

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES
REGULAR MEETING
OCTOBER 8, 2014**

ATTENDANCE: Denese Taylor-Moye, Co-Chair; Rev. Mary A. McBride-Lee, Milta Feliciano, Rick Torres

CALL TO ORDER

Council Member McBride-Lee called the meeting to order at 6:43 p.m. A quorum was present.

Approval of Committee Minutes of September 10, 2014

**** COUNCIL MEMBER TORRES MOVED THE MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 10, 2014.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER FELICIANO SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**General discussion with committee members regarding a brief overview of information
discussion in previous meetings.**

Rev. Lee said that this meeting was informal discussion for the Committee Members to talk about possible issues.

Council Member Taylor-Moye said that she felt that the social issues would be important and mentioned that Council Member Feliciano had expressed concerns about the Bridgeport Housing Authority problems. She said that she did not think that they could discuss the composition of School Building Committee tonight because Council Member Halstead was not able to attend.

Council Member Torres said that he shared Council Member Halstead's concern about the composition of School Building Committee. There are two schools in the Black Rock district that are being renovated, Longfellow and Black Rock, and Council Member Torres said that he felt that one of the two Council Members should have been on the Building Committee. He pointed out that Council Member Taylor-Moye had work going on in her district also and said that Bassick would soon have work being done.

Council Member Feliciano asked if the School Building Committee meetings were open to the public. Council Member Torres said that they were, but a District Representative would not have a vote. He went on to say that the State law was very general, but implied that each school project would have separate committees.

Council Member Taylor-Moye said that there were Council Members on the School Building Committee and that she had been on that Committee at one point. There is a great deal of work involved and a significant amount of reading and financial details also.

Council Member Torres said that it was important to expand responsibility because when responsibility was concentrated, it can lead to temptation. He said that although he was very skilled with numbers, he was not put on any committee that had financial issues, but the people who were on the committees in the past were re-appointed. He said that it is important to have

another set of eyes. He said that maintaining a constant group of people was not right.

Rev. Lee said that when the Council Members are on Committees, they should be serving the Committees. She said that there were a number of projects that were coming into Bridgeport but she didn't see local people getting jobs. The workers did not live in Bridgeport. Rev. Lee said that she would like to tour the new housing to see who is living there. If there is something wrong in the 135th, she wants to know about it. She wants her constituents to see her working for them. Sometimes people don't serve the best interest of the people.

Council Member Taylor-Moye said that while she was not 100% in agreement with Council Member Halstead or Council Member Torres, the issue should be looked at further. If something is going on in her district, she will be going there to check it out. Council Member Taylor-Moye said that she had attended several school meetings about the swing school but one of the Board members did not like this. There was a great deal of negativity being expressed about the project and Council Member Taylor-Moye had to get the State Representatives to help insure that the students could attend the swing school.

Council Member Taylor-Moye suggested that if the new Council Member felt there were committees that they could help out with they should speak with Council President McCarthy about it. Council Member Torres said that there were 20 Council Members and each one had different strengths and skills to bring to the committees. He said that School Building Committees don't necessarily mean that it has to be a totally new committee. Projects in Black Rock could simply have one of the representatives on it. He added that the Council Members' job was not to tell someone how to do the construction but oversight. And each Council Member brings different contributions to the group.

Council Member Taylor-Moye said that if there was a project going on in a district, the Council Member should not have to wait to be appointed to a committee. The Council Members should just go to the meetings to represent their constituents. No one stopped her from going forward to present the viewpoint of the parents. In reality, when it has to do with a school, it should be what the parents want. She said that she was not against any Committee wanting to introduce a resolution.

Council Member Taylor-Moye said that she had attended a number of meetings about five year plans and that when the plan comes back, it doesn't necessarily reflect what someone said or originally wanted.

Council Member Feliciano said that when Council Member Halstead started bringing issues up, she became confused as to what the Council Members want. Council Member Torres said the various Districts are as large as the surrounding towns and those towns, like Wilton, have local control of the school construction. Redding does not tell Wilton how to construct the school. There is nothing wrong with wanting to have individual school committees. He said he had no problem with have a core membership of people who have particular expertise, such as how the school should be constructed. However, he would like to see the District representatives involved. He said he did not think that there should be a constant committee composition. There is no reason for Council Member Holloway to oversee projects in Black Rock, but this could be negotiable.

Council Member Feliciano said that she understood what the structure was now, but wanted to clarify what the goal was. Council Member Torres said that he wanted to be able to have the best expertise on each project. The Council Members are there for oversight.

Rev. Lee said that she needed to clarify what the role of the Committee would be and what the Committee can do. She said she felt that the Committee should have some input into the school construction project. There was a meeting with O&G and various school officials but they did not invite Mr. Bagley, who is the president of the School Construction Committee. She said that while her new school building was built, it was beautiful, but when it rains, her room leaks.

Council Member Taylor-Moye said that in order to make changes, the Committee members needs to discuss this.

Rev. Lee asked whether the Council Members on the Building Committee should be reporting to the Education & Social Services Committee. Council Member Taylor-Moye said that the Building Committee has minutes and if the Education Committee wanted to see the minutes, they can. She wondered if people had ever read the minutes.

Council Member Feliciano said that the three Council Members had never come to the Committee to report on the various issues. She said that her concern was that it would be best to wait to hear from Council Member Halstead and present his ideas to the Committee.

Council Member Torres said that putting anyone at risk of temptation in that magnitude was unfair and unhealthy. Council Member Feliciano suggested Council Members Torres and Halstead work on some of the ideas on how to change things. Council Member Torres said that at Building Committee had hired a contractor to work on Madison School. After the work was done, the building leaked and they had to pull up the concrete in the common room because it never dried properly. Then the School Building Committee hired the same contractor to repair the job that he did not do correctly the first time.

Council Member Taylor-Moye said that when a contractor does shoddy work on a school, the contractor would probably do shoddy work on other buildings. The Committee should have a clause that says if a contractor doesn't do a good job, he will not be allowed to work on City projects for a number of years. Council Member Torres agreed and suggested that the contractor should guarantee the work for a number of years.

Council Member Feliciano asked if the Council Members could be requested to come and give a report to the Committee. She added that it would also be very good to have Council Member Halstead and Torres present possible solutions.

Council Member Torres pointed out that when the Council Members attend the various meetings, they are just private citizens and not acting in their capacity as a Council Members. When a Council Member is on the Committee, then they can actually have an impact. Council Member Feliciano said that Council Member Torres wanted to have the Committee composition changed with each project. Council Member Taylor-Moye said she was not in favor of this. Council Member Torres said that just the Council Members would change. Council Member Feliciano said that the Council President appoints the Council Members for the two year terms. Rev. Lee suggested possibly adding the two appropriate Council Members to the various projects. Council

Member Feliciano said that she was very open to Rev. Lee's suggestion.

Council Member Torres said that he would like to craft a resolution to have it referred to Committee for discussion.

Rev. Lee said that she was a firm believer that a person has a right to their own opinion and the different opinions make people grow. The discussion is good. She said that it bothers her when people act negatively when others express a differing opinion. She said the next meeting would be focused on a resolution.

Rev. Lee said that while she knew that the public was not supposed to speak during the meetings, but wanted clarification whether or not Atty. Anastasi was allowed to speak during the meeting. Council Member Taylor-Moye said that there had been times in Committee when he had pointed out something, but she had asked him to wait while she answered the question. Council Member Torres said that the Chair had the right to decide who would speak.

ADJOURNMENT

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

**** COUNCIL MEMBER TORRES SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services