

CITY COUNCIL MEETING

PUBLIC SPEAKING FORUM

MONDAY, APRIL 5, 2021

6:30 P.M.

This meeting will be conducted by Zoom/Teleconference.

CALL TO ORDER

Council President Nieves called the Public Speaking portion of the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.

ROLL CALL

The Assistant City Clerk Frances Ortiz called the roll.

- 130th District: Scott Burns, Matthew McCarthy
- 131st District: Denese Taylor-Moye, Jorge Cruz
- 132nd District: Marcus Brown, *M. Evette Brantley*
- 133rd District: Michael DeFilippo, Jeanette Herron
- 134th District: Michelle Lyons, AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia
- 135th District: Rosalina Roman-Christy, Mary McBride-Lee
- 136th District: *Alfredo Castillo*, Avelino Silva
- 137th District: Maria Valle, Aidee Nieves
- 138th District: Maria Pereira, Samia Suliman
- 139th District: Eneida Martinez, Ernest Newton

During the roll call, there appeared to be no response from the individuals whose names are listed in italics.

Council President Nieves announced that there was a 3 minute time limit for each speaker.

THE FOLLOWING NAMED PERSON HAS REQUESTED PERMISSION TO ADDRESS THE CITY COUNCIL ON MONDAY, APRIL 5, 2021 AT 6:30 P.M.

NAME

SUBJECT

Jim Williams
American Heart Association
280 Grovers Avenue
Bridgeport, CT 06605

Proposed ordinance to restrict sale of
flavored tobacco products.

There was no response when Mr. Williams' name was called.

Ellie Angerame
Green Village Initiative
135 Clarence Street
Bridgeport, CT 06608

The matter concerning the proposed conversion of Bridgeport's Reservoir Community Farm into a public library.

Ms. Angerame spoke about her February presentation regarding the location for the Green Village Farm on the parcel where the library would be located. She also cited a local survey that supported keeping the educational farm at the location. Ms. Angerame said that the school gardens were starting up but people were asking about the future of the education farm.

Christina Smith
Groundwork Bridgeport, Inc.
1001 Main Street, Suite 20
Bridgeport, CT 06604

Bridgeport Film Fest.

Ms. Smith said that she was present on behalf of Groundwork Bridgeport, Inc. While many know of them regarding their ecological programs, they are adding new programs. She said that they would be starting with a hybrid film showing at the Klein Memorial. More information can be found online at Bridgeport Film Fest.

Jason Coombs
Groundwork Bridgeport, Inc.
1001 Main Street, Suite 20
Bridgeport, CT 06604

Bridgeport Film Fest.

Ms. Smith said that Mr. Coombs was ill and unable to address the Council.

Brian Fojtik
National Assoc. of Tobacco Outlets
2738 Main Street
Bridgeport, CT 06606

Item 21-20 that would ban the sale of flavored tobacco products.

There was no response when Mr. Fojtik's name was called.

Pete Spain
280 Grovers Avenue
Bridgeport, CT 06605

WPCA Sanitation Infrastructure.

Mr. Spain urged everyone to vote in favor regarding Agenda Item 24-20 for upgrading the sewer processing plants. There has been a major change and progressive leadership at the WPCA along with the support of many of the City Council Members. He noted that the State representatives were also in support of the infrastructure projects. He added that there were also unprecedented amounts of Federal funding grants for infrastructure. Allowing the Harbor and shoreline of Bridgeport to become polluted is not right. He added that if the Council denied this vote, the cost would simply increase and the City could possibly lose their place in line for Federal Funding.

Kevin Blagys
115 Harbor Avenue
Bridgeport, CT 06605

Upgrades to WPCA expansion in
Water treatment.

Mr. Blagys said that he was the owner of KB Services and also the coordinator for the Harbor Study. He said that he has been diving in Captain's Cove for many years and can testify about the nitrogen levels in the Harbor. He said that during the summer, the Harbor becomes hypoxic and the fish die off, along with the horseshoe crabs. The proposed plan is a good one, but there is still a discharge pipe in Black Rock Harbor. The new treatment plants will reduce the number of bypass events. However, he felt that the funding should come from the Clean Water Fund and not from the taxpayers.

Dirk Hettrich
The Success Village Apartments, Inc.
100 Court D
Bridgeport, CT 06610

PILOT Sidewalk Program and
The Success Village Apts., Inc.

Mr. Hettrich thanked the Council for allowing him to speak. He said that Success Village was the second largest taxpayer in Bridgeport and described the size of the parcel. He said that they were approached by the City about the repair of the sidewalks, which measures almost 1 mile of sidewalk. There are missing portions, tree roots and other issues that have created this. The repairs will remove the obvious trip and fall hazards and the project will enhance safety. This project funding has been set aside for this and the residents are patiently waiting for the construction to begin.

Barry A. Hyman
879 Gilman Street
Bridgeport, CT 06605

Black Rock Harbor Pollution.

Mr. Hyman said that he was interested in clean water since the Clean Water Act was passed in 1972. He then read a portion of a letter regarding Combined Sewer and rainwater outflows. The pollution is a major concern in both Cedar Creek and Black Rock Harbor. He mentioned the Save the Sound report card, which gave Black Rock Harbor a grade of D. The DEEP regulations call for them to stop the CSOs to be stopped. The WPCA came up with a large storage tank for the overflow under Ellsworth. The last time the plants were updated was in 1996. The new construction will increase the capacity in the West Side from 40 million gallons per day to 200 million gallons per day. This will allow it to handle rainstorms. The new upgrades must be started soon in order to be completed by 2026 or risk fines from the DEEP. The Federal grant of \$118 million will reduce the cost of the projects. This is a rare moment when doing the right thing environmentally and fiscally happened at the same time. He encouraged the Council Members to support this Agenda Item.

John Marshall Lee
30 Beacon Street
Bridgeport, CT 06605

City Employment/Finance.

Mr. Lee greeted the Council Members and thanked them for the opportunity. He said that the two biggest news stories of 2020 could possibly be COVID 19 and probably the death of George Floyd. Among Floyd's last words to the world was "I can't breathe." [Inaudible] \$20 million dollar death suit awarded already. [Inaudible] while non-discriminatory policing is unobserved too frequently.

Why is this important? COVID has caused job losses and raised questions of paying rent, paying mortgages, pay the light bill and other similar issues. The Federal Government has helped, but the problem has not been resolved, just postponed and there is no answer in sight. This has happened before when the WPCA foreclosed on homes several years ago. The residents look to the City for direction or guidance and if there is no specific department, they may look to the Fair Housing Commission or the Fair Rent Commission like those mentioned on the Boards and Commission list. But those two boards and commissions are [inaudible] citizens' groups which were appointed by a Mayor at one time to serve other neighbors in terms of their homes and fairness issues. Some of those board and Commission members are still alive even though their commissions expired sometime after 1997 and 2007. However, the rules for the Boards and Commissions say that members serve until a successor is appointed and has qualified. What happened in these two cases? The members were not re-appointed and a series of mayors failed to pay attention. No one else did, either. Minutes were not kept and information was not published. Is this how a city begins to rust and becomes corrupted. How does the Mayor indicated he cares about the COVID problems that will soon affect the City residents. Time will tell.

Brian Fojtik

Item 21-20 that would ban the sale of flavored tobacco products.

There was no response when Mr. Fojtik's name was called.

Jim Williams

American Heart Association
280 Grovers Avenue
Bridgeport, CT 06605

Proposed ordinance to restrict sale of flavored tobacco products.

There was no response when Mr. Williams' name was called.

ADJOURNMENT

Council President Nieves adjourned the public speaking at 7:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Telesco Secretarial Services

City of Bridgeport
City Council Meeting
Regular Meeting
April 5, 2021

CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
MONDAY, APRIL 5, 2021

7:00 P.M.

This meeting was conducted by teleconference.

The public was able to listen to this meeting by calling a conference line.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Ganim called the Regular Meeting of the City Council to order at 7:07 p.m.

PRAYER

Mayor Ganim asked Council President Nieves to lead the Council in prayer.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Ganim asked Council Member Cruz to lead those present in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

The Assistant City Clerk called the roll.

130th District: Scott Burns, Matthew McCarthy
131st District: Denese Taylor-Moye, Jorge Cruz
132nd District: Marcus Brown, M. Evette Brantley
133rd District: Michael DeFilippo, Jeanette Herron
134th District: Michelle Lyons, AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia
135th District: Rosalina Roman-Christy, Mary McBride-Lee
136th District: Alfredo Castillo, Avelino Silva
137th District: Maria Valle, Aidee Nieves
138th District: Maria Pereira, Samia Suliman
139th District: Eneida Martinez, Ernest Newton

Mayor Ganim said that the annual budget had been included. Assistant City Clerk said that it was Agenda Item 41-20 listed on the agenda.

Mayor Ganim noted that despite COVID, the City had seen the Grant List grow and his budget would show a reduction of 10 mills. However, he cautioned the residents not to jump to conclusions.

Mayor Ganim said that this was an unprecedented time where there was coordination between the Federal Government and the State Government to help stabilize the conditions. Mayor Ganim encouraged everyone to work together to address the needs of the various neighborhoods. He said that there was good news about the various opportunities for the airport and the Harbor. The Council Members need to be responsible and to listen as they consider the budget.

Council Member Burns requested a moment of silence for Michelle Hubeler who passed away this week.

MINUTES FOR APPROVAL:

• March 1, 2021

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED THE MINUTES OF MARCH 1, 2021.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF MARCH 1, 2021 AS SUBMITTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

PUBLIC HEARING(S) TO BE ORDERED BY THE FULL COUNCIL:

46-20 Request from OPED to Order a Public Hearing for April 19, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. re: Proposed Resolution seeking Approval of a Lease of City Property on the Site of the Former Pequonnock Apartments to allow the installation of a Digital Billboard to support the Harbor Yard Amphitheater Project.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON MOVED AGENDA ITEM 46-20 REQUEST FROM OPED TO ORDER A PUBLIC HEARING FOR APRIL 19, 2021 AT 7:00 P.M. RE: PROPOSED RESOLUTION SEEKING APPROVAL OF A LEASE OF CITY PROPERTY ON THE SITE OF THE FORMER PEQUONNOCK APARTMENTS TO ALLOW THE INSTALLATION OF A DIGITAL BILLBOARD TO SUPPORT THE HARBOR YARD AMPHITHEATER PROJECT.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER CRUZ SECONDED.**

Council Member Pereira said that she did not understand why they were scheduling a public hearing for an item that has not been sent to Committee.

**** THE MOTION PASSED WITH NINETEEN (19) IN FAVOR (BURNS, MCCARTHY, CRUZ, TAYLOR-MOYE, BROWN, BRANTLEY, HERRON, DEFILIPPO, LYONS, VIZZO-PANICCIA, MCBRIDE-LEE, ROMAN-CHRISTY, SILVA, CASTILLO, NIEVES, VALLE, SULIMAN, MARTINEZ AND NEWTON) AND ONE (1) OPPOSED (PEREIRA).**

Assistant City Clerk Ortiz explained that the item was also listed on the agenda to be referred to Committee.

COMMUNICATIONS TO BE REFERRED TO COMMITTEES:

39-20 Communication from Finance re: Proposed Partial Release Agreement with Connecticut Green Bank regarding the Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy (C-PACE) Program from 2012, referred to Contracts Committee.

40-20 Communication from Labor Relations re: Proposed Tentative Agreement with American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) Local 1522, Council 4 regarding their Collective Bargaining Agreement, referred to Contracts Committee.

41-20 Communication from Mayor re: Proposed General Fund Operating Budget for Fiscal Year 2021-2022, referred to Budget and Appropriations Committee.

42-20 Communication from Central Grants re: Grant Submission: Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) Program (#21210 & #21483), referred to Public Safety and Transportation Committee.

44-20 Communication from Sikorsky Memorial Airport re: The Sikorsky Memorial Airport Environmental Assessment Acceptance of Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Grants, referred to Public Safety and Transportation Committee.

46-20 Communication from OPED re: Proposed Resolution seeking Approval of a Lease of City Property on the Site of the Former Pequonnock Apartments to allow the installation of a Digital Billboard to support the Harbor Yard Amphitheater Project, referred to Joint Committee on Economic and Community Development and Environment and Contracts.

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

43-20 Resolution presented by Council Member(s) Valle & Nieves re: Proposed resolution requesting that Hallet Street and Maple Street be designated as an “All-Way” Stop Intersection with appropriate signs erected and stop lines painted on the road surface, referred to Board of Police Commissioners.

45-20 Resolution presented by Council Member Martinez re: Proposed resolution to conduct an Informational Meeting with the Police Chief, Fire Chief and Emergency Management Director regarding use of Fire Police Volunteers in Bridgeport, referred to Public Safety and Transportation Committee.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ MOVED TO CONSOLIDATE AND REFER THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:**

COMMUNICATIONS TO BE REFERRED TO COMMITTEES:

39-20 COMMUNICATION FROM FINANCE RE: PROPOSED PARTIAL RELEASE AGREEMENT WITH CONNECTICUT GREEN BANK REGARDING THE COMMERCIAL PROPERTY ASSESSED CLEAN ENERGY (C-PACE) PROGRAM FROM 2012, REFERRED TO CONTRACTS COMMITTEE.

40-20 COMMUNICATION FROM LABOR RELATIONS RE: PROPOSED TENTATIVE AGREEMENT WITH AMERICAN FEDERATION OF STATE, COUNTY, AND MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES (AFSCME) LOCAL 1522, COUNCIL 4 REGARDING THEIR COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT, REFERRED TO CONTRACTS COMMITTEE.

41-20 COMMUNICATION FROM MAYOR RE: PROPOSED GENERAL FUND OPERATING BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2021-2022, REFERRED TO BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE.

42-20 COMMUNICATION FROM CENTRAL GRANTS RE: GRANT SUBMISSION: DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY (DHS) FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY (FEMA) ASSISTANCE TO FIREFIGHTERS GRANT (AFG) PROGRAM (#21210 & #21483), REFERRED TO PUBLIC SAFETY AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE.

44-20 COMMUNICATION FROM SIKORSKY MEMORIAL AIRPORT RE: THE SIKORSKY MEMORIAL AIRPORT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT ACCEPTANCE OF FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION (FAA) GRANTS, REFERRED TO PUBLIC SAFETY AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE.

46-20 COMMUNICATION FROM OPED RE: PROPOSED RESOLUTION SEEKING APPROVAL OF A LEASE OF CITY PROPERTY ON THE SITE OF THE FORMER PEQUONNOCK APARTMENTS TO ALLOW THE INSTALLATION OF A DIGITAL BILLBOARD TO SUPPORT THE HARBOR YARD AMPHITHEATER PROJECT, REFERRED TO JOINT COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT AND CONTRACTS.

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

43-20 RESOLUTION PRESENTED BY COUNCIL MEMBER(S) VALLE & NIEVES RE: PROPOSED RESOLUTION REQUESTING THAT HALLET STREET AND MAPLE STREET BE DESIGNATED AS AN "ALL-WAY" STOP INTERSECTION WITH APPROPRIATE SIGNS ERECTED AND STOP LINES PAINTED ON THE ROAD SURFACE, REFERRED TO BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS.

45-20 RESOLUTION PRESENTED BY COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ RE: PROPOSED RESOLUTION TO CONDUCT AN INFORMATIONAL MEETING WITH THE POLICE CHIEF, FIRE CHIEF AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DIRECTOR REGARDING USE OF FIRE POLICE VOLUNTEERS IN BRIDGEPORT, REFERRED TO PUBLIC SAFETY AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED WITH NINETEEN (19) IN FAVOR (BURNS, MCCARTHY, CRUZ, TAYLOR-MOYE, BROWN, BRANTLEY, HERRON, DEFILIPPO, LYONS, VIZZO-PANICCIA, MCBRIDE-LEE, ROMAN-CHRISTY, SILVA, CASTILLO, NIEVES, VALLE, SULIMAN, MARTINEZ AND NEWTON) AND ONE (1) OPPOSED (PEREIRA).**

MATTERS TO BE ACTED UPON (CONSENT CALENDAR):

***13-20 Miscellaneous Matters Committee Report re: Reappointment of Osiba Nelson (D) to the Water Pollution Control Authority.**

***14-20 Miscellaneous Matters Committee Report re: Reappointment of Clement Young (D) to the Water Pollution Control Authority.**

***15-20 Miscellaneous Matters Committee Report re: Reappointment of Nina M. Thomas (D) to the Water Pollution Control Authority.**

***27-20 Miscellaneous Matters Committee Report re: Appointment of Susan Tabachnick (D) to the Historic District Commission.**

***28-20 Miscellaneous Matters Committee Report re: Appointment of Stuart Sachs (D) to the Historic District Commission.**

***29-20 Miscellaneous Matters Committee Report re: Appointment of Kristen Alvanson (D) to the Historic District Commission.**

***30-20 Miscellaneous Matters Committee Report re: Appointment of Guy Horvath (D) to the Historic District Commission.**

***31-20 Miscellaneous Matters Committee Report re: Appointment of Timothy V. O'Connor (D) as an Alternate to the Historic District Commission.**

***26-20 Joint Committee on Economic and Community Development and Environment and Public Safety and Transportation Report re: Resolution concerning Sikorsky Memorial Airport Economic Study.**

Mayor Ganim asked if any Council Member wished to have an item removed from the Consent Calendar.

Council Member Pereira requested that Agenda Items 13-20, 14-20, 15-20 and 26-20 be removed from the Consent Calendar.

Council Member Newton remarked that those items involve appointments of black people to Boards.

Council Member Pereira said that Council Member Newton's comment was outrageous.

Assistant City Clerk Ortiz read the remaining items into the record.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA MOVED THE FOLLOWING ITEMS AS THE CONSENT CALENDAR:**

***27-20 MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS COMMITTEE REPORT RE: APPOINTMENT OF SUSAN TABACHNICK (D) TO THE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION.**

***28-20 MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS COMMITTEE REPORT RE: APPOINTMENT OF STUART SACHS (D) TO THE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION.**

***29-20 MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS COMMITTEE REPORT RE: APPOINTMENT OF KRISTEN ALVANSON (D) TO THE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION.**

***30-20 MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS COMMITTEE REPORT RE: APPOINTMENT OF GUY HORVATH (D) TO THE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION.**

***31-20 MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS COMMITTEE REPORT RE: APPOINTMENT OF TIMOTHY V. O'CONNOR (D) AS AN ALTERNATE TO THE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE CONSENT CALENDAR AS READ BY THE ASSISTANT CITY CLERK PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

13-20 Miscellaneous Matters Committee Report re: Reappointment of Osiba Nelson (D) to the Water Pollution Control Authority.

14-20 Miscellaneous Matters Committee Report re: Reappointment of Clement Young (D) to the Water Pollution Control Authority.

15-20 Miscellaneous Matters Committee Report re: Reappointment of Nina M. Thomas (D) to the Water Pollution Control Authority.

26-20 Joint Committee on Economic and Community Development and Environment and Public Safety and Transportation Report re: Resolution concerning Sikorsky Memorial Airport Economic Study.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ MOVED TO COMBINE AND CONSOLIDATE THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:**

13-20 MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS COMMITTEE REPORT RE: REAPPOINTMENT OF OSIBA NELSON (D) TO THE WATER POLLUTION CONTROL AUTHORITY.

14-20 MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS COMMITTEE REPORT RE: REAPPOINTMENT OF CLEMENT YOUNG (D) TO THE WATER POLLUTION CONTROL AUTHORITY.

15-20 MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS COMMITTEE REPORT RE: REAPPOINTMENT OF NINA M. THOMAS (D) TO THE WATER POLLUTION CONTROL AUTHORITY.

26-20 JOINT COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC SAFETY AND TRANSPORTATION REPORT RE: RESOLUTION CONCERNING SIKORSKY MEMORIAL AIRPORT ECONOMIC STUDY.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON SECONDED.**

Council Member Martinez said that this was an issue about racism because they were all black candidates for the WPCA Board.

Council Member Pereira said that she was on a number of WPCA calls. She said that Ms. Thomas had asked many questions and Mr. Young runs a good meeting. She was concerned that no one thought to reach out to the proposed rate payers. This is not a good practice and Council Member Pereira will not be supporting these items.

Council Member McBride-Lee said that she did not understand the charges about racism. Council Member Pereira objected that she was attacking a colleague. Council Member McBride-Lee said that the candidates were all black and she had a right to question this.

Council Member Brantley asked her colleagues to support this because they did include the State delegations. It is unfair to judge the candidates on what they may or may not have done.

Council Member Newton said that he was the liaison to the WPCA and attends every meeting. The board candidates were carefully selected. He asked his colleagues to support these candidates to go back to complete their work. He requested a roll call vote.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that she did not co-chair the meeting that night but the candidates received unanimous votes. The morning after, Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia sent

an email to the Council Members asking if they had additional questions, but did not receive any responses.

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:**

13-20 MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS COMMITTEE REPORT RE: REAPPOINTMENT OF OSIBA NELSON (D) TO THE WATER POLLUTION CONTROL AUTHORITY.

14-20 MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS COMMITTEE REPORT RE: REAPPOINTMENT OF CLEMENT YOUNG (D) TO THE WATER POLLUTION CONTROL AUTHORITY.

15-20 MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS COMMITTEE REPORT RE: REAPPOINTMENT OF NINA M. THOMAS (D) TO THE WATER POLLUTION CONTROL AUTHORITY.

26-20 JOINT COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC SAFETY AND TRANSPORTATION REPORT RE: RESOLUTION CONCERNING SIKORSKY MEMORIAL AIRPORT ECONOMIC STUDY.

PASSED WITH SEVENTEEN (17) IN FAVOR (BURNS, MCCARTHY, CRUZ, TAYLOR-MOYE, BROWN, BRANTLEY, HERRON, DEFILIPPO, VIZZO-PANICCIA, MCBRIDE-LEE, ROMAN-CHRISTY, SILVA, CASTILLO, NIEVES, VALLE, MARTINEZ AND NEWTON); ONE ABSTENTION (LYONS) AND TWO (2) OPPOSED (SULIMAN AND PEREIRA).

Council Member Pereira objected and said they had not included Agenda Item 26-20 in the motion for consolidation. Both Council Member Martinez and Mayor Ganim stated that Agenda Item 26-20 had been included in the motion.

MATTERS TO BE ACTED UPON:

32-20 Education and Social Services Committee Report re: Grant Submission: State of Connecticut Office of Early Childhood – School Readiness Preschool Grant – Priority and Quality Enhancement Grant Program.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED AGENDA ITEM 32-20 EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE REPORT RE: GRANT SUBMISSION: STATE OF CONNECTICUT OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD – SCHOOL READINESS PRESCHOOL GRANT – PRIORITY AND QUALITY ENHANCEMENT GRANT PROGRAM.**

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

Council Member Pereira said that she had asked for a specific list for the School Readiness slots by location. She said that she had received a list of the slots but it did not include all the information she had requested, therefore, she could not support it.

Council Member Cruz said that this item was discussed in the Committee and had been approved.

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 32-20 EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE REPORT RE: GRANT SUBMISSION: STATE OF CONNECTICUT OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD – SCHOOL READINESS PRESCHOOL GRANT – PRIORITY AND QUALITY ENHANCEMENT GRANT PROGRAM PASSED WITH NINETEEN (19) IN FAVOR (BURNS, MCCARTHY, CRUZ, TAYLOR-MOYE, BROWN, BRANTLEY, HERRON, DEFILIPPO, LYONS, VIZZO-PANICCIA, MCBRIDE-LEE, ROMAN-CHRISTY, SILVA, CASTILLO, NIEVES, VALLE, SULIMAN, MARTINEZ AND NEWTON) AND ONE (1) OPPOSED (PEREIRA).**

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

24-20 Budget and Appropriations Committee Report re: Resolution Approving Financing for the Design, Rehabilitation, Upgrading and Construction of Various Renovations and Improvements to the City’s Wastewater Treatment Plants.

Assistant City Clerk Ortiz explained that the Council had moved to table this item previously.

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT NIEVES MOVED TO APPROVE 24-20 BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT RE: RESOLUTION APPROVING FINANCING FOR THE DESIGN, REHABILITATION, UPGRADING AND CONSTRUCTION OF VARIOUS RENOVATIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS TO THE CITY’S WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANTS.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON SECONDED.**

Council Member DeFilippo said that the City should be treated as if they were running a business. It is not smart to bond all this money. [Loss of audio] Every time they approve bonding money, the money can be used for anything. He wished to know what would happen if the Federal government approved the two proposed infrastructure bills. He added it was a garbage deal for the taxpayer and they are saying this should have been done yesterday. No one wants to bond this much money. It’s not a rainy day fund. When they bond money, once it is bonded, people forget about it.

Council Member Pereira read the following statement into the record:

Mr. Chair,

As elected representatives our role is to serve our constituents and help them in any way possible. Our role is not to harm or burden them.

Bridgeport residents, homeowners and tax payers already deal with the highest unemployment and foreclosure rates in CT, and the highest eviction rates in all of New England.

There is a false narrative that the issue at hand is whether upgrades to the two sewer treatment plants should occur. That is not the issue. I am sure there is not one amongst us who is opposed to ensuring the Long Island Sound is protected and that upgrades are completed. The issue at hand is the total cost of \$610,000,000 being placed on the backs of our homeowners, tenants, small businesses including restaurants and hair salons, our non-profits that have limited revenue streams and more.

Those that benefit most by approving tonight's \$395 million dollar resolution is Blackrock's very own John Stafstrom whose nephew is State Rep. Steve Stafstrom. Pullman & Comley will earn 1% of the resolution amount which is \$3.95 million. Although I have tried to obtain Pullman & Comley's contract from the City Attorney's office I have been met with fierce resistance from our lawless law department. If I was wrong wouldn't they simply hand over the contract to prove me wrong?

My overburdened constituents should not bare massive WPCA increases because Blackrock's residents appear to hold more weight than my constituents. After all, Blackrock is about to receive the largest tax decrease in the City and is the most affluent neighborhood in Bridgeport, therefore many of the homeowners in that neighborhood are more likely to afford a 50 to 117% increase in their WPCA bills. My constituents cannot afford to do so. They live in poverty or are hardworking middle class ratepayers.

President Biden just introduced his \$2.4 Trillion Infrastructure Bill last week with House Speaker Nancy Pelosi issuing a statement on Friday expecting the bill to pass right before July 4th. Why can't we press the pause button for 90 days? Where is the harm as the West End Plant design & specifications are not due until November 30, 2022? Senator Blumenthal. Senator Murphy and Congressman Himes have all committed to obtain federal infrastructure funds.

Ann Straut with DEEP stated the reason the full \$395,000,000 must be bonded for is because there are NO guarantees that any Clean Water Grants will be provided.

The best case scenario is that we receive \$118.5 million in Clean Water Grants with the remaining \$276.5 million being borrowed at 2% interest with ratepayers having to pay back an additional \$59.2 million in interest. WPCA rates will go up by 50% by 2027 at a minimum.

The worst case scenario is the full \$395 million needs to be borrowed at 2% having to pay back an additional \$96 million in interest. WPCA rates will increase by up to 66% by 2027. Neither option is okay for the vast majority of Bridgeport, business, non-profit and the BPS as rate payers.

Many of the most impoverished districts in Bridgeport are about to see significant real estate property tax increases effective July 1st with the 139th, 137th, JFK in the 138th, 136th, 135th, 133, the 130th Aquaculture Precinct and 131st City Hall Precinct

experiencing increases as high as 32%. How can any of us even contemplate passing this tonight know that you are adding double digit WPCA increases on top of these massive real estate tax increases?

We can wait 90 days before we vote on something that will further exasperate the financial well-being of those we represent.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER PEREIRA MOVED TO TABLE AGENDA ITEM 24-20 BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT RE: RESOLUTION APPROVING FINANCING FOR THE DESIGN, REHABILITATION, UPGRADING AND CONSTRUCTION OF VARIOUS RENOVATIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS TO THE CITY'S WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANTS MATTER UNTIL THE INFRASTRUCTURE ACT IS PASSED IN 90 DAYS.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER DEFILIPPO SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO TABLE AGENDA ITEM 24-20 BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT RE: RESOLUTION APPROVING FINANCING FOR THE DESIGN, REHABILITATION, UPGRADING AND CONSTRUCTION OF VARIOUS RENOVATIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS TO THE CITY'S WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANTS MATTER UNTIL THE INFRASTRUCTURE ACT IS PASSED IN 90 DAYS FAILED TO PASS WITH FOUR (4) IN FAVOR (BROWN, DEFILIPPO, CASTILLO AND PEREIRA) , FOURTEEN (14) OPPOSED (BURNS, MCCARTHY, CRUZ, TAYLOR-MOYE, BRANTLEY, HERRON, VIZZO-PANICCIA, MCBRIDE-LEE, ROMAN-CHRISTY, SILVA, NIEVES, VALLE, MARTINEZ AND NEWTON) AND TWO (2) ABSTENTIONS (LYONS AND SULIMAN).**

Council Members Lyons and Suliman stated that they had conflicts of interest and therefore were abstaining from the vote.

Council Member Newton said that everyone that had been on the 2018 City Council had voted to start this project. The Council Members that went on the tour saw the horrible conditions. Now the systems can't hold the amount of wastewater that comes into the system. The Council has approved this before and the WPCA has 100% rate of paying back their loans. They did not raise the rates for 7 years. There are residents who have to live with the odors because the plants are in such poor repair. There is a consent decree to do this. How much money John Stafstrom is making is not the issue and the City Council does not raise the WPCA rates. This is a State Law, just like the state mandates the gas taxes. This should have been done 25 years ago. Between 1/3rd to 2/3rds of their budget has been paid to an outside firm to manage the WPCA. If the system is improved, the rates might not go up. The Budget and Appropriations co-chairs will be doing everything they can to lower taxes and bring in new businesses to the City. There are people on the Council who were absent when residents were having their homes foreclosed by the WPCA. Grand standing is wrong. The sky is not going to fall.

Council Member Brantley said that she was supporting this bill because the overhaul is long overdue. It affects the entire U.S. She listed a number of locations where there is flooding and water coming out of the storm drains during rainstorms. If it is not done now, the generations coming up will have to pay. The President is working on infrastructure. This is about social justice for the people who live near these plants. They have to get rid of the lead pipes that the

drinking water comes from. Aquarion had a program to remove the lead pipes, but they ended the program in Bridgeport. Now property owners have to find private financing. It's not just in the paint on the walls, it's in the pipes. She requested that they support this item.

Council Member Cruz said that he remembered the latrines in Puerto Rico and when they moved to P.T., they brought the smell and stench with them. It created health problems for his mother and brother. He said that he had received an email from someone that said Mr. Himes had stated the bill might not pass. He's listened to many different people speak about this and has formed his own opinion and he was voting yes on this issue.

Council Member Taylor-Moye thanked Council Member Cruz for reading the letter into the record. This project has been ignored for a very long time. She said that she did not want to have the City to carry the name of "Stinky City". There are still children living and playing at P.T. Barnum. This is not about just one District, this is about the City of Bridgeport. It is imperative to get this job done. Let's move on with this.

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 24-20 BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT RE: RESOLUTION APPROVING FINANCING FOR THE DESIGN, REHABILITATION, UPGRADING AND CONSTRUCTION OF VARIOUS RENOVATIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS TO THE CITY'S WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANTS MATTER UNTIL THE INFRASTRUCTURE ACT IS PASSED IN 90 DAYS FAILED TO PASS WITH IN FOURTEEN (14) IN FAVOR (BURNS, MCCARTHY, CRUZ, TAYLOR-MOYE, BRANTLEY, HERRON, VIZZO-PANICCIA, MCBRIDE-LEE, ROMAN-CHRISTY, SILVA, NIEVES, VALLE, MARTINEZ AND NEWTON), FIVE (5) OPPOSED (BROWN, DEFILIPPO, CASTILLO, PEREIRA AND SULIMAN) AND ONE (1) ABSTENTION (LYONS).**

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT NIEVES REQUESTED TO SUSPEND THE RULES IN ORDER TO ADD AN ITEM FOR IMMEDIATE FOR CONSIDERATION REGARDING THE CT DEPT OF EDUCATION GRANT TO THE AGENDA.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO SUSPEND THE RULES IN ORDER TO ADD AN ITEM FOR IMMEDIATE FOR CONSIDERATION REGARDING THE CT DEPT OF EDUCATION GRANT TO THE AGENDA PASSED WITH EIGHTEEN (18) IN FAVOR (BURNS, MCCARTHY, CRUZ, TAYLOR-MOYE, BROWN, BRANTLEY, HERRON, LYONS, VIZZO-PANICCIA, MCBRIDE-LEE, ROMAN-CHRISTY, SILVA, CASTILLO, NIEVES, VALLE, SULIMAN, MARTINEZ AND NEWTON) AND TWO (2) OPPOSED (PEREIRA AND DEFILIPPO).**

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT NIEVES MOVED TO WAIVE REFERRAL FOR THE AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM GRANT FOR \$600,000 IMMEDIATE CONSIDERATION DUE TO TIME CONSTRAINTS.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO WAIVE REFERRAL FOR THE AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM GRANT FOR \$600,000 IMMEDIATE CONSIDERATION DUE TO TIME CONSTRAINTS PASSED WITH EIGHTEEN (18) IN FAVOR (BURNS, MCCARTHY,**

CRUZ, TAYLOR-MOYE, BROWN, BRANTLEY, HERRON, LYONS, VIZZO-PANICCIA, MCBRIDE-LEE, ROMAN-CHRISTY, SILVA, CASTILLO, NIEVES, VALLE, SULIMAN, MARTINEZ AND NEWTON) AND TWO(2) OPPOSED (PEREIRA AND DEFILIPPO).

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT NIEVES MOVED TO APPROVE THE CT DEPT OF EDUCATION AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM GRANT FOR \$600,000.**

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

Council Member Pereira said that they were just told that this had to be signed by April 19th. This has been a constant, repetitive problem with things being added to the agenda.

Ms. DeJesus said that the application was due on the 14th.

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE CT DEPT OF EDUCATION AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM GRANT FOR \$600,000 PASSED WITH NINETEEN (19) IN FAVOR (BURNS, MCCARTHY, CRUZ, TAYLOR-MOYE, BROWN, BRANTLEY, HERRON, DEFILIPPO, LYONS, VIZZO-PANICCIA, MCBRIDE-LEE, ROMAN-CHRISTY, SILVA, CASTILLO, NIEVES, VALLE, SULIMAN, MARTINEZ AND NEWTON) AND ONE (1) OPPOSED (PEREIRA).**

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT NIEVES MOVED TO ADD AN ITEM REGARDING CHANGES TO THE COUNCIL COMMITTEES TO THE AGENDA.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO ADD AN ITEM REGARDING CHANGES TO THE COUNCIL COMMITTEES TO THE AGENDA PASSED WITH NINETEEN (19) IN FAVOR (BURNS, MCCARTHY, CRUZ, TAYLOR-MOYE, BROWN, BRANTLEY, HERRON, DEFILIPPO, LYONS, VIZZO-PANICCIA, MCBRIDE-LEE, ROMAN-CHRISTY, SILVA, CASTILLO, NIEVES, VALLE, SULIMAN, MARTINEZ AND NEWTON) AND ONE (1) OPPOSED (PEREIRA).**

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT NIEVES MOVED TO MAKE THE FOLLOWING COMMITTEE CHANGES IN ORDER TO ADD COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ BACK TO HER COMMITTEES:**

BUDGET & APPROPRIATIONS:

REMOVE – DENESE TAYLOR-MOYE

ADD – MARY MCBRIDE-LEE

ORDINANCES:

REMOVE – EVETTE BRANTLEY

ADD – ENEIDA MARTINEZ – CHAIR

***ROSALINA BACK IN THE COMMITTEE**

PUBLIC SAFETY & TRANSPORTATION:

REMOVE MARY MCBRIDE-LEE

ADD DENESE TAYLOR-MOYE, CHAIR

REMOVE AVELINO SILVA

ADD ENEIDA MARTINEZ

COUNCIL LEADERSHIP

MAJORITY LEADER – ENEIDA MARTINEZ

DEPUTY MAJORITY – JEANETTE HERRON

DEPUTY MAJORITY – ERNEST NEWTON

DEPUTY MAJORITY – MICHELLE LYONS

ADD ENEIDA MARTINEZ TO THE FOLLOWING AS LIAISON:

HOUSING

POLICE COMMISSION

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY SECONDED.**

Council President Lyons asked about the Council rules regarding the Committees that require to having the changes in writing. Council President Nieves said that she had submitted the changes to the City Clerk earlier in the day.

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE CHANGES TO THE COUNCIL COMMITTEES AS PRESENTED BY THE CITY COUNCIL PRESIDENT PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

ADJOURNMENT.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Telesco Secretarial Services

City of Bridgeport
City Council Meeting
Regular Meeting
April 5, 2021