

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT  
ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE  
REGULAR MEETING  
MARCH 15, 2016**

**ATTENDANCE:** Milta Feliciano, Co-Chair; M. Evette Brantley, Co-Chair; Aidee Nieves; Michelle Lyons; Eneida Martinez (6:15 PM)

**MISC:** Bill Coleman, OPED; Scott Burns, Councilman; Angel dePara, Chief Administrative Office; Jose Casco, Councilman; Max Perez, OPED; Isolina DeJesus, Central Grants

**CALL TO ORDER**

Co-Chair Feliciano called the meeting to order at 6:13 PM. A quorum was present.

**APPROVAL OF COMMITTEE MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 1, 2016 (PUBLIC HEARING) & APPROVAL OF COMMITTEE MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 17, 2016.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER NIEVES MOVED TO APPROVE THE COMMITTEE MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 1, 2016 (PUBLIC HEARING) AND THE COMMITTEE MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 17, 2016 (REGULAR MEETING).**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER LYONS SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mr. Coleman asked that item 58-15 be presented first, in order to accommodate Central Grants. The committee members were amenable to this suggestion.

**58-15**

**GRANT SUBMISSION: RE CONNECTICUT OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD FOR A HEALTHY START GRANT PROGRAM (PROJECT #16267)**

Ms. DeJesus came forward to present on the item. She stated that the grant provides funds to deliver outreach services to pregnant women and children up to three years of age, in families that are at or below the national poverty level. She stated that Bridgeport has been receiving this grant since 2005, and that the state allocation is \$280,980. There is no match required, and the breakdown of the services includes a bilingual assessment worker, 2 seasonal 9 ½ hour employees, and \$43,500 to fulfill the contractual obligations to Optimus.

*Council Member Martinez entered the meeting at 6:15 PM.*

Council Member Feliciano asked for specifics regarding that salary breakdowns. Ms. DeJesus stated that the grant covers 4 positions- the bilingual assessment worker, the supervisor and two seasonal employees. The assessment worker makes \$47,802, the supervisor makes \$51,675 and the seasonal employees make \$8,187 each. Council Member Feliciano asked if the grant amount covers any salaries under the Optimus obligations, and Ms. DeJesus answered in the affirmative, stating that part does cover a salary for one person at Optimus in Bridgeport.

Council Member Lyons asked how the salaries are determined, and Council Member Feliciano stated that the salaries were determined years ago by the union, who identified the salaries which stay the same or increase based on union contractual agreements. Council Member Lyons asked about the job hours, and Ms. DeJesus stated that the jobs run from 9 AM to 5 PM for the supervisor and assessment worker. Council Member Feliciano stated that the hours of the seasonal employees would likely fall under the discretion of the Acting Director of Health, Tina Baptista. Ms. Baptista stated that she was unsure whether it was under her purview or that of the Director of Social Services. Ms. DeJesus stated that the purview of hourly assignment regarding the seasonal workers has not yet been determined, and the Social Services are being overseen by CAO.

Council Member Martinez asked for clarification regarding the person who oversees the grant, as the application lists both the Director of Health and the Director of Social Services, and Ms. DeJesus stated that the grant is overseen by the Director of Social Services. Council Member Martinez asked if the program is new, and Ms. DeJesus answered in the negative, stating that the program began in 2005. Council Member Martinez asked if there is a salary match, or if there are statistics regarding the amount. Ms. DeJesus answered in the affirmative, and stated that the only increases that occur are a result of the union agreement.

Through the Chair, Council Member Casco asked if the grant is through the Office of Early Childhood Development, and why the grant is requesting funds for employees to work in 3 different cities. Ms. DeJesus stated that the way the grant used to be utilized was that it would be granted to the City, then distributed through subcontracts with Norwalk and Stamford. Norwalk opted out of the subcontract agreement due to a decrease in funding, and now Bridgeport has taken over making sure the clients are still being seen. Council Member Casco asked if the employees worked in both Stamford and Bridgeport. Ms. DeJesus stated that Optimus covers Stamford, and Bridgeport covers the City and any Norwalk patients in need. Council Member Casco asked if the Bridgeport staff travels, and Ms. DeJesus answered in the negative, stating that the Norwalk patients come to them.

Council Member Feliciano asked how they receive clients from Norwalk, and Ms. DeJesus stated that, while they aren't required to seek them out, they receive them through referral. Council Member Feliciano asked what the seasonal workers will be doing. Ms. DeJesus stated

that their duties are to be determined, given the transition that is currently happening in the department. Ms. DeJesus stated that after the grant is approved, there will be an implementation meeting where new duties will be discussed or the funds may end up being reprogrammed if the seasonal workers are found to be redundant.

Ms. DeJesus stated that funds were cut from the state budget, and that her office worked to get those funds back. She stated that the seasonal workers were previously used to do data entry, as at the time, there was a great deal to be done. Now they are currently meeting with the State and Yale data services to rescope the funds, but that State wants them to do presumptive applications until the program changes.

Council Member Brantley asked if they are able request the funding without a job description. Ms. DeJesus stated that they are able to modify the budget at any time based on the program needs.

Council Member Martinez asked how the salary regarding the seasonals came up when they haven't determined whether or not they will be necessary. Ms. DeJesus provided the committee members with the salary and fringes description and breakdowns. Council Member Feliciano stated that there appears to be roughly \$56,000 in benefits, and that including the salaries the number comes up to around \$115,000.

Council Member Lyons asked when the application needs to be in. Ms. DeJesus stated that the expiration date is June 30, 2016, and that they have been paying the salaries for the supervisor and bilingual assessment worker since July 30, 2015. Council Member Lyons asked where the salary for the seasonal workers is currently coming from. Ms. DeJesus stated that they don't have the money yet, and that there is no executive contract. Ms. DeJesus stated that this is to allow them to continue providing services should the position be deemed unnecessary, clarifying that the amount for their salaries will be allocated towards those ventures. Ms. DeJesus further stated that the City will not let them hire seasonal workers until the contract is cleared.

Council Member Feliciano stated that the employees covered by this grant have been working since 2005, then last year they were told the State funding would be reduced. The City picked the costs up in the General Fund line item to ensure services would continue, while in the interim people fought to have the amount continually funded. To this point, they have been picking up the salaries on the General Fund line. Council Member Feliciano stated that this is a continuation of the grant they have received in the past.

Council Member Brantley asked why they need two seasonal workers if they don't know what they will be used for. Ms. DeJesus stated that they provide reporting on a quarterly level, and that they can submit a revision to the budget, should they choose to use the funds for something else.

Council Member Lyons asked that the committee be provided with further details regarding the allocation of the funds, and if the positions are maintained, the details regarding the functions they serve. Ms. DeJesus answered in the affirmative.

Council Member Martinez expressed her displeasure with the lack of information on the items, noting that this was not the fault of Ms. DeJesus.

Council Member Brantley asked that information be submitted regarding the intended purpose of the funds should they be transferred for another use. Ms. DeJesus stated that she was amenable to this, and that there has been a huge transition for the department. Council Member Brantley asked why new ideas for the funds that may be allocated were not submitted this evening. Ms. DeJesus stated that they cannot make any changes until the contract is signed and that only then can they revise it. Ms. DeJesus stated that the department would likely choose what to do with the money, and that she currently doesn't know what is happening in the Social Services Department. Ms. DeJesus stated that the contract needed to be signed in order to address the incurred expenses from the assessment worker and supervisor to date.

Council Member Lyons stated that, in a sense, the grants are a year behind. Council Member Feliciano stated that this grant is for the City moving forward, and that the City already covered the salaries for 2015-2016. Ms. DeJesus stated that they set up an account for this grant, and pay the salaries out of this. Ms. DeJesus stated that once they accept the grant, it will cover the expenditure, whereas if they don't, they won't get the money back.

Council Member Brantley stated that they are stuck on the 2 part time employees. Ms. DeJesus stated that the budget was put together by people who no longer work in the Department, and that they will be figuring out the rest of the budget. Council Member Feliciano asked Ms. Baptista what she thought the role of the part time employees would be moving forward. Ms. Baptista stated that she had not been aware this item was on the agenda until today, and thus does not have an answer for the committee.

Council Member Feliciano suggested that they pass the item on the condition that they receive information regarding the hires, including a job description and list of duties, within six months. In this way, they can move forward with reimbursement, and the City can decide whether or not to move forward with the seasonal employees or reprogram the funds. Ms. DeJesus stated that they will make the committee aware once a decision is reached.

Council Member Feliciano asked if six months is a reasonable time period. Ms. DeJesus stated that they will know well before then, as there are only 3-4 months left in the fiscal year, and they must submit a revision at least 30 days before the end date in May. Council Member Feliciano requested an update within 6 months.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER FELICIANO MOVED TO APPROVE ITEM 58-15  
GRANT SUBMISSION: RE CONNECTICUT OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD FOR  
A HEALTHY START GRANT PROGRAM (PROJECT #16267) WITH THE  
FOLLOWING CONDITION:**

- 1. WITHIN SIX MONTHS OF CONTRACT RATIFICATION, THE APPLICANT  
WILL PROVIDE AN UPDATE CONCERNING THE MATTER OF THE TWO (2)  
SEASONAL POSITIONS. SHOULD THE POSITIONS BE UPHELD, A JOB  
DESCRIPTION, LIST OF RESPONSIBILITIES AND HOURS SHALL BE  
PROVIDED TO THE COMMITTEE. SHOULD THE POSITIONS BE  
DISSOLVED, INFORMATION REGARDING REPROGRAMMING OF FUNDS,  
INCLUDING USES AND REASONS FOR SAID USES, WILL BE PROVIDED TO  
THE COMMITTEE.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER NIEVES SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**64-15**

**PROPOSED RESOLUTION CONCERNING DISPOSITION OF CITY OWNED  
PROPERTY LOCATED AT 48 TROWEL STREET AND ORDERING A PUBLIC  
HEARING RELATIVE TO THE SAME.**

Mr. Perez came forward to present on the matter and displayed the attached pictures. Mr. Perez stated that the property is a 4-car garage that used to be a clubhouse for the Hell's Angels Motorcycle Club. He stated that the building is 12,000 square feet and the property was appraised for \$65,000. He stated that they intend to sell the building as it is, where it is, and that they have already received Planning & Zoning approvals. Mr. Perez stated that the building is zoned as Light Industrial, and that it can be used exclusively for inside storage. He stated that the buyer must comply with zoning regulations, and that nothing may be stored outside.

Council Member Brantley asked that a stipulation be added that they can't store any firearms, ammunitions or explosives in the building. Mr. Perez stated that he was amenable to this condition. Council Member Brantley asked if the building could be torn down by the person who purchases the parcel, and Mr. Perez answered in the affirmative, stating that it could be used to build a residence.

Council Member Feliciano asked if they had a buyer yet, and Mr. Perez stated that they have someone in mind, but as of yet there is no agreement in place.

Mr. Coleman stated that there may be a preclusion against banning storage of firearms on the property stemming from a state or federal law, but that they can certainly attempt to make it a condition.

Council Member Martinez asked if a sale deadline could be put in place. Mr. Perez stated that this could be arranged.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED TO ACCEPT THE FOLLOWING AMENDMENT TO ITEM 64-15, AS ARTICULATED THUSLY:**

- 1. "NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, THAT PROVIDED THAT THE PROPERTY SHALL NOT BE USED FOR THE STORAGE OF FIREARMS, EXPLOSIVES OR AMMUNITIONS."**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER LYONS SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED TO APPROVE ITEM 64-15 RE: PROPOSED RESOLUTION CONCERNING DISPOSITION OF CITY OWNED PROPERTY LOCATED AT 48 TROWEL STREET AND ORDERING A PUBLIC HEARING RELATIVE TO THE SAME.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER LYONS SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED TO ORDER A PUBLIC HEARING ON ITEM 64-15 RE: PROPOSED RESOLUTION CONCERNING DISPOSITION OF CITY OWNED PROPERTY LOCATED AT 48 TROWEL STREET AND ORDERING A PUBLIC HEARING RELATIVE TO THE SAME.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER LYONS SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

#### **66-15**

#### **PROPOSED RESOLUTION CONCERNING THE DISPOSITION OF FOUR PROPERTIES WITHIN THE SEAVIEW AVENUE INDUSTRIAL PARK AND ORDERING A PUBLIC HEARING RELATIVE TO THE SAME.**

Mr. Coleman came forward and stated that Ed Laroche wanted to attend, but Mr. Coleman accidentally gave him the wrong date.

Mr. Coleman stated that the area being discussed is generally known as the Seaview Avenue Industrial Park. He stated that it is part of a municipal development plan that never came to fruition, and that the lot on the corner is populated by Rotair, a company that makes helicopter parts. He stated that this agreement calls for the 4 parcels being discussed to be transferred to Rotair to provide them with parking or expansion. He stated that Mr. Laroche has the development plan moving again, and wants to sell them as, currently, they don't bring in any tax money. Mr. Coleman stated that the agreement has been in place for many years, but in an abundance of caution, they wanted to come before the committee first. He stated that the money that comes out of the sale doesn't go to the City, but rather the project.

Mr. Perez stated that the parcels were acquired with State money rather than City money, and that they don't have to pay the money back. Mr. Coleman stated that the sale is advantageous, as it prevents Rotair from using the parcels for free, as they do one occasion now. Council Member Feliciano asked for the amount to be repeated. Mr. Coleman stated that for 4/10 of an acre, the price is just shy of \$69,000. He stated that this is a decent price for the 4 lots.

Council Member Burns asked for clarification regarding the properties in question. Mr. Coleman stated that the larger area is broken into 4 different parcels, though visually it appears to be one piece. Council Member Burns asked if Rotair makes helicopter parts exclusively for Sikorsky Airport. Mr. Perez stated that they do make parts for Sikorsky, as well as anyone who wants to purchase parts, as they also sell parts overseas. Mr. Coleman stated that Rotair hasn't expanded in 20 years, and that the parcels will likely be used for parking.

Council Member Casco asked why the committee needs to give permission regarding this item. Mr. Coleman stated, arguably, that they didn't have to at this stage, as when the city passed the municipal development plan, they designated Bedco as an agency to do work on behalf of the City. Mr. Coleman stated that he only wanted to do so in the interest of full disclosure.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ MOVED TO APPROVE ITEM 66-15  
RE: PROPOSED RESOLUTION CONCERNING THE DISPOSITION OF FOUR  
PROPERTIES WITHIN THE SEAVIEW AVENUE INDUSTRIAL PARK AND  
ORDERING A PUBLIC HEARING RELATIVE TO THE SAME.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**57-15**

**(REF. PROPOSED RESOLUTION AMENDING THE CITY'S AUTHORIZATION TO  
DISPOSE OF PROPERTY FOR #155-13) THE CHERRY STREET ADAPTIVE REUSE  
PROJECT.**

Mr. Coleman stated that this parcel is directly next to O&G, in Council Member Burns' district. He stated that the western half of the block is owned by the City through foreclosure, while the eastern half is owned by Gary Flaco. Mr. Coleman stated that one of these properties is a fire damaged building, and that the plan is to transfer the western half of the block to the developer.

Council Member Feliciano asked for a copy of the resolution, and Mr. Coleman distributed the resolution to the committee members.

Mr. Coleman stated that the block is a bad calling card for the City, and displayed a rendering of what the eastern half of the block is expected to look like. Mr. Coleman stated that the 5-story building rising above the railroad tracks will be converted into housing, and the lower buildings

on Howard and Cherry will be converted to teacher housing and a charter school to be run by a company out of Newark called Great Oaks. He stated that Great Oaks created a teacher's village in Newark, and that part of the plan includes dormitories for teachers to live on campus. Mr. Coleman stated that Mr. Flaco got his funding approved through CHAFA and as the buildings are historic, he received those tax credits. Mr. Coleman stated that they are looking to close in April, and that the Council already authorized them to sell the west half of the block to him once they saw progress on the eastern side. He stated that they are asking to be allowed to sell the west side sooner for a very specific reason, as CHAFA wants to see his demonstrated parking, which was already cleared through zoning. He stated that they want to utilize O&G for parking, and that a parking agreement with them has been signed. He stated that they have to provide evidence of parking or they won't be able to close, and that they had previously come to the Council for approval to create slivers of parking around the block.

Council Member Feliciano asked how the new information differed from the prior agreement. Mr. Coleman stated that it doesn't, and that the only difference is that the opportunity needs to be seized now. He stated that the slivers of parking helped to provide evidence of parking, but that in order to close on the financing, they will need the O&G building to be evidence as to more expansive parking. Mr. Coleman stated that they wish to transfer the property now, but that the price of the property is the same as before. He stated that a change that has been made is that now Mr. Flaco will be footing the bill for demolition on the properties, where before it was the City's responsibility. He stated that Mr. Flaco does get a credit against the purchase price.

Council Member Brantley asked how this development affects the streets in the area, including street parking and snow removal. Mr. Coleman stated that the existing travel widths will remain, and based on the review from the City Engineer, they don't anticipate a negative impact. He stated that they also presented the placement of the spaces to the Police Commission, and they approved it in the 3rd week of February. Mr. Coleman stated that, when these slivers of street are abandoned, they become real, taxable property. He stated that the owners must maintain them, plow them, and keep the sidewalks maintained, but that they also retained a public easement so pedestrians can continue to walk on the sidewalks.

Council Member Brantley asked if the streets would be newly renovated, and Mr. Coleman stated that this isn't in the project budget, but that the sidewalks on Railroad have recently been repaired, and the street itself has been recently paved. Council Member Brantley clarified that Mr. Flaco is responsible for the snow plowing, and the City is responsible for the streets.

Council Member Lyons stated asked if the application had changed, as there appeared to be some differences. Mr. Coleman stated that they have done things since that approval to help get the project towards closing, but that Mr. Flaco needs more, and thus they are transferring the property. He stated that they approved the original transfer, but there was a stipulation that they would not do so until they see construction. They now want to transfer the property prior to construction, as not doing so will impact the closing. Mr. Coleman stated that these parcels are

currently not providing taxes to the City, and by selling them, each would bring in between \$80,000 and \$100,000 worth of taxes once they transfer the title. He stated that the liability of the buildings, one of which has caught fire twice, will transfer to the developer. He further stated that, as the project takes up the entirety of the block, there is some value in Mr. Flaco being able to attack the project all at once.

Council Member Brantley asked if they anticipate any blockages or discontinuation of access on the roads. Mr. Coleman stated that there will be no road blocks, and that there will be parallel parking alongside the roads.

Council Member Feliciano asked how the prospects of this development will affect the City in the future. Mr. Coleman stated that this project will replace the current defunct area with a better, more vibrant development. He stated that the housing will complement the institutional uses, and that this will soften the use of the area. Council Member Brantley asked if rock cutting is still going on at the property, and Mr. Coleman stated that this section of the property has ceased rock cutting, and that there is talk of them moving out of Seaview to a parcel on the lower west end.

Council Member Brantley asked if the property will be remediated, and Mr. Coleman stated that it is likely. Council Member Brantley asked who would be doing the remediation, and Mr. Coleman stated that Mr. Flaco would be doing so, and that he received a million dollars to do the cleaning on Brownfield. Council Member Brantley suggested that Mr. Flaco explore new federal funds as well.

Council Member Feliciano asked if Planning & Zoning has approved the plan for the City owned half of the block. Mr. Coleman stated that the commission approved the plan for the whole block, including structured parking, though it isn't ready to be constructed just yet.

Council Member Burns asked how quickly they can expect the view from the highway to change. Mr. Coleman stated that the view will go from a derelict building with trees to a demolition site which will become parking.

Council Member Casco asked if a property mentioned earlier without a roof could also be a potential purchase by Mr. Flaco, and Mr. Coleman stated that the City still owns that parcel and would like to see something creative happen there eventually.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ MOVED TO ACCEPT THE FOLLOWING AMENDMENT TO ITEM 57-15, AS ARTICULATED THUSLY:**

- 1. AT THE BOTTOM OF THE FIRST PAGE: "PROVIDED THAT THE DEMOLITION AND SURFACE PARKING ARE COMPLETED WITHIN 15 MONTHS OF COUNCIL APPROVAL, WITH REASONABLE EXTENSION ALLOWED FOR ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES"**

Council Member Feliciano asked if 15 months is a feasible time period for the demolition and parking completion. Mr. Coleman stated that it would be, though they couldn't fully account for issues that may arise with weather or remediation.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER LYONS SECONDED THE MOTION.  
\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED TO APPROVE ITEM 57-15  
(REF. PROPOSED RESOLUTION AMENDING THE CITY'S AUTHORIZATION TO  
DISPOSE OF PROPERTY FOR #155-13) THE CHERRY STREET ADAPTIVE REUSE  
PROJECT WITH THE AFOREMENTIONED AMENDMENTS.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ SECONDED THE MOTION.  
\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mr. Coleman stated that there was no need for a public hearing on this item and the committee members did not dispute this.

**66-15**  
**PROPOSED RESOLUTION CONCERNING THE DISPOSITION OF FOUR**  
**PROPERTIES WITHIN THE SEAVIEW AVENUE INDUSTRIAL PARK AND**  
**ORDERING A PUBLIC HEARING RELATIVE TO THE SAME**  
**(CONT.)**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ MOVED TO ORDER A PUBLIC HEARING  
ON ITEM 66-15 RE: PROPOSED RESOLUTION CONCERNING THE DISPOSITION  
OF FOUR PROPERTIES WITHIN THE SEAVIEW AVENUE INDUSTRIAL PARK  
AND ORDERING A PUBLIC HEARING RELATIVE TO THE SAME.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY SECONDED THE MOTION.  
\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**ADJOURNMENT**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED TO ADJOURN.meb  
\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ SECONDED THE MOTION.  
\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting concluded at 7:35 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Ramos  
Telesco Secretarial Services

City of Bridgeport  
ECD&E Committee  
Regular Meeting  
March 15, 2016