

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
CITY COUNCIL
PUBLIC SPEAKING SESSION
MONDAY, MAY 4, 2015
6:30 PM**

CALL TO ORDER

Council President McCarthy called the Public Speaking Session to order at 6:40 p.m.

ROLL CALL

City Clerk Hudson called the roll.

The following members were present:

130th District: Susan Brannelly, Enrique Torres
131st District: Jack O. Banta, Denese Taylor-Moye
132nd District: Robert Halstead, Patricia Swain
133rd District: Thomas McCarthy
134th District: AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia, Michelle Lyons
135th District: Richard Salter
136th District: Josè Casco, Alfredo Castillo
137th District: Milta Feliciano, Lydia Martinez
138th District: Michael Marella, Melanie Jackson
139th District: Eneida Martinez, James Holloway

A quorum was present.

THE FOLLOWING NAMED PERSON HAS REQUESTED PERMISSION TO ADDRESS THE CITY COUNCIL ON MONDAY, MAY 4, 2015 AT 6:30 P.M., IN THE CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL, 45 LYON TERRACE, BRIDGEPORT, CT.

NAME

SUBJECT

Jacquelyn Cauthen, RN
397 Charles Street
Bridgeport, CT 06606

Adolescent Life Skills.

Ms. Cauthen came forward and spoke about comprehension health education program she presents that includes life skills and safety. She said that she had been a RN for over 40 years and would like to present this Life Skills program to the Bridgeport Schools. Ms. Cauthen said that she had moved to Bridgeport in 2008 and listed some of the high points of her career since then. Ms. Cauthen said that she is committed to Bridgeport youth, particularly the girls in maintaining personal health. This includes a handbook and a journal. She displayed the book and the packets that the students receive for the Council Members to see. Each student has an adult mentor. Ms. Cauthen said that she was looking for both a location and funding for the program.

John Marshall Lee
30 Beacon Street
Bridgeport, CT 06605

City Finances – Public Information.

Mr. John Marshall Lee came forward to address the Council Members.

Council President McCarthy, elected Council members, taxpayers, voters and friends of a better vision for our City of Bridgeport.....This is the last chance I will have to speak to you as a voting body before you act on the 2015-16 Operating and Capital Budgets.

Recently I have focused on materials provided to you before a decision and whether it is trustworthy. In the case of approval for \$44 Million of Capital spending, a two page outline of over 30 projects is striking for the information it fails to provide for each project. Perhaps one or more items should be in the Operating Budget where you get some information monthly, rather than the Capital budget where there is no regular reporting mechanism at this time. You need to monitor and verify the money and budgets you vote upon better for real accountability.

In recent appearances I have called into question the number of mistakes and errors that routinely show up in City fiscal documents. I will guess that no one proofreads them or that folks in power do not care what they send out, as they do not expect you to read and reflect on the numbers. Errors are a part of the problem but so is the failure by the City to use its MUNIS fiscal reporting to its full extent by including grants revenue with footnotes, totals of those employed with taxpayer dollars, and meaningful service indicators of performance for departments and programs. Can you trust City reports?

I nominate the Police and Fire Department budgets as presented monthly and in proposed budgets for the Annual Obfuscation Award. Thank you to the Councilman who asked for a budget presentation restricted to the six Office of Policy Management categories. It helps you focus on variances from one month or one year to the next. That executive type summary should become your standard going forward. When you review and need more info you can always request it. Start with the simple display.

However, representing the largest serious problems I find in your budget, are the continued half truths of padding, ghost employees, and half stories. With the experience of Baltimore so recent in our minds, we know that schools, police and youth programs of all kinds are being held up to critical light by the media. For tonight let us postpone schools and police and focus on formal funded youth afterschool and summer program provider, Lighthouse. Pages 315 to 318 of the Proposed Budget provide a most incomplete presentation of this program.

While targeting 3500 youth to be served by after-school and summer programs among others, they report serving no more than 2800 year round. (Crudely estimated $\$1,750,000 / 2800 = \625 per youth expense.) Where are the details listed below included?

When revenue data is requested, NOT APPLICABLE is stated, yet in a recent report to the BOE, Lighthouse claims \$850,000 of registration and fee revenue (and there is no specific info on how many scholarships or fee mitigation cases may exist or such process.)

City of Bridgeport
City Council
Regular Meeting
May 4, 2015

In addition the total 2015 budget revenue is \$4,551,362 including Federal grants of \$860,000 and State Department of Education grants of \$570,504 and two other grants from the State of CT totaling \$501,000. ($\$4,551,362 / 2800 = \1625.49 per youth!)

The program is budgeting \$3,651,232 for next year including grants that is twice what they show the City Council. And the BOE charges no rent for school space used by the programs, an in-kind act that is most helpful to Lighthouse expenses and the City budget. Does it serve to offset any of the City listed in-kind contributions to the BOE?

Did the Council look at this program this year? Were any questions asked to explore how the program spends twice what the local taxpayer provides with no further increase than 2800 youth when there are almost 25,000 Bridgeport youth from the K-12 population in public, charter, parochial and other schools? Are you aware that there is a local non-profit serving over 4,200 youth in Westport, Fairfield, and Bridgeport providing similar services and after school and summer programs funded on a budget of \$2.5 Million? Why not benchmark both programs for efficiency?

Who is auditing or monitoring Lighthouse? Has their very necessary light for the youth of our community grown dim and prevented more outreach and programs because fees are too high, because administrative compensation appears excessive, or because the program is no longer a dynamic force? City Council members will you consider a thorough study, followed by a public presentation and hearing, with Council participation? (Whether one of the Budget co-chairs should participate or vote is his ethical decision.) How many parents wish for such a program for their youth yet are left on the sidewalk by the current fee structure or management decisions? Time will tell.

Steve Domyan
MetroCrops, LLC
73 River Street
Bridgeport, CT 06605

New England's First Urban High Density
Indoor Farm.

Mr. Domyan came forward with Ms. Nancy Domyan to speak about his MetroCrops business. He then passed around a package of locally grown kale, which is an example of the produce that his company produces. He said that the goal is producing urban high density indoor farming produce in old factory buildings. He said that in dealing with the Bridgeport officials about the project he was very impressed with the professionalism, the courtesy and cooperation throughout the process.

Ms. Domyan then spoke about the licensing process from the Department of Agriculture and the various phases involved in establishing an urban farm in Bridgeport. She said that she was looking forward to establishing this business in Bridgeport.

Bishop John Thompson
Calvary Temple Christian Center
319 Barnum Avenue
Bridgeport, CT 06608

How the C-PACE Program and going green
helped save church.

Bishop Thompson spoke about how C-Pace, a Commercial Property program that reduced the energy costs and upgrades helped his church. There were two oil burners in the building, which C-Pace replaced with gas burners. The return on the investment was immediate, allowing the church to pay back the cost and to redirect the savings into programs for the church.

Iame' Manucci
1067 Park Avenue
Bridgeport, CT 0660

The Domestic Worker's Bill of Rights – Senate
Bill 446.

Ms. Manucci came forward to speak about the Domestic Worker's Senate Bill 446. She explained that a domestic worker is a person who works within their employer's household. Domestic workers perform a variety of household services for an individual or a family, from providing care for children and elderly dependents to cleaning and household maintenance, known as housekeeping.

While there are over 52 million care workers in the world, 2.5 million are located in the United States and there are over 42,000 in the State of Connecticut. This profession makes all the other work possible. Domestic workers have historically been viewed as outside the traditional work force, largely because most are women, often immigrants, doing the work most often done by housewives and servants at home. Due to the nature of domestic work, they are isolated from the rest of the workforce and subjected to round-the-clock physically demanding labor, often with little or no clear separation between work and personal time.

This is an unregulated industry that was intentionally excluded from coverage by federal labor laws, including the Fair Labor Standards Act, National Labor Relations Act, Family Medical Leave Act and the Occupational Safety and Health Act. Yet, it is still a "real job" and often a hard one demanding professionalism and dedication for care workers who do it. They are among the most vulnerable to abuse and mistreatment of all workers, since their workplace typically are not subject to any laws regulating job safety, wage and hour standards or protection against discrimination, including sexual harassment.

The proposed bill, a Domestic Workers' Bill of Rights would establish labor standards that protect the workers basic workplace rights, including health and safety, meals and rest breaks, unemployment benefits, sick time for themselves and caring for family members and freedom from discrimination and harassment.

The employers would receive the highest quality of care for their families and homes by affording the domestic workers dignity and respect. It would also reduce turn over by providing greater stability for the workers and improve the health and safety of the employers.

Council President McCarthy then said that there were no additional speakers signed up to address the Council at this time.

ADJOURNMENT

Council President McCarthy adjourned the meeting at 7:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

S. L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services

CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
MONDAY, MAY 4, 2015

7:00 PM

City Council Chambers, City Hall - 45 Lyon Terrace

Bridgeport, Connecticut

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Finch called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m.

PRAYER

Mayor Finch then requested Bishop Thompson of the Calvary Temple Christian Center to lead those present in prayer.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Finch then requested Council Member Taylor-Moye to lead those present in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Finch thanked Bishop Thompson for his prayer and welcomed both Council Member Taylor-Moye back to the City Council and Ed Lavernoich to working with the City again.

Mayor Finch then led the Council Members and those present in singing Happy Birthday to Council Member Lydia Martinez.

ROLL CALL

City Clerk Hudson called the roll.

The following members were present:

130th District: Susan Brannelly, Enrique Torres
131st District: Jack O. Banta, Denese Taylor-Moye
132nd District: Robert Halstead, Patricia Swain
133rd District: Thomas McCarthy
134th District: AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia, Michelle Lyons
135th District: Richard Salter
136th District: Josè Casco, Alfredo Castillo
137th District: Milta Feliciano, Lydia Martinez
138th District: Michael Marella, Melanie Jackson
139th District: Eneida Martinez, James Holloway

A quorum was present.

MINUTES FOR APPROVAL:

Approval of City Council Minutes: March 16, 2015.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARELLA MOVED THE MINUTES OF MARCH 16, 2015.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF MARCH 16, 2015 AS SUBMITTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

COMMUNICATIONS TO BE REFERRED TO COMMITTEES:

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARELLA MOVED TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING AGENDA ITEMS TO BE REFERRED TO COMMITTEES:**

76-14 COMMUNICATION FROM OPED RE: 2015 NEIGHBORHOOD ASSISTANCE ACT PROGRAM, REFERRED TO ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE.

77-14 COMMUNICATION FROM CITY ATTORNEY RE: TWENTY DAY NOTICE TO SETTLE PENDING LITIGATION PURSUANT TO MUNICIPAL CODE SECTION 2.10.130 WITH DEBORAH WEST, ACCEPTED AND MADE PART OF THE RECORD.

78-14 COMMUNICATION FROM CITY ATTORNEY RE: TWENTY DAY NOTICE TO SETTLE PENDING LITIGATION PURSUANT TO MUNICIPAL CODE SECTION 2.10.130 WITH KBE BUILDING CORPORATION, ACCEPTED AND MADE PART OF THE RECORD.

79-14 COMMUNICATION FROM MAYOR RE: REAPPOINTMENT OF JAMES W. GILES (D) TO THE PARKS COMMISSION, REFERRED TO MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS COMMITTEE.

80-14 COMMUNICATION FROM MAYOR RE: REAPPOINTMENT OF REGINALD F. WALKER (D) TO THE PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION, REFERRED TO MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS COMMITTEE.

81-14 COMMUNICATION FROM MAYOR RE: APPOINTMENT OF LETICIA COLON (D) TO THE ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS AS AN ALTERNATE, REFERRED TO MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS COMMITTEE.

82-14 COMMUNICATION FROM LIGHTHOUSE PROGRAM RE: GRANT SUBMISSION: NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY, INC. FOR A "WILDLIFE GUARDS 2015" TO BE USED BY THE LIGHTHOUSE PROGRAM, REFERRED TO ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE.

83-14 COMMUNICATION FROM PUBLIC FACILITIES RE: PROPOSED ENERGY SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH BRIDGEPORT MICROGRID, LLC FOR THE CITY HALL MICROGRID PROJECT, REFERRED TO CONTRACTS COMMITTEE.

87-14 COMMUNICATION FROM CENTRAL GRANTS RE: GRANT SUBMISSION: STATE OF CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION URBAN GREEN & COMMUNITY GARDEN INITIATIVE GRANT (PROJECT #15352), REFERRED TO ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE.

88-14 COMMUNICATION FROM PUBLIC FACILITIES RE: APPLICATION FOR WAIVER TO EXTEND DRIVEWAY WIDTH ENTRANCE LOCATED AT GLOBE INDUSTRIES ON 197 ASH STREET, REFERRED TO PUBLIC SAFETY AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE.

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT MCCARTHY SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

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

Council President McCarthy pointed out that the listing on the agenda was incorrect and Resolutions were actually being referred to the Ordinance Committee rather than to Boards and Commissions.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER HOLLOWAY MOVED TO REFER THE FOLLOWING ITEMS TO THE ORDINANCE COMMITTEE:**

84-14 RESOLUTION PRESENTED BY COUNCIL MEMBER TORRES RE: REQUEST THAT HOME FORECLOSURE ACTION MUST ONLY BE EMPLOYED AFTER CONSULTATION AND APPROVAL OF SAID ACTION BY COMMON COUNCIL, FIRST THROUGH APPROPRIATE COMMITTEE AND THEN AS A WHOLE COUNCIL, REFERRED TO ORDINANCE COMMITTEE.

85-14 RESOLUTION PRESENTED BY COUNCIL MEMBER TORRES RE: REQUEST THAT THE TAKING OF VEHICLES AND THE ACTION OF "BOOTING" MUST ONLY BE EMPLOYED AFTER MULTIPLE OFFENSES AND THAT A CERTIFIED LETTER BE SUBMITTED TO THE OWNERS OF VEHICLE AND THAT NOTICE IS PROVIDED TO THE APPROPRIATE CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE FOR THEIR APPROVAL OF SAID ACTION, REFERRED TO ORDINANCE COMMITTEE.

86-14 RESOLUTION PRESENTED BY COUNCIL MEMBER TORRES RE: REQUEST THAT LEANING OR THE TAKING OF HOMES BY FORECLOSURE ACTION BY THE WPCA OR THE CITY OF BRIDGEPORT

MUST ONLY BE EMPLOYED AFTER CONSULTATION AND APPROVAL OF SAID ACTION BY THE COMMON COUNCIL, FIRST THROUGH APPROPRIATE COMMITTEE AND THEN AS A WHOLE COUNCIL, REFERRED TO ORDINANCE COMMITTEE.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER SWAIN SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

MATTERS TO BE ACTED UPON (CONSENT CALENDAR):

***33-14 Economic and Community Development and Environment Committee Report re: Resolution Authorizing the Disposition of certain City-Owned Properties by Auction, by Sale to Abutter or by Sale to Community Based Housing Development Corporations.**

***34-14 Economic and Community Development and Environment Committee Report re: Resolution Authorizing the Disposition of 157 William Street.**

***49-14(PHO) Economic and Community Development and Environment Committee Report re: Public Hearing Ordered for May 18, 2015: Acquisition and Disposition of Redevelopment Property in accordance with the Lower East End Municipal Development Plan.**

***69-14 Economic and Community Development and Environment Committee Report re: Grant Submission: State of Connecticut Department of Transportation for Dial-A-Ride Grant Program for the Elderly & Disabled (#16408).**

***70-14 Economic and Community Development and Environment Committee Report re: Grant Submission: State of Connecticut Department of Social Services for Healthy Start Grant Program (#15267).**

***36-14 Miscellaneous Matters Committee Report re: Reappointment of James Brideau (R) to the Parks Commission.**

***57-14 Miscellaneous Matters Committee Report re: Appointment of Vincent DiPalma (D) to the Water Pollution Control Authority Commission.**

***64-14 Miscellaneous Matters Committee Report re: Settlement of Pending Litigation with Elisa Colon.**

***65-14 Miscellaneous Matters Committee Report re: Settlement of Pending Litigation with Carmelo Taveras-Javier.**

***67-14 Miscellaneous Matters Committee Report re: Workers Compensation Stipulation with Nicholas Cousins.**

***75-14 Miscellaneous Matters Committee Report re: Appointment of Ana Nilsa Diaz (D) to the Food Policy Council.**

***55-14 Budget and Appropriations Committee Report re: Five-Year Capital Plan (CP) for Fiscal Years 2016-2020 (as amended).**

Mayor Finch then asked if there was any Council Member who would like to remove an item from the Consent Calendar. Council Member Lyons requested that Agenda Item 33-14 be removed from the Consent Agenda. City Clerk Hudson then read the revised Consent Agenda into the record.

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT MCCARTHY MOVED THE FOLLOWING ITEMS AS THE CONSENT AGENDA:**

***34-14 ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE REPORT RE: RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE DISPOSITION OF 157 WILLIAM STREET.**

***49-14(PHO) ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE REPORT RE: PUBLIC HEARING ORDERED FOR MAY 18, 2015: ACQUISITION AND DISPOSITION OF REDEVELOPMENT PROPERTY IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE LOWER EAST END MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN.**

***69-14 ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE REPORT RE: GRANT SUBMISSION: STATE OF CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FOR DIAL-A-RIDE GRANT PROGRAM FOR THE ELDERLY & DISABLED (#16408).**

***70-14 ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE REPORT RE: GRANT SUBMISSION: STATE OF CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES FOR HEALTHY START GRANT PROGRAM (#15267).**

***36-14 MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS COMMITTEE REPORT RE: REAPPOINTMENT OF JAMES BRIDEAU (R) TO THE PARKS COMMISSION.**

***57-14 MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS COMMITTEE REPORT RE: APPOINTMENT OF VINCENT DIPALMA (D) TO THE WATER POLLUTION CONTROL AUTHORITY COMMISSION.**

***64-14 MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS COMMITTEE REPORT RE: SETTLEMENT OF PENDING LITIGATION WITH ELISA COLON.**

***65-14 MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS COMMITTEE REPORT RE: SETTLEMENT OF PENDING LITIGATION WITH CARMELO TAVERAS-JAVIER.**

***67-14 MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS COMMITTEE REPORT RE: WORKERS COMPENSATION STIPULATION WITH NICHOLAS COUSINS.**

***75-14 MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS COMMITTEE REPORT RE: APPOINTMENT OF ANA NILSA DIAZ (D) TO THE FOOD POLICY COUNCIL.**

***55-14 BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT RE: FIVE-YEAR CAPITAL PLAN (CP) FOR FISCAL YEARS 2016-2020 (AS AMENDED).**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARELLA SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED WITH 17 IN FAVOR (BRANNELLY, BANTA, TAYLOR MOYE, HALSTEAD, SWAIN, MCCARTHY, LYONS, VIZZO-PANICCIA, SALTER, CASCO, CASTILLO, L. MARTINEZ, FELICIANO, MARELLA, JACKSON, E. MARTINEZ, AND HOLLOWAY) AND ONE OPPOSED (TORRES).**

Council Member Torres said that he would have pulled agenda item 55-14 from the Consent Calendar, but missed the opportunity.

***33-14 Economic and Community Development and Environment Committee Report re: Resolution Authorizing the Disposition of certain City-Owned Properties by Auction, by Sale to Abutter or by Sale to Community Based Housing Development Corporations.**

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT MCCARTHY MOVED AGENDA ITEM 33-14.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER LYONS SECONDED.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER LYONS MOVED TO AMEND AGENDA ITEM 33-14 AS FOLLOWS:**

I HEREBY MOVE TO AMEND AGENDA ITEM 33-14 REGARDING THAT THE PROPERTY AT 104 JOURMIRE ROAD BE AUCTIONED OR SOLE ON THE CONDITION THAT:

(1) IT IS TO BE USED EXCLUSIVELY AS OWNER OCCUPIED HOUSING FOR A TERM OF NOT LESS THAN TWENTY (20) YEARS; AND

(2) THAT ANY DEED TRANSFERRING TITLE OWNERSHIP FROM THE CITY TO ANY PURCHASER BY AUCTION OR SALE WILL CONTAIN A REVERTER PROVISION TO THE EFFECT THAT IN THE EVENT OF AND AT SUCH TIME AS THE PREMISES KNOWN AS 104 JOURMIRE ROAD BECOMES OCCUPIED BY OTHER THAN AN OWNER OR OWNERS IN RESIDENCE, THEN TITLE WILL IMMEDIATELY REVERT TO THE CITY OF BRIDGEPORT WITHOUT COMPENSATION.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARELLA SECONDED.**

Council Member Lyons said that she did some investigative work and some of the parties that were interested in the parcel on Journire Road as an investment. Many of these parcels in this area are then turned into student housing, which is why the amendment includes the statement that this should be an owner occupied parcel. She spoke about the parties that occur in the area and said that the other residents of Journire Road had requested this amendment.

Council Member Holloway said that there had been a pattern of the OPED giving the property away in the East End. One parcel he knew about was given to a church that abutted the land and the parcel was taken off the tax rolls.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER TORRES MOVED TO TABLE AGENDA ITEM 33-14 ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE REPORT RE: RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE DISPOSITION OF CERTAIN CITY-OWNED PROPERTIES BY AUCTION, BY SALE TO ABUTTER OR BY SALE TO COMMUNITY BASED HOUSING DEVELOPMENT CORPORATIONS AND SEND IT BACK TO COMMITTEE.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER HOLLOWAY SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

MATTERS TO BE ACTED UPON:

23-14 Economic and Community Development and Environment Committee Report re: Resolution Authorizing a Tax Incentive Agreement for Crescent Crossings II Project, An 84 Unit Mixed-Income, Affordable Housing Development Located at 252 Hallett Street.

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT MCCARTHY MOVED AGENDA ITEM 23-14.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARELLA SECONDED.**

Council Member Torres said that this was an example of the tax abatements that would fall in line with Council Member Holloway's concerns. Council Member Torres said that the City was the highest taxed city in the nation. Mayor Finch said that Bridgeport was not the highest taxed city.

Council Member Torres said that the developers were among the highest income bracket but the people of Bridgeport were being asked to help this developer by giving more. He said that the City should not pass along a tax break to the property owners.

Council Member Holloway said that this type of proposal had the Federal Government behind it. He said that it would be important to remember this.

Council Member Taylor-Moye said that people were forgetting the fact that there were terms being included and the City has the right to bring the developers back to the table. She added that if Bridgeport wants to have affordable housing, this is how it happens. This is how a safe and secure environment is provided for those who need affordable housing. She asked the Council Members what they were looking for?

Council Member Halstead said that a 2/3rd reduction of taxes for the land and building is hard when people are struggling to pay their taxes. He went on to express his concerns about this item.

Council Member Torres then said that the City had not tested the waters in Bridgeport. The developers come in and shake the City down. The fact that the land cost them nothing and on top of that, the taxpayers are being asked to pay more to underwrite the project. He suggested that this project could go to Habitat and have them handle the project. He said that the guidelines that are used to calculate the affordable housing included Greenwich. The rents from this project will be going to the Greenwich owners.

Mayor Finch said that while Habitat was an interesting idea, but they don't build on large scale.

Council Member Taylor-Moye agreed with the Mayor and said that it would take Habitat a long time to handle a project like this. She said that the Council was here to insure that things work well for the residents.

Council Member Halstead said that Habitat had done two other houses and went on to speak about how well they did their work. He mentioned Superstorm Sandy and concerns about that.

Council Member Torres said that the Council will be dealing with this time and time again. Anytime the City cuts the taxes for a developer, the residents lose. Any time that the Economic Development does this, the residents lose because the City provides police and fire along with other services for the residents. It would be a major loss for the City.

Mayor Finch congratulated OPEd on their work. He reminded everyone that there were residents who were living in substandard conditions in the City and the City was responsible for marshalling all the resources possible to change this. HUD was no longer doing any large scale projects as they had in the past. The only large scale projects that are going forward are partnership with private developers across the nation. He said that for as long as he had been around none of the developers had gotten a tax break without returning significant social benefits. This project would provide 35 years of affordable housing for the City. This is what inner City development looks like in America now. The cities must be ingenious and find ways to leverage the market. This 30 million dollar project for 177 housing units would leverage more jobs in Bridgeport. He said that it was incumbent upon those who were opposed to this project to look at other cities and see how they are managing these types of housing projects. They should look the residents who are currently in substandard housing in the eye and tell them that they have a better plan and how it would be done. He repeated his appreciation of Economic Development Department in their efforts to move this forward. These types of projects will continue to be brought forward because the goal is to increase employment in the City and improve the housing for the residents. This is what economic expansion looks like and is not to be feared.

Council Member Halstead expressed several other concerns he had about the project.

Council Member Martinez reminded everyone that the Council Members were to look out of the residents. She then asked where the children were going to go to school. Charter schools are

not the answer. Bridgeport residents already pay high taxes and this would put more students in an already overcrowded District.

**** THE MOTION FOR AGENDA ITEM 23-14 FAILED TO PASS WITH EIGHT (8) IN FAVOR (BRANNELLY, BANTA, TAYLOR-MOYE, MCCARTHY, VIZZO-PANICCIA, MARELLA, E. MARTINEZ, AND HOLLOWAY) AND TEN (10) AGAINST (TORRES, HALSTEAD, SWAIN, LYONS, FELICIANO, CASCO, CASTILLO, SALTER, L. MARTINEZ, AND JACKSON).**

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT MCCARTHY MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARELLA SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO ADJOURN PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:51 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

S. L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services