

**CITY COUNCIL MEETING
PUBLIC SPEAKING
MONDAY, APRIL 4, 2016
6:30 PM
City Council Chambers, City Hall
45 Lyon Terrace
Bridgeport, CT**

CALL TO ORDER

Council President McCarthy called the public speaking portion to order at 6:50 PM.

ROLL CALL

City Clerk Martinez called roll.

The following members were present:

130th District: Scott Burns; Kathryn Bukovsky
131st District: Jack Banta; Denese Taylor-Moye
132nd District: M. Evette Brantley; John W. Olson
133rd District: Jeanette Herron; Thomas C. McCarthy
134th District: Michelle A. Lyons
135th District: Richard D. Salter; Mary A. McBride-Lee
136th District: Jose R. Casco
137th District: Milta I. Feliciano; Aidee Nieves
138th District: Anthony R. Paoletto; Nessah J. Smith
139th District: James Holloway; Eneida L. Martinez

A quorum was present.

THE FOLLOWING NAMED PERSON HAS REQUESTED PERMISSION TO ADDRESS THE CITY COUNCIL ON MONDAY, APRIL 4, 2016 AT 6:30 P.M., IN THE CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL, 45 LYON TERRACE, BRIDGEPORT, CT.

NAME

SUBJECT

**David M. Walker
37 Beacon Street
Bridgeport, CT 06605**

The Mayor's Proposed Budget.

Mr. Walker submitted the following memo to the Council. It read as follows:

*Bridgeport City Council Meeting
Mayor's Proposed Fiscal 2017 Budget
April 4, 2016*

*By: Hon. David M. Walker
Former Comptroller General of the United States*

Mr. President and Members of the City Council, I am Dave Walker. My wife Mary and I live at 37 Beacon Street in Bridgeport. Thank you for the opportunity to speak this evening.

It is my understanding that Mayor Ganim will present his proposed budget to the City Council later this evening. When he does, I suggest that you go straight to the "bottom line" to see how much he is proposing to cut net spending.

Let me acknowledge that Mayor Ganim has already taken some steps to reduce headcount and control salary costs. He should be complimented for doing so. At the same time, Bridgeport's financial challenges are so serious and so structural in nature, that much more dramatic and fundamental reforms are necessary.

Let me help put things in perspective. Finance Director Flatto's recent announcement that the net taxable grand list went down 15% means that the current mil rate will have to go up to 17.64% mil rate if net spending stays the same as last year. It's just math.

That is totally unacceptable, given the onerous property tax burdens and very high effective tax rates already borne by property owners in this city. As a result, since state funding, is flat, and absent major new revenue sources, the only way to keep the mil rate down is to cut spending!

Higher mil rates mean that the effective tax property rate in percentage terms will go up for every taxable property owner in Bridgeport irrespective of their new assessment. In addition, even if not spending is held flat, anyone whose property tax assessment did not go down at least 15% will face another property tax increase in dollar terms.

The economic and social implications of Bridgeport's financial challenges are clear and compelling. Higher property tax burdens result in: lower property values, making Bridgeport a less attractive place to live and do business, and forcing more seniors and individuals on fixed incomes out of their homes.

One of the primary reasons that Bridgeport's tax base declined much more than the average since 2008, is due to the failure of City leaders to "hold the line" on property taxes in the past. In that regard, I clearly recall that Mayor Ganim's pledge to "hold the line on taxes" was a major part of his campaign.

Total property taxes in Bridgeport have already gone up multiple times the rate of inflation since 2008. Enough is enough! It's time for dramatic and fundamental change.

Don't count on the state of the federal government to bail you out. They have their own serious financial challenges. In addition, it is more likely than not that the state will cut municipal funding next year given the magnitude of its fiscal challenge.

It's time to cut spending, transform City Government, and restructure retirement plans in an equitable and sustainable fashion. Failure to do so will serve to demonstrate that Bridgeport City Government cannot do what needs to be done to puts its financial house in order.

If this Mayor and Council can't do what needs to be done then it is time for a State appointed Financial Control Board to make the transformational and financial restructuring changes that are necessary for the City to avoid bankruptcy. This is the approach that is likely to be taken in connection with Puerto Rico's current financial crisis. How the Puerto Rican situation is resolved is likely to be a precursor to how troubled states like Illinois, New Jersey, and Connecticut will be addressed in the future.

Three years ago, I gave this Council and the previous Mayor several pages of ideas about how to reduce spending, enhance revenues, and restructure retirement plans. So far, little has been done to act on them.

It's time to get serious. The clock is ticking and time is not working in our favor.

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

City Financial State.

Mr. Lee submitted the following memo to the Council. It read as follows:

Council Members, citizens, taxpayers and friends of Bridgeport,

I am pleased to visit with you this evening in advance of the presentation by Mayor Ganim of the Operating Budget for the coming year. As you go about this work will you remembers that the current approved budget is projected 'in the red' some \$12-16 million by June? Will you keep in mind the recently delivered Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for the FY 2014-15 that shows the City Balance Sheet to be 'in the red' also by at least \$50.3 million? And that was calculated with 2008 City land and building values. If being 'in the red' is an unfamiliar term to you, it came about when fiscal reports used red ink, to call attention to negative or worrisome financial results.

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More familiar to us today is the situations of homes purchased 10 years ago at values that seemed to go up almost automatically but later fell precipitously. Some people with few real dollars invested were able to borrow 100% of a real estate deal. So when market values fell after 2008 and debt remained high, people termed the property 'underwater'. The debt total was greater than the market value. That was a bad deal for many, led to additional foreclosures, and falling real estate values in the community.

Most of you know that positive signs of economic development include new businesses. Businesses come and go. But eight years ago Fairfield Avenue welcomed TWO BOOTS that provided good food, beverages, and varied entertainment. Recently they close and moved out of town. As a partial tribute to them, but primarily to keep your 20 minds on the obvious matter of fiscal discipline, I am presenting TWO BOOTS to you tonight symbolically. You can see two large red rubber boots in front of us tonight. Red is for our financial condition. Remember when Nancy Sinatra talked about 'boots made for walking'? And these rubbers boots are made for walking... in water... because when both budget report and balance sheet are negative... we are dealing with an underwater condition. The boots are symbolic of our conditions today.

I call the first boot Operating Budget or OB for short and the second boot, Balance Sheet or BS for short. At the moment you have been presented with a Capital Budget 'plan' by the administration. Neither you nor the G2 has held a public meeting on this Charter subject where ideas on Capital spending can be addressed by the public and also for comments on exactly how the City proposes to handle \$40 million additional in debt. Why do we continue to fund items that have lifetimes shorter than 20 year bonding? Aren't they supposed to be funded in the Operating Budget? And how much past bond authorization exists today without going to markets? Or how much more money is contained in each project or plan funded in the past but not completed? Where is that information at a time when we are 'in the red'? Over the next month your Budget and Appropriations Committee will labor over the G2 budget documents. Do you have a goal in mind? Have you discussed your goals in any session? When the Board of Education comes in with their budgets showing \$10, 15 or 20 million more needed to balance their budget, how will your numbers measure down to meet the needs of the youth of the community? How will you prioritize other City services? You will find increased pension and public safety funding because of decisions and deferrals of the past eight years. You will have difficult choices, but isn't that why you chose to serve the public? Isn't that part of the duty you owe to those who voted for you?

The water is rising everywhere. That is why the State and Federal government have provided \$50 million or more to prepare a sustainable plan and get on with it in the South End. You must do your part for sustainability for taxpayers. The line may have been drawn in the sand in the past, but the line is gone from sight. Drain the operating budget of liberal revenue assumptions and chart realistic projections, based on facts. For the balance sheet, understand the numbers

and help us only add liabilities through borrowing where we make serious gains is net worth. Why not hire some independent and professional assistance in your work? Time will tell.

Gerald Coleman
Home of the Braves
655 Park Avenue
Bridgeport, CT 06604

Homelessness.

Mr. Coleman came forward to address the City's homeless situation. He stated that he works with the City in a program that helps homeless individuals work through sobriety. Mr. Coleman himself has been clean for a year and a half, is working on having his record expunged, and is trying to be a productive member of society, which he feels good about. He stated that he appreciates and values the opportunity to address members of his government directly, a right that isn't extended in some countries. Mr. Coleman stated that as he was trying to get housing, he did not qualify, as he does not fall under the definition of 'chronically homeless'. As such, his only option was to go to a shelter, and being in that environment is not conducive to recovery. Mr. Coleman stated that he was one of the fortunate individuals who fought his way out of the system, but that others haven't been so fortunate. He stated that everyone present wants to live in a secure neighborhood and raise their children to be productive members of society, and that he would like to see those same opportunities extended to himself and his family. He stated that it is frustrating when you try to go through various channels with agencies and programs, and some are less helpful or effective than advertised. He stated that he would like to see some effective government involved with these processes and commended those present who strive to make the City and neighborhoods better. Mr. Coleman cited one case where a man was kicked out of the shelter, roaming the streets and expressed suicidal ideation. Fortunately, this man didn't relapse and turn to substance abuse. Mr. Coleman stated that he himself resides at Home of the Braves, which is a wonderful place, but that he is concerned about opportunities available once he leaves. He stated that he doesn't want to become a person pushing a carriage, not because he is in any way better than those individuals who do, but because he wants a safer, improved environment for himself. He concluded that he does not know how to address the problem properly on his own, and asked for the Council's help and support in addressing this issue.

Jacquelyn Cauthen
397 Charles Street
Bridgeport, CT 06606

**D.I.V.A.S. (Lighthouse Girls Program) and
National Poetry Month.**

Ms. Cauthen came forward. She provided the following statements, which read as follows:

BECOMING D.I.V.A.S.

There is a need...

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BECOMING D.I.V.A.S. is a pre-teen and teen Health and Wellness Program and Handbook. The overall goal of the 'D.I.V.A.S. program is to complement, enhance and reinforce community and school based health education instruction. The D.I.V.A.S. program is concordant with both the New York and Connecticut Healthy Teen Act, offering additional support to a sometimes underserved pre-teen population.

Here is the solution...

Jacquelyn Cauthen RN, B.A. Health Educator and Certified Life Skills/Success Coach has offered "Being girl" and "A time for Answers" presentations to thousands of N.Y. public and parochial school students in the tri-state area. For the past 15 years, in partnership with Women's Health Bridge (P&G). Ms. Cauthen AKA 'Nana Jackie' has also established herself as a Community Health Educator/Practitioner. In 2008, she relocated to Bridgeport, accompanied by her desire and commitment to serve the youth. In 2010, while serving as Education Coordinator, she was honored by St. Vincent's Medical Center Special Needs Services. Ms. Cauthen has established a Connecticut network of health-conscious individuals, who are committed to educating and motivating our youth, and who will provide ongoing support.

The time is now...

Overall Goal: To motivate and educate female participants towards optimum health practices and proactive social behaviors, so that girls will have the necessary knowledge and skills to establish and maintain positive health habits through a comprehensive exploration of pubescent physical, social, and emotional changes.

Program Launch: Saturday October 24th, 2015, the following 'D.I.V.A.S.' program will be available and offered to 5th through 9th grade female participants. This series will be offered weekly (12 weeks) for 1-2 hours, and has five program components. The entire 'Becoming D.I.V.A.S.' program package includes a Handbook, Certificate, Membership Card, Bookmark, and Journal Book and may be purchased at a nominal cost: (Parental/mentor attendance and/or volunteers are always welcome)

Locations of Community Based D.I.V.A.S. Members

- (1) Pure Martial Arts Fitness Academy (PMAFA) North End (Corner of Main & Charles St.)*
- (2) 397 Charles St. (Between Main St. & Madison Ave.)*

An additional event flyer submitted read as follows:

Special Events at Burroughs-Saden Library

Saturday, April 16, 2015

2:00 - 3:30 PM

Programming room, 1st floor

It's a Poetry Time with Nana Jackie!

*Join Nana Jackie for National Poetry Month as she explores the wonderful world of poetry!
There will be many fun activities for children, teens, and adults.
Poetry reading, open mic poetry, poetry writing workshop, activity tables, coloring, scissor
tables, writing stations for children and adults.*

*Adults will get creative as well!
Free refreshments will be served.*

Ms. Cauthen further invited all the Council Members and constituents to the aforementioned event, and asked for their assistance in finding a new, empty building to house the program in the future.

Ernest Newton

Mr. Newton came forward to discuss the role of the City Council. He stated that he served as City Council president from 1984 to 1985, and at the time they did not have a budgets process in place. He stated that since that time, the statute has been changed and there was a resolution to allow the City Council a certain amount of authority in that process. Mr. Newton stated that there must be a series of checks and balances, and that the previous trend of not asking questions from the previous administration must not continue into this one. He stated that Council Members must be the voice of the people, and suggested that the provision of probationary periods be brought back if necessary. He stated that if the Council does not possess the tools it needs, then the members need to procure said tools. Mr. Newton stated that, in his tenure, they fought to ensure there was accountability at hand, and asked that Council Members be diligent in their attentions towards administrative actions, particularly those related to budget, expenditures and contracts.

ADJOURNMENT

Council President concluded the public speaking portion at 7:20 PM.

CITY COUNCIL MEETING
MONDAY, APRIL 4, 2016
7:00 PM
City Council Chambers, City Hall
45 Lyon Terrace
Bridgeport, CT

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Ganim called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM.

PRAYER

Mayor Ganim asked for a volunteer to lead those present in prayers. A member of the public obliged.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Ganim asked City Clerk Martinez to lead those present in the Pledge of Allegiance. She obliged.

Council Member Olson asked, in memoriam of Reverend Martin Luther King Jr.'s death on this day in 1968, and that those present take a moment of silence in honor of those who have given their lives in the pursuit of peace.

ROLL CALL

City Clerk Martinez called roll.

The following members were present:

130th District: Scott Burns; Kathryn Bukovsky
131st District: Jack Banta; Denese Taylor-Moye
132nd District: M. Evette Brantley; John W. Olson
133rd District: Jeanette Herron; Thomas C. McCarthy
134th District: Michelle A. Lyons; AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia
135th District: Richard D. Salter; Mary A. McBride-Lee
136th District: Jose R. Casco; Alfredo Castillo
137th District: Milta I. Feliciano; Aidee Nieves
138th District: Anthony R. Paoletto; Nessah J. Smith

139th District: James Holloway (out prior); Eneida L. Martinez

A quorum was present.

ACCOLADES AND RECOGNITION

Mayor Ganim and the City Council recognized the outstanding and invaluable service of those who collectively responded to the devastating condominium fire at 215 Charles Street on December 31, 2015. They collectively honored those who put their lives on the line every day for the City and those from the community who selflessly came forth to give of themselves in providing hope and much needed support to the many residents and families affected by this event. They further recognized Council Member Herron, who was instrumental in spearheading aid initiatives.

PUBLIC HEARING

64-15 Public Hearing re: Disposition of City-Owned Property located at 48 Trowel Street.

The Mayor opened the public hearing and asked if anyone wished to speak in favor of the item.

John Marshall Lee came forward and presented the following statement:

Agenda Item 64-15: City Owned Property at 48 Trowel Street

The City of Bridgeport is an owner of land and buildings to an extent beyond its current or projected municipal requirements.

Such property can be put on the market and put to use that is productive and taxable. To fail to manage actively results in ANNUAL LOSS OF REVENUE, an opportunity COST.

Such property while it remains with the City may need maintenance or management to avoid blight at certain EXPENSE to the taxpayers.

Such property may become a source of risk whereby the City becomes a 'deep pocket' to be sued and settled with at taxpayer expense.

In the past month or so, the City is releasing such property for disposition. However, to increase the marketing potential, why is the market valuation or assessment currently showing on the City books as part of the 'disposition' information?

For the purpose of this hearing, what info has been submitted to the City Council for evaluation, if any? Vision Appraisal records indicate that the property has been in City hands for one month short of ten years. Why so long? What is the normal path for property, however received to find its way from non-taxpaying to taxable and listed so on the Net Grand List? Two buildings and .28 acre of Land carry a value of \$164,640 and assessment of \$115,250. These fail to be shown in the City posting. Why is that purposefully done?

When the disposition occurs, how are the Council members (and the public) informed of the date and the dollars recovered? Is there a list of all such properties and values that could become taxable by disposition? Which Council Committee is interested in actively promoting such behavior and helping in the advertising of the same? How many real dollars are sitting on the City books in such fashion?

Will you act on this matter in an OPEN, ACCOUNTABLE and TRANSPARENT manner that is also HONEST to the taxpayers? Time will tell.

Council Member Olson asked Mr. Coleman to speak on the points addressed by Mr. Lee.

Mr. Coleman stated that the disposition of the property came to the ECDE Committee at its last meeting, and, as per the direction of the Chair, the property was appraised. He stated that they requested permission to auction the property, sell the property to the abutter or sell the property to another party for a minimum of \$65,000. Mr. Coleman stated that part of the reason the process took so long was due to various different steps in the process, and that they typically set the property at one price, and if it doesn't sell for that price for a length of time, he approaches the committee again to discuss a new price.

He then asked if anyone wished to speak in opposition. Hearing none, he closed the hearing on 48 Trowel Street.

66-15 Public Hearing re: Disposition of Four City-Owned Properties located within the Seaview Avenue Industrial Park.

Mayor Ganim asked if anyone wished to speak in favor of the application.

Mr. Lee came forward and stated that he had no prepared comments for this item, but inquired about the values of the properties. He stated, in the interest of an open, accountable, transparent administration, the values of properties should be listed on the agenda item.

Mayor Ganim asked Mr. Coleman to provide background information on the item. Mr. Coleman stated that the locations are behind the Rotair Industries site. Mr. Latimer stated that the item involves an area designated as a municipal development plan site under state law. Mr. Latimer

stated that they were charged with taking on some of the rehabilitation of this area, and that they tracked down federal and state funds to do so. Mr. Latimer stated that the properties were acquired with federal and state funds, and that they put the proceeds of the sales towards the continuation of the project. Furthermore, this allows Rotair the use of the site legally.

Mayor Ganim asked if anyone wished to speak in opposition. Hearing none, he closed the public hearing on item 66-15.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Approval of City Council Minutes: February 16, 2016

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT MCCARTHY MOVED TO APPROVE THE CITY COUNCIL MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 16, 2016 MEETING.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

COMMUNICATIONS TO BE REFERRED TO COMMITTEES & RESOLUTIONS TO BE REFERRED TO BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, ETC.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER LYONS MOVED TO APPROVE AND REFER THE FOLLOWING COMMUNICATIONS AND RESOLUTIONS TO COMMITTEES, COMMISSIONS, AND BOARDS:**

- 1. 85-15 COMMUNICATION FROM CITY ATTORNEY RE: TWENTY DAY NOTICE TO SETTLE PENDING LITIGATION PURSUANT TO MUNICIPAL CODE SECTION 2.10.130 WITH JADEE CLEGG.**
- 2. 88-15 COMMUNICATION FROM OPED RE: PROPOSED RESOLUTION WITH NUPOWER THERMAL, LLC AUTHORIZING THE USE OF THE ENTERPRISE ZONE STATUTE TO ENABLE THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE BRIDGEPORT THERMAL DISTRICT PROJECT, REFERRED TO ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE.**
- 3. 90-15 COMMUNICATION FROM FINANCE RE: (REF. #55-14 & 29-15) PROPOSED RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS AND ALLOCATION OF BOND PROCEEDS FOR THE CRESCENT CROSSING PHASE 1B, REFERRED TO ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE.**
- 4. 89-15 COMMUNICATION FROM MAYOR RE: APPOINTMENT OF STUART M. ROSENBERG (U) TO THE BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS, REFERRED TO PUBLIC SAFETY AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE.**

5. **91-15 COMMUNICATION FROM WPCA RE: PROPOSED WATER POLLUTION CONTROL AUTHORITY BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2016-2017.**
6. **92-15 COMMUNICATION FROM MAYOR RE: PROPOSED GENERAL FUND OPERATING BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2016-2017, REFERRED TO BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE.**
7. **86-15 RESOLUTION PRESENTED BY COUNCIL MEMBER(S) PAOLETTO AND SMITH RE: REQUEST THAT A STUDY BE DONE AND A RECOMMENDATION BE MADE FOR THE INSTALLATION OF A “NO LEFT HAND TURN” SIGN ON MINNESOTA AVENUE ONTO HUNTINGTON TURNPIKE,REFERRED TO BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS.**
8. **87-15 RESOLUTION PRESENTED BY COUNCIL MEMBER(S) PAOLETTO AND SMITH RE: REQUEST THAT A STUDY BE DONE AND A RECOMMENDATION BE MADE FOR THE INSTALLATION OF STOP SIGNS AT ASYLUM AND ROCKLAND STREET AND ASYLUM AND STANDISH STREET WITH THE INSTALLATION OF SPEED BUMPS PLACED ON ASYLUM STREET BETWEEN ROCKLAND AND COGSWELL STREET WITH PROPER SIGNAGE POSTED AND APPROPRIATE STREET MARKINGS, REFERRED TO BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA SECONDED THE MOTION.
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

MATTERS TO BE ACTED UPON (CONSENT CALENDAR)

**** COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON MOVED TO COMBINE AND APPROVE THE FOLLOWING ITEMS ON THE CONSENT CALENDAR:**

1. **08-15 (B) ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE REPORT RE: DISPOSITION OF CITY-OWNED PROPERTY LOCATED AT 16 RIVER STREET BY AUCTION, SALE TO ABUTTER OR BY SALE TO COMMUNITY BASED HOUSING DEVELOPMENT CORPORATIONS.**
2. **09-15 (B) ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE REPORT RE: DISPOSITION OF SEVEN CITY-OWNED PROPERTIES BY AUCTION, SALE TO ABUTTER OR BY SALE TO COMMUNITY BASED HOUSING DEVELOPMENT CORPORATIONS.**
3. **51-15 ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE REPORT RE: DISPOSITION OF CITY-OWNED PROPERTIES LOCATED AT 77 JOHNSON STREET AND 119 JOHNSON STREET BY SALE TO ABUTTER.**
4. **57-15 ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE REPORT RE: (REF. #155-13) RESOLUTION**

AMENDING THE CITY'S AUTHORIZATION TO DISPOSE OF PROPERTIES FOR THE CHERRY STREET ADAPTIVE REUSE PROJECT.

5. 76-15 MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS COMMITTEE REPORT RE: SETTLEMENT OF PENDING LITIGATION WITH CLAIRE ERVIN.

- ** COUNCIL MEMBER FELICIANO SECONDED THE MOTION.**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

OTHER BUSINESS

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT MCCARTHY MOVED TO SUSPEND THE RULES FOR THE PURPOSES OF ADDING AN ITEM TO THE AGENDA TO BE REFERRED TO THE CONTRACTS COMMITTEE.**

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

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT MCCARTHY MOVED TO REFER THE FOLLOWING ITEM TO THE CONTRACTS COMMITTEE:**

1. RE: MASTER STATE/MUNICIPALITY AGREEMENT FOR THE READJUSTMENT, RELOCATION AND/OR REMOVAL OF MUNICIPAL FACILITIES ON HIGHWAY PROJECTS.

- ** COUNCIL MEMBER BUKOVSKY SECONDED THE MOTION.**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY. (ITEM #93-15)**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER LYONS (IN CONJUNCTION WITH COUNCIL MEMBERS HERRON, FELICIANO, VIZZO-PANICCIA, BRANTLEY AND COUNCIL PRESIDENT MCCARTHY) MOVED TO SUSPEND THE RULES FOR THE PURPOSES OF REFERRING THE FOLLOWING ITEMS TO THE ORDINANCE COMMITTEE:**

- A. ITEM 1: STUDENT HOUSING PERMIT ORDINANCE (ITEM #95-15)**
- B. ITEM 2: STUDENT HOUSING (ITEM #94-15)**

- ** COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON SECONDED THE MOTION.**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

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

- C. ITEM 1: STUDENT HOUSING PERMIT ORDINANCE**
- D. ITEM 2: STUDENT HOUSING**

- ** COUNCIL MEMBER MCCARTHY SECONDED THE MOTION.**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ MOVED TO SUSPEND THE RULES TO ADD AN ITEM FOR RECONSIDERATION, FORMERLY KNOWN AS 71-15 RE: THE**

APPOINTMENT OF B. OYIBOKA BENSON TO THE BOARD OF ASSESSMENT APPEALS.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO SECONDED THE MOTION.**

There was some question as to how a reconsideration of the item would need to be conducted. Council Member Martinez clarified that the a motion must be made by a Council Member that voted with the prevailing side in the previous vote. She further stated that, should this item make it through to a vote for approval, it would hold its original position, and would not need to be referred back to committee.

Atty. Anastasi stated that the first vote would be to add the item to the agenda, the second is to reconsider the item, and the third is to approve or deny the item. He further stated that, in order to add the item to the agenda, there must be a vote of $\frac{2}{3}$ majority.

Council Member Brantley requested a roll call vote.

Mayor Ganim clarified that the vote was simply to add the item to the agenda for consideration.

The roll call vote was as follows:

Kathryn Bukovsky: Yes
Scott Burns: Yes
Jack Banta: Yes
Denese Taylor-Moye: Abstained
M. Evette Brantley: No
John Olson: No
Tom McCarthy: No
Jeanette Herron: No
Michelle Lyons: No
AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia: No
Mary McBride-Lee: Yes
Richard Salter: No
Jose Casco: Yes
Alfredo Castillo: Yes
Aidee Nieves: No
Milta Feliciano: Yes
Anthony Paoletto: Yes
Nessah Smith: Yes
Eneida Martinez: Yes

The motion failed to carry without a $\frac{2}{3}$ majority vote.

Council President McCarthy recognized Mr. Rosario and Mr. Ashton, present to show support for the City's budget, as well as Mr. Testa, the Democratic Committee Town Chairman.

Council Member Martinez took a point of personal privilege to thank Chief Perez for his efforts in addressing the recent uptick in illegal dumping throughout the City. She further thanked Mr. Flatto for helping make Carlson happen sans tax incentive, but stated that she would like to meet with the contractor on the site in order to ensure there are a sufficient number of minorities represented by the workers on site. Mayor Ganim answered that the language in the City's contract with said contractor reflect this, and thus this is an appropriate time to bring this up during the next phase of moving forward with this partnership. Council Member Martinez stated that she has seen improvements in the East End, and thanked the Administration for their dedication. She further stated that O&G has been a large issue, and that focus of Public Facilities, the Mayor, and the Administration is very appreciated.

Council Member Brantley took a point of personal to recognize the recent accomplishments in the City's youth organizations, including the Access Program, which focuses on STEM education, who recently attended the National Society of Black Engineers Conference in Boston. She also referenced the Village Initiative and College Prep Program, who took Bridgeport students on college tours throughout the country, including stops in Chicago, Kentucky and North Carolina. Council Member Brantley commended Chief Perez and the Mayor for their focus on the anti-dumping initiative. She expressed concern that the media has stated that dumping has 'been allowed' and stated that she didn't believe any of the previous administrations had allowed or encouraged the illegal dumping to take place. She stated that there are hotspots for these illegal activities on Wood, Colorado, Grove, Railroad, and State. Council Member Brantley stated that she has experienced issues with refuse from illegal dumping on her own property's back fence, further stating that she looks forward to work on these problems in the future as a collective.

Council Member Paoletto stated that it was a shame some members of the Council let politics get in the way of decisions regarding certain appointments, which would move the City forward. He stated that they all have to come together to move things forward, and that they cannot work for everyone if they are fighting one another.

Council Member Olson stated that the item Council Member Paoletto was referencing was defeated 10 to 8 during the last Council Meeting, and that they should find another candidate who passes muster.

Mayor Ganim stated that the budget, as required by charter, must be submitted no later than tomorrow, April 5th. He stated that the City Clerk will be given a copies of the budget tomorrow, and asked that Council Members sign out their copies so they can ensure they receive them. He stated that Bridgeport is struggling through challenges that are still part of the budget inherited in December, and that they saved \$3.5 million through bond refinancing. Mayor Ganim stated that

the budget has to be fiscally sound, and that he believes the budget to be presented will meet those goals while minimizing spending in any non-discretionary area. He stated that the only area where there has been an increase in funds has been in the area of public safety, where he proposed a commitment to Police maintenance up to more acceptable levels, though even in this case, they intend to maintain as many cost saving measures as possible. Mayor Ganim stated that they are relying on the State to follow through with the commitments made, and that there is no uniform budget in the State. He stated that they will move forward based on projections and estimates in the governor's budget, which is usually the most reliable. He further stated that they can increase items or revenue or cut them, should necessity demand.

Mayor Ganim stated that Senate Bill 1, as sponsored by the President of the Senate and Speaker of the House, is one of the first definitive steps towards regional redistribution of resources. He stated that the bill acknowledges the inequity of property taxes, and will cause the mil rate to be reduced by 10 mils in regards to automobiles, going from 40 to 45 - 30 - 35, seeing a reduction as of July 1st. Mayor Ganim stated that when a percentage of revenue, there is a gap in the budget, and that the state has addressed this gap in the same proposal. He stated that this takes money that would normally go into this gap and redistributes it proportionately, and in some ways this favors cities like Bridgeport. He stated that they will still have the benefit of a 10 mil tax cut, and that in the City's budget, there have not only been cost savings and freezes, but also furloughs for non-union City employees. Mayor Ganim stated that they met with Union leaders this afternoon, and asked them to join the Administration in cost-saving measures or concessions of \$5 million. He stated that the first step towards savings, in lieu of layoffs, is in early retirements, and that they are offering an early retirement program to qualified city employees. Mayor Ganim stated that the Director of Labor Relations has been given his direction to meet with the unions and calculate savings.

Mayor Ganim stated, on a closing note, that Wednesday is Bridgeport Day in the city of Hartford. He stated that, since the City has so much hanging in the balance regarding the budget, they should show their support in force for their legislators and the governor's budget. He stated that the Administration will provide whatever needed to help people get to Hartford.

Council Member Brantley asked if transportation would be provided for those who wish to attend. Mayor Ganim answered in the affirmative, stating that Ms. Malheiro would take the lead in coordinating said transportation.

Council Member Olson took a point of personal privilege to commend Mayor Ganim for being the first mayor in a long while to speak of a partnership between the Mayor's office and the Board of Education. Mayor Ganim thanked Council Member Olson.

ADJOURNMENT

- ** COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON MOVED TO ADJOURN.**
- ** COUNCIL MEMBER FELICIANO SECONDED THE MOTION.**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting concluded at 8:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Ramos
Telesco Secretarial Services