

CITY COUNCIL PUBLIC SPEAKING SESSION
CITY of BRIDGEPORT
MARCH 7, 2011
6:30 P.M.

ATTENDANCE: Brannelly, M. McCarthy, A. Ayala, Taylor-Moye, Brantley,
T. McCarthy, Lyons, Vizzo-Paniccia, dePara, Silva, Martinez, Paoletto,
Curwen, Baker, Holloway

ABSENT: Council members: Austin, Bonney, *M. Ayala, *Blunt, *Walsh

*= arrived late

Council President McCarthy called the public speaking session to order at 6:40 pm.

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

Council President McCarthy announced that Council member Austin wasn't in attendance tonight due to a death in the family.

THE FOLLOWING NAMED PERSONS HAVE REQUESTED PERMISSION TO ADDRESS THE CITY COUNCIL ON MONDAY, MARCH 7, 2011, AT 6:30 P.M., IN THE CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL, 45 LYON TERRACE, BRIDGEPORT, CT.

NAME	SUBJECT
John Bagley 826 Beechwood Avenue Bridgeport, CT 06605 – not present to speak	Boys and Girls Club
Nancy Esposito 105 Little Deer Road Bridgeport, CT 06606	Bridgeport Animal Control

Ms. Esposito thanked the city council for allowing her to speak tonight. She stated that she was a member of an organization that protects the rights of animals. She had three issues concerning dogs: 1) one dog was observed on Seaview Avenue, where the dog was left outside and the food bowl was turned over. The second dog was observed at 255-257 Hollister Avenue and the dog was chained to the garage. She said she didn't believe anyone was living in the house and the food bowl was turned over. The third dog belongs to Meg Rodriguez. She said she saw the dog had a broken leg and she offered to help Ms. Rodriguez get it some medical assistance, but the dog's injury was never addressed. She stressed that the dog suffered for weeks in that condition. She read a portion of the state statute regarding animals that read; you cannot leave a dog for a long time unattended and without proper care. She said she tried to make some calls to the animal control facility to

report the incidences, but no one ever answers the phone. She also sent copies of the reports and investigations to them, but she hasn't received any response. She mentioned that the laws should be enforced as they pertain to animal control. She further noted that she wanted to see the shelter open and operating at regular hours and the animal issues addressed.

Thayer Barkley
281 Thorne Street
Bridgeport, CT 06606 – not present

Boys and Girls Club

Tyrone Swaby
850 Atlantic Street
Bridgeport, CT 06604 – not present

Boys and Girls Club

Carolyn Nah (*signed up to prior to the session*)

Abuse of Power

Ms. Nah stated that she has been a resident of Bridgeport for 43 years and a taxpayer. She said she was there to talk about abuse of power, specifically as it referred to the hearing for the halfway house that was proposed in the west end of Bridgeport. She stated there were people council members and people from Fairfield present at the hearing, but some of the residents weren't allowed to speak and express all their concerns. She said she didn't feel the council members should be allowed to use their power to sway a board's decision. She cautioned the council members about abusing their power.

Clyde Nicholson (*signed up to speak prior to the session*)

West End Halfway House

Mr. Nicholson spoke about the night the hearing was held for the halfway house proposed on the west end of Bridgeport. He said his purpose for attending was to talk about his concerns regarding the permit. He said he had a problem with the chairman of the meeting because he felt he was being talked down to. He noted that the halfway house was proposed for the west end of Bridgeport. He stressed that there are crack houses and other run down places in Bridgeport, so he didn't see the problem with a halfway house going in as a place that could help those coming out of jail. He mentioned the minister that spoke at the hearing who stated that he didn't want the halfway house in that area. Mr. Nicholson expressed that this is God's work and he emphasized that every time someone comes forward to do something in Bridgeport, it gets denied. He pointed out that there are other big cities, such as New Haven and Hartford that are growing, so he didn't see why Bridgeport couldn't as well.

He went on to address other concerns he had in the past and brought forward to the city council, but nothing has been done. Such as the state of the school system and his idea for gun control. He ended his comments to strongly express that he didn't like the way Council President McCarthy sat on the podium to listen to the public and act like George Wallace.

The public speaking session ended at 7:00 pm.

CITY COUNCIL MEETING

Monday, March 7, 2011

7:00 p.m.

City Council Chambers, City Hall - 45 Lyon Terrace
Bridgeport, Connecticut

ATTENDANCE: Brannelly, M. McCarthy, A. Ayala, Taylor-Moye, Brantley, Walsh, T. McCarthy, Lyons, Vizzo-Paniccia, Blunt, dePara, Silva, M. Ayala, Martinez, Paoletto, Curwen, Baker, Holloway
ABSENT: Council members: Austin, Bonney

Mayor Finch called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm.

Pledge of Allegiance - the pledge was led by Barry Piesner

Prayer - the prayer was offered by Bishop Banks

Moment of Silence – Mayor Finch called for a moment of silence for Council member Austin’s brother who passed away.

Council member Vizzo-Paniccia asked for a moment of silence, for a friend John Delvecchio who she said was instrumental in the Italian American community. He was also a member of Union-Local 99

Roll Call - the city clerk took the roll and she announced there was a quorum.

Mayor Finch announced that the comprehensive financial statement was issued. He said it will be available on-line and hard copies are also available.

MINUTES FOR APPROVAL:

Approval of City Council Minutes: February 7, 2011

** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES
** COUNCIL MEMBER A. AYALA SECONDED
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

COMMUNICATIONS TO BE REFERRED TO COMMITTEES:

**** COUNCIL MEMBER CURWEN MOVED TO REFER COMMUNICATIONS TO COMMITTEES**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER dePARA SECONDED**

42-10 Communication from Ethics Commission re Proposed Amendments to the Municipal Code of Ordinance, amend Chapter 2.38 Code of Ethics, referred to Ordinance Committee.

43-10 Communication from Mayor re Proposed Five-Year Capital Plan for fiscal years 2012-2016, referred to Budget and Appropriations Committee.

44-10 Communication from Engineering re Project 15-352, Letter of Commitment – Pavement Rehabilitation and Resurfacing of John Street, Lafayette Boulevard, Water Street and North Frontage Road Utilizing Funding from the STP-Urban Program, referred to Public Safety and Transportation Committee.

45-10 Communication from Central Grants and Community Development re Grant Submission: 2011 Medical Reserve Corps Grant, referred to Economic and Community Development and Environment Committee.

46-10 Communication from Mayor re Approval of General Obligation Bonds – To Fund Certain Capital Improvement Projects, referred to Budget and Appropriations Committee.

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

City Council Citation: Pastor Alphod Sinclair in recognition of Service to the Community.

Mayor Finch, Council President McCarthy and Council members Brantley and Walsh approached the front of city council chambers to present the citation.

Council member Brantley stated that the citation pertained to Prayer Tabernacle Church. She expressed that they have a food pantry and they're the only church in Bridgeport that also offers rent and utility assistance. They also offer clothing assistance to those in need. She commented that the food they prepare is overwhelming and they not only feed people in the community, they go outside the community to feed the poor and hungry. So the city council wanted to recognize all the good work they do. She further expressed that she hoped they continued to bless the community!

Mayor Finch stated that he really appreciated what Pastor Sinclair and the church does for the community.

A member of the church stated that Pastor Sinclair wanted to be here tonight to express his gratitude. He said the pastor sees himself as a member of the community and he

reaches out to strengthen the west end of Bridgeport. He hoped to continue their work for many years.

Council President McCarthy congratulated Prayer Tabernacle Church for all they do in the community.

Point of Personal Privilege – Council member Baker recalled that he received a post card from Bridgeport PAL regarding the Mayor’s Ball. He expressed that over the years, they have worked hard to provide funding to the organization. However, he spoke about other programs that have been closed and boarded up. He asked the Mayor to consider spreading the wealth among other organizations and not just for the seniors and youth.

MATTERS TO BE ACTED UPON (CONSENT CALENDAR):

Mayor Finch asked if there were any items to remove from the consent calendar.

Council member Walsh requested to remove item * **26-10** Economic and Community Development and Environment Committee Report re Approval of Sycamore Housing Associates LLP as the Purchaser and Developer of Sycamore Place Apartments.

Council member Vizzo-Paniccia requested to remove the following items:

* **32-10** Public Safety and Transportation Committee Report re Signage Honoring Fallen Firefighters Lieutenant Steven Velasquez and Firefighter Michel Baik by including honorary names on the street sign at the intersection of Ocean Drive and Osborne Street, adjacent to their Firehouse 7 & 11.

* **36-10** Public Safety and Transportation Committee Report re Request by Greater Bridgeport Transit Authority (GBTA) for approval relating to design and installation of Bus Stop Shelters at various locations, pursuant to Resolution 58-08.

** **COUNCIL MEMBER CURWEN MOVED TO APPROVE**
** **COUNCIL MEMBER dePARA SECONDED**

The city clerk read the remaining items into the record.

Mayor Finch returned to item * **32-10** Public Safety and Transportation Committee Report re Signage Honoring Fallen Firefighters Lieutenant Steven Velasquez and Firefighter

Michel Baik by including honorary names on the street sign at the intersection of Ocean Drive and Osborne Street, adjacent to their Firehouse 7 & 11.

** **COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO MOVED TO APPROVE**
** **COUNCIL MEMBER T. McCARTHY SECONDED**

Council member Vizzo-Paniccia stated that as with all the previous requests of this type, she will vote against the item until there is a uniform policy in place regarding signage.

**** MOTION PASSED WITH SEVENTEEN VOTES IN FAVOR AND ONE VOTE IN OPPOSITION (COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA)**

36-10 Public Safety and Transportation Committee Report re Request by Greater Bridgeport Transit Authority (GBTA) for approval relating to design and installation of Bus Stop Shelters at various locations, pursuant to Resolution 58-08.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY MOVED TO APPROVE
** LYONS SECONDED**

Council member Vizzo-Paniccia stated that over the last year and a half, some of the bus shelters have been in disrepair, she said she wanted to make sure a follow up plan is in place.

Council member Lyons said a thorough report was done and a lot of questions were asked to assure that the transit authority will live up to their contract. As the project progresses, the committee will receive a report of the installations and a timeline schedule of each phase. She said the committee will be made aware of each stage of the design installation.

Council member Holloway stated that he has seen many bus stops and bus shelters in the city, but the 129th district only has two (2) bus shelters. And from East Main Street to Stratford Avenue, there aren't any bus shelters.

Council member Lyons said they added a bus shelter at 42 Connecticut Avenue and 38 Stratford Avenue. She explained that for any more added bus shelters they want installed, the developer will be glad to accommodate them. She repeated that the committee will be kept updated as to the installations and the timeline and phase.

Council member Holloway said he had a concern that people taking the bus and for people that transfer to other buses, shouldn't have to stand in the rain. He stressed that the area between Stratford Avenue and East Main Street is a big bus stop and it the shelter should be replaced.

Council member Vizzo-Paniccia clarified that during a snow storm, no one is at the bus shelters to clean up. She wanted to make sure that the shelters don't continue to block the sidewalks.

Council member Lyons stated that if there were any other questions, the council member should contact the Bridgeport Transit Authority. She reiterated that reports will be submitted to the committee with updates.

****MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

Mayor Finch returned to the following item:

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED TO APPROVE
** COUNCIL dePARA SECONDED**

- * **26-10** Economic and Community Development and Environment Committee Report re Approval of Sycamore Housing Associates LLP as the Purchaser and Developer of Sycamore Place Apartments. - *removed*

Council member Brantley stated that there was a meeting and they discussed moving forward to get better services for the seniors. She expressed that she looked forward to the new development.

Council member Walsh had a question about the resolution as it pertained to the residents maintaining residency according to HUD standards. He asked if they will be able to maintain the existing standard they currently have. – *he noted this information was found in the resolution dated November 10, 2003.* Mr. Lavernoich clarified that there was a 2003 and 2004 resolution that was approved.

Mr. Lavernoich updated that the most recent resolution includes Wishcamper Companies as the new developer.

Council member Walsh asked which resolution he should be referring to. Mr. Lavernoich gave him a copy of the current resolution.

Council member dePara stated that the resolution context for approval was outlined on the second page of the 2003/2004 resolution. Mayor Finch asked if the developer would be bound by the contents of the resolution agreed upon during 2003/2004. Mr. Lavernoich acknowledged that was correct.

Council member Walsh stated that as long as it's on the record and in the contract that the developer will maintain the important portability standards, then he didn't have a problem with it. Mr. Lavernoich acknowledged his comment.

Council member dePara commended Council member Brantley for addressing some key questions and issues during the committee meeting. Particularly the issue regarding the elevator and its safety; as well as any security measures that will be taken to bring the building up to standard. He thanked her for the questions she put to the developer.

Mayor Finch said he only hoped that the building will be improved for the sake of the seniors for better conditions to live in.

- * **32-10** Public Safety and Transportation Committee Report re Signage Honoring Fallen Firefighters Lieutenant Steven Velasquez and Firefighter Michel Baik by including honorary names on the street sign at the intersection of Ocean Drive and Osborne Street, adjacent to their Firehouse 7 & 11. - *removed*

- * **36-10** Public Safety and Transportation Committee Report re Request by Greater Bridgeport Transit Authority (GBTA) for approval relating to design and installation of Bus Stop Shelters at various locations, pursuant to Resolution 58-08. - *removed*
- ***161-09** Economic and Community Development and Environment Committee Report re Disposition of City Owned Property to Habitat for Humanity.
- ***164-09** Economic and Community Development and Environment Committee Report re Development, Lease and Use Agreement with M.O.V.E. Yacht Club for the re-development of 148-220 Waterview Avenue.
- * **20-10(PHO)** Economic and Community Development and Environment Committee Report re Public Hearing Ordered for March 21, 2011 regarding Disposition and re-development of City Owned Properties located at 167 Steuben Street and 95 Gilmore Street former Waltersville School.
- * **25-10(PHO)** Economic and Community Development and Environment Committee Report re Public Hearing Ordered for March 21, 2011 regarding PILOT Agreement with POKO Partners in collaboration with Alpha Community Services for the Clinton Commons Project, a 33-unit affordable housing project, at 75-101 Clinton Avenue.
- * **26-10** Economic and Community Development and Environment Committee Report re Approval of Sycamore Housing Associates LLP as the Purchaser and Developer of Sycamore Place Apartments. - *removed*
- * **29-10** Economic and Community Development and Environment Committee Report re Grant Submission: U.S. Department of Energy EPA 2010 LEAP (Local Energy Assurance Plans for Connecticut Municipalities) Grant Program.
- * **30-10** Economic and Community Development and Environment Committee Report re Grant Submission: Connecticut Department of Public Health for 2011 Lead Poisoning Prevention – Education Outreach Grant.
- * **40-10** Economic and Community Development and Environment Committee Report re Grant Submission: Southwest Community Health Center 2011-2012 Oral Health Care Grant.
- * **19-10** Miscellaneous Matters Committee Report re Appointment of Carl Theodore Horton Jr. to the Energy Improvement District Board.
- * **33-10** Miscellaneous Matters Committee Report re Suit Settlement with Bryan Cascio.

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

Other Business:

**** COUNCIL MEMBER CURWEN MOVED TO SUSPEND THE RULES FOR THE PURPOSE OF ADDING AN ITEM TO THE AGENDA FOR IMMEDIATE CONSIDERATION**
**** COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO SECONDED**
**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

Council member Curwen deferred to Council member dePara to address the item.

Council member dePara stated that item was time sensitive, noting that it came out of the Budget & Appropriations Committee.

1. Tax Anticipation Notes (TAN)

**** COUNCIL MEMBER dePARA MOVED TO APPROVE**
**** COUNCIL MEMBER CURWEN SECONDED**

Council member Brannelly asked him to clarify what they were voting on. Council member dePara said the item was submitted as item **34-10** – *the council members took a few minutes to review the information*. He explained that Tax Anticipation Notes involved going out to market to borrow a certain percentage, to help the city keep up with expenses and obligations.

Council member Walsh asked about the \$83 million and if that amount was part of the \$110 million. Mayor Finch explained that the city borrows twice per year. Dawn Norton, Finance Director clarified that it was ECS money that comes in.

Council member Walsh asked if they would be \$32 million in the hole before the \$83 million is available. Ms. Norton said that was correct. Council member Walsh asked where the \$83 million comes from. Ms. Norton said it is generated from the (TAN).

Council member Curwen informed the council members that his has happened often within the last four or five years, because the fund balance is too low. He said until it's replenished, they will be in this predicament until the fund balance is built back up.

Council member Walsh asked what the cost was associated with borrowing the money. Mayor Finch replied that it was too much, noting that the cost was approximately \$400k according to Tom Sherwood. He further stated that it's the plan they had, to make Bridgeport stable. He commented that it was necessary, due to past mismanagement and that 's the reason they have to use Tax Anticipation Notes.

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER T. McCARTHY MOVED TO SUSPEND THE RULES FOR THE PURPOSE OF APPOINTING A SPECIAL REDISTRICTING COMMITTEE**
**** COUNCIL MEMBER CURWEN SECONDED**
**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER T. McCARTHY MOVED TO APPOINT A SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON REDISTRICTING** –*he briefly explained the process involved. He noted that the following council members have been selected to serve on the committee:* Council members: Holloway, Martinez, Brannelly, Taylor-Moye, Brantley, Austin and Lyons.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO SECONDED**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

Mayor Finch referred to and read a statement from Senator Harry Reed regarding a vote in the house to continue HR1, noting that they cut CDBG funds by 65% as well as other city programs. There is another motion on the senate floor to pass it.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY MOVED TO SUSPEND THE RULES FOR THE PURPOSE OF REFERRING TWO RESOLUTIONS TO COMMITTEE**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER T. McCARTHY SECONDED**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

The following items were referred to committee:

1. **Lafayette Circle Realignment (ITEM # 49-10)**
2. **Pedestrian Bridge and Walkway over Ash Creek (ITEM # 48-10)**

Council member Holloway questioned what the urgency was to refer the items. He further questioned why the matter couldn't wait until Wednesday to submit the items during the committee meeting.

**** MOTION PASSED WITH SEVENTEEN VOTES IN FAVOR AND ONE VOTE IN OPPOSITION (COUNCIL MEMBER HOLLOWAY)**

Council member Vizzo-Paniccia reminded the council members about the annual GBRC recommendations. She urged everyone to get their budget done by the first of May to avoid working overtime.

Council President McCarthy announced for anyone attending the National Cities to see him tonight after the meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO MOVED TO ADJOURN**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER LYONS SECONDED**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

The meeting adjourned at 7:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Graham
Telesco Secretarial Services

City of Bridgeport
City Council Meeting
March 7, 2011
Page **10** of **10**