

**CITY of BRIDGEPORT  
CITY COUNCIL  
PUBLIC SPEAKING SESSION  
MONDAY, MAY 21, 2012  
6:30 PM**

ATTENDANCE: Council members: Brannelly, M. McCarthy, Colon, T. McCarthy, Olson, Brantley, Austin, Vizzo-Paniccia, Bonney, Blunt, dePara, Silva, Ayala, Martinez, Paoletto, Curwen, Baker, Holloway

ABSENT: Council members: Taylor-Moye, T. McCarthy, Lyons

President Pro Tempore Bonney called the public speaking session to order at 7:15 pm.

Roll Call – the city clerk took the roll call and announced there was a quorum.

THE FOLLOWING NAMED PERSON(S) REQUESTED PERMISSION TO ADDRESS THE CITY COUNCIL ON MONDAY, MAY 21, 2012, AT 6:30 P.M., IN THE CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL, 45 LYON TERRACE, BRIDGEPORT, CT.

*Speakers signed up prior to the session*

**NAME**

**SUBJECT**

John Marshall Lee  
30 Beacon Street  
Bridgeport, CT 06605

*-see statement below-*

Ladies and gentlemen of the City Council, good evening.

You may have noticed that I have sent no emails to you in over five days. To some that will be welcome, because you don't read them anyway and therefore it is one less thing to delete. For others I am always hopeful that there is a "nugget" of common sense, or City information, or even regulations, ordinance language or Charter matters that may bear your attention as a public servant elected by the people. Of course, our City elections will win us no prizes for the number of people who come out to vote, especially with respect to the number who are registered. That is a serious matter but not my subject this evening.

On Wednesday evening there is a public hearing on changes to the Charter. The Revision Committee has met on over 30 occasions to review, discuss, and amend our City Charter,  
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with most attention focused on Mayoral appointment of Board of Education members (subsequent to a review of qualifications by another Mayoral appointed body). Frankly I don't see the changes as critical to getting accountability of many types from the current Interim Superintendent. But that is a personal opinion.

What I thought I might focus upon and recommend for your consideration are some other subjects and words that may sound new to you from the proposed Charter:

- Legislative Procedures and Oversight Function: With respect to matters pertaining to the budget and finances of the City, the City Council, or a committee thereof, shall conduct periodic oversight meetings (on not less than a quarterly basis) with appropriate City officials pertaining to the filing of the monthly financial report required by Section 7 of Chapter 9...
- Regarding the Monthly Financial Report: That report for the previous month is now required to be in your hands by the first City Council meeting of the following month. That accelerates the date of the report. Perhaps you will use the latent power always available to you in the language, "the City Council may, by Ordinance, require that additional information be included in such report". There are two items I would strongly suggest to help you keep track of your responsibilities: request that employment information broken down by department reporting funded positions that are currently filled and those with vacancies. That should go a long way to helping you answer the charge of having "ghost positions" that are sources of "slush funds" for which you have no access because you fail to get a 12<sup>th</sup> month report that would show you line item funding. The second item is to request that variance to last year's revenue and expense be noted in the monthly reports as it is in most community budgets you will see. You will find the info helpful to you as busy people trying to get a sense of the "big picture".
- Police and Fire Pensions continue to be the province of the Board Commissioners as Trustees. With the budget just passed do you understand what the City liability remains relative to investment risks on Police and Fire Pension Plan B participants?? If you have Pension A, Pension B Fire and Pension B Police funds under three different structures, or investment management concepts, what is the risk to the public of losses similar to those suffered by Pension A in the past dozen years when the financial markets lost significant values on two occasions? What are the current risks to the taxpayers in this regard? Will you invite the Actuaries to a presentation as they were in the City budget session one year ago to alert us to what the transfer to MERF of current funding means to City taxpayers if we continue to hold retirement plan assets?

I have several other observations and questions and look to share them on Wednesday evening. I am concerned that a simple question that I did ask two weeks ago which one of your members took up as a task to research is still not answered. So let me ask all of you in the hope that someone knows where the answer can be found. An employment chart contained in the 2013 budget transmittal showed City employees including BOE at 3523. Several pages later the budget narrative indicated that there were 4380 active employees in City healthcare plans. I asked the simple question as to where they were working, what budgets were being spent (including retirement funds) and for what services, and where

reporting to Council and oversight was happening. Can anyone tell me? Is this a secret? Or is it part of your responsibility of being informed for the public you represent?

John Marshall Lee  
30 Beacon Street  
Bridgeport, CT 06605  
May 21, 2012

Tom Bottillo spoke about development of the city, particularly at exit-29 coming into Stratford. He said that the entire intersection isn't functional. He further stated that the development of it seems to shut off people from traveling down Stratford Avenue. He mentioned Steel Point and he suggested that until it's developed, the grass should be grown and cleaned up. He emphasized that it would make an excellent park. He went on to say that common sense was lacking in the city. He mentioned the street he lived on noting that it's a very busy street and traffic lights are needed. He expressed that there are many things that bring money into the city, but that aren't necessarily good ventures. He mentioned other sites around the city that are no longer functioning as businesses and should be considered for parks and other uses. He commented that it was shameful that residents aren't treated with common courtesy and that the city council and administration should exercise more common sense.

The public hearing session closed at 7:30 pm.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER HOLLOWAY MOVED TO ENTER INTO A 5-MINUTE  
CAUCUS PRIOR TO THE CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER CURWEN SECONDED  
\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

*The city council members entered into caucus at 7:31 pm.  
The caucus ended at 7:50 pm.*

**CITY of BRIDGEPORT**

**CITY COUNCIL MEETING**

**MONDAY, MAY 21, 2012**

**7:00 PM**

**City Council Chambers, City Hall - 45 Lyon Terrace**

**Bridgeport, Connecticut**

**ATTENDANCE:** Council members: Brannelly, M. McCarthy, Colon, Taylor-Moye, Brantley, Austin, Vizzo-Paniccia, Bonney, Blunt, dePara, Silva, Ayala, Martinez, Paoletto, Curwen, Baker, Holloway

**ABSENT:** Council members: Taylor-Moye, T. McCarthy, Lyons

Mayor Finch called the meeting to order at 7:51 pm.

Prayer - Council member Olson offered the prayer.

Pledge of Allegiance - Council member Holloway led the pledge of allegiance.

Roll Call The city clerk took the roll call and announced there was a quorum.

City Council Citation: In Recognition of Paul Barnum for his Dedication and Service to the Bridgeport Community.

Mayor Finch asked Paul Barnum to come forward to receive the citation.

The Mayor recalled years ago when he met Paul. He also acknowledged Ms. Meyer who was 100-years old today. He expressed that Mr. Barnum and Ms. Meyer were truly God sends in what they have done for the east side community.

Mr. Barnum expressed a few of the good things that have been accomplished on the east side of Bridgeport through the years.

Mayor Finch relayed what a good friend Paul has been and he further expressed all the positive contributions that he has made to the city.

Mr. Barnum expressed that he sincerely loved the city and although they have experienced some difficulties through the years; a lot of work has been done on the east side. He said he was proud to be a citizen of Bridgeport.

*Council member Martinez read the citation in recognition of Paul Barnum for his dedication and service to the City of Bridgeport on this day May 21, 2012.*

City Council Citation: In Recognition of the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce for the Completion of the 2012 Small Business Development Class.

Mayor Finch asked the three members that were present from the Hispanic Merchants Association to come forward.

Mayor Finch stated that new entrepreneurs were trained to run small businesses through the help of the Hispanic Merchants Association. He mentioned that their graduation was this evening – *he recognized all the graduates that were present in the audience.*

*Mayor Finch read the citation.*

The Hispanic Merchants Association members expressed their appreciation for recognizing their contributions.

Council member Martinez asked Deborah Caviness to come forward to acknowledge all the hard work she dedicates to the business development class – *she read the citation.*

It was stated that one-hundred (100) merchants have benefited from the small business development class and she wished all that graduated well in the future.

It was expressed by one of the members that *“If you have a dream, make it happen”!*

Mayor Finch commented that the City of Bridgeport was the first city to have its own small business office located in the City Hall Annex.

#### **MINUTES FOR APPROVAL:**

Approval of City Council Minutes: April 16, 2012

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER HOLLOWAY MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES  
\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER M. McCARTHY SECONDED  
\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**COMMUNICATIONS TO BE REFERRED TO COMMITTEES:**

**86-11** Communication from Tax Collector re: Assignment of Tax Liens for Fiscal Year 2012, referred Contracts Committee.

**87-11** Communication from Tax Collector re: Municipal Suspense Tax Book, referred to Budget and Appropriations Committee.

**88-11** Communication from City Attorney re: Proposed Arena Billboard Lease Agreement among Arena Operator, Independent Outdoor III, LLC, referred to Contracts Committee.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER HOLLOWAY MOVED TO REFER  
COMMUNICATIONS TO BE REFERRED TO COMMITTEES  
\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER dePARA SECONDED  
\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**MATTERS TO BE ACTED UPON (CONSENT CALENDAR):**

**\*84-11** Budget & Appropriations Committee Report re: Approval of the De-Authorization of Projects Previously Approved for Bonding Authority.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBR dePARA MOVED TO APPROVE  
\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO SECONDED  
\*\* MOTION PASSED UANANIMOUSLY**

**MATTERS TO BE ACTED UPON:**

**83-11** Budget & Appropriations Committee Report re: Approval of General Obligation Bonds – To Fund Certain Capital Improvement Projects.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY MOVED TO APPROVE  
\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER McCARTHY SECONDED**

Council member Vizzo-Paniccia made a statement in regard to the item. She relayed that she had concerns about certain projects that will be funded. She stated that she wears Bridgeport on her sleeve. And as the representative of the 134<sup>th</sup> district (upper north end) and as a representative of the city as a whole since she lives in the city; she had an issue with Esplanade Park being located in the middle of Lincoln Boulevard at a cost of over \$1 million.

She further stressed that to put a park in the middle of a street is a little scary due to the potential problems that may occur with drivers trying to make a roundabout turn. She also had a concern about the fumes from the vehicles. She clarified that she didn't intend any disrespect to those that support the project; however, she said she would vote no on this project.

She commented that Council President McCarthy and Council member Austin were aware of her concerns.

There was a roll call vote:

**\*\* MOTION PASSED WITH FIFTEEN VOTES IN FAVOR; TWO VOTES IN  
OPPOSITION (COUNCIL MEMBERS: OLSON and VIZZO-PANICCIA)**

***\*It was noted that three (3) council members were absent from the vote.***

New business:

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO MOVED TO SUSPEND THE RULES FOR THE  
PURPOSE OF REFERRING AN ITEM TO COMMITTEE  
\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY SECONDED  
\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO MOVED TO REFER RE: PROPOSED  
AMENDMENT OF CODE OF ORDINANCES SECTION 13.04.040 BOARD OF  
DIRECTORS TO THE ORDINANCE COMMITTEE  
\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER HOLLOWAY SECONDED  
\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

***It was noted that the item would be brought up at the Ordinance Meeting scheduled on Tuesday, May 22, 2012.***

Announcements:

- Council member Vizzo-Paniccia announced that Council member Lyons had a family situation and was unable to attend the meeting.
- Council member Brannelly announced that she left a packet of information on everyone's desk for review for tomorrow's Ordinance meeting. The information pertained to Sexually Oriented Businesses and Massage Establishment and Parlors.

She announced that Council member Taylor-Moye just arrived back from an out of town conference and was unable to attend the meeting.

- Council member dePara announced that a revised copy of the amendment would be submitted by City Attorney Anastasi and available for the Ordinance Committee Meeting on Tuesday, May 22, 2012
- Council member Olson commented that although he wasn't present for the Budget & Appropriations PY13 approval; he felt a good job was done to accommodate everyone as best they could.
- Council member Brantley mentioned that students in the Lighthouse Program held a talent show and the children were wonderful and awesome. She encouraged everyone to attend the show next year.

She announced that Bridgeport Tabernacle was sponsoring a carnival to be held throughout Memorial Day weekend.

## ADJOURNMENT

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO MOVED TO ADJOURN  
\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY SECONDED  
\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

The meeting adjourned at 8:25 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Graham  
Telesco Secretarial Services