee members.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ MOVED TO ENTER APPLICATION FOR LAND
VALUE TAXATION PILOT PROGRAM AS EXHIBIT 08-14-12.08.2014**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER SWAIN SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Ms. Kelly-Lenz explained that this was the application for the State to consider allowing Bridgeport to move forward. There will also be an application for an extension for the time schedule. Council Member Torres said that he was strongly in support of this. He said that the most valuable parcels of land was being under utilized and would help the residential community. It was pointed out that the City could determine how large of an area they wished to work with on this.

Council President McCarthy said that he was in agreement with Council Member Torres on this. Council Member Swain said that she was delighted that the City was ready to move forward on this after discussing it last month.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ MOVED TO ADOPT A RESOLUTION TO:**

1) APPROVE THE FILING OF THE CITY OF BRIDGEPORT'S APPLICATION FOR LAND VALUE TAXATION PILOT PROGRAM PURSUANT TO PUBLIC ACT 13-247, SEC. 329 AND C.G.S. SEC. 12-63H AS AMENDED.

2) TO AUTHORIZE, EMPOWER AND DIRECT THE MAYOR AND/OR SUCH OTHER APPROPRIATE CITY OFFICIALS TO COMPLETE AND FILE WITH THE CT STATE OPM THE CITY OF BRIDGEPORT'S APPLICATION FOR LAND VALUE TAXATION PILOT PROGRAM PURSUANT TO PUBLIC ACT 13-247, SEC. 329 AND C.G.S. SEC. 12-63H AS AMENDED.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL MEMBER TAYLOR-MOYE MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

S. L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services