

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
JANUARY 9, 2008**

ATTENDANCE: Susan Brannelly, Co-chair; Michelle Lyons; Carlos Silva;
Ezequiel Santiago

OTHERS: Linda Lambeth, CT Post; Maria Valle, Council Member;
Daniel Martinez, Council Member; Khallid Graham, Young Adult
Police Commission; Leland Jones, Young Adult Police
Commission; Lowell Jones, Young Adult Police
Commission; Jonathan Silva, Young Adult Police
Commission; Ana Marti, Columbus PAC President

CALL TO ORDER

Co-chair Silva called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

INFORMATIONAL SESSION

Co-chair Silva introduced the members of the Committee that were present and then had the Young Adult Police Commissioners introduce themselves. Co-Chair Silva said that many times the Education Committee had been cancelled. Co-chair Silva said that he and Co-chair Brannelly had discussed the direction that this Committee should take. Co-Chair Silva said that it would be important to connect with the parents of the students, the educational staff, and the school administration.

JUNIOR POLICE COMMISSION FUNCTION

Co-chair Silva said that he felt it was important to recognize the Young Adult Police Commissioner (Y.A. P.C.) and have the Commissioners become a recognizable entity in the high schools that the other students look up to in their schools.

BOE MEETING CALENDAR

He said that the meetings may be held at the various locations and to interact with the Board of Education. Co-chair Silva then distributed copies of the BOE schedule.

Ms. Lyons suggested that perhaps the Young Adult Police Commissioners could have the opportunity to address the various grades in the various schools. Y.A.P.C. President Jones said that they attend the Police Commission meetings.

Co-Chair Silva said that Dr. Ramos, Police Chief Norwood and two of the PAC presidents were unable to attend because of conflicts of schedule. Co-chair Silva said that he had only invited two of the PAC presidents this time because he started with his district and that Co-chair Brannelly would invite the PAC presidents from her district. Co-chair Brannelly said that with 10 districts, the Educational Committee could put one district a month on the schedule now and plan to discuss that district. Co-chair Brannelly said that the important that the Committee focus on helping the students.

Council Member Valle suggested that the Committee contact the home school coordinators and speak to them. Council Member Valle pointed out that when there is snow, the schools are plowed out, but often the homeowners don't shovel the walks within 24 hours, so the students are walking in the street.

Council Member Valle said that often traffic is a problem and related an incident where a school needed "No Parking During the Hours of ..." so the buses can get in to pick up the students. The signs are now in place.

The discussion then returned to a recent incident where a student was hit by a car at Blackman. Although the child was not hurt, it was still a dangerous situation. Council Member Lyons said that the Mayor had visited the school the following day and the situation was corrected.

PAC PRESIDENT'S INFORMATION

The Columbus PAC President Marti said that during a fire drill when the fire alarms went off at Columbus, the students were falling on the ice and when they were coming back into the building, they were slipping on the wet floors.

Council Member Lyons pointed out that without someone from the Board of Education, the work that the Committee will not be able to progress very far. Council Member Santiago agreed and said it would be important to get communication between the BOE and the Committee.

Council Member Martinez said that it would be good to have one meeting at each of the various high schools. Council Member Valle said that once a month, all the home school coordinators have a meeting on the first Friday of the month. Council Member Valle said that she was one of the home school coordinators. She suggested that the Committee contact Marilyn Robson about this. A discussion about this then followed.

Ms. Marti said that there is a Columbus PAC meeting for the parents in the morning every month. Council Member Valle said that there would be a meeting on January 16, 2008 at Beardsley School in the evening.

Council Member Santiago said that he was also involved in the School Construction Meetings and could rely information to and from the group.

Co-chair Silva said that if anyone did not get a packet, he will see about getting another packet for them.

Co-chair Brannelly then asked Y.A.P.C. President Jones about what they do as Police Commissioners. Y.A.P.C. President Jones said that there were 15 on the Commission and meet once a week with Chief Norwood about various issues in the school. Y.A.P.C. President Jones said that many of the students don't realize that the Y.A.P.C. Commissioners are there to benefit them. Co-chair Silva said that the Halloween Safe Night and a car wash that was sponsored at another time were great successes. Y.A.P. Commissioner Silva said that it was important for the kids to get to know the police officers and regard them as friends rather than enemies. Y.A. P. Commissioner Silva said that often police officers would go into the schools and describe the program to the students. Co-chair Silva said that the Y.A.P.C members were welcomed to attend any of the meetings. Council Member Martinez said that he was proud of the Y.A.P.C. program and pleased that the Y.A.P.C members had come to the meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL MEMBER SANTIAGO MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER LYONS SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Service

MINUTES OF MEETING
CITY COUNCIL EDUCATION & SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE
Wednesday, February 13, 2008

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Silva called the meeting to order at 6:36pm. Noting no stenographer present, notes to be taken by co-chair, Susan Brannelly.

ATTENDANCE

(Voting Members Bold)

Carlos Silva, Co-chair
Susan Brannelly, Co-chair
Michelle Lyons
Warren Blunt
Ezequiel Santiago
Andre Baker
Richard Bonney

Lorraine Farrar-James

Item 36-07

Carlos Silva – Concern – why was this brought to the Council. Responsibility of the BOE – open the floor to discussion

Richard Bonney – Co-sponsor of Resolution 36-07 – Historically 1989 SNET featured Lillian Whitting Hamilton in Black History month as the 1st black teacher not only in Bridgeport but in the entire State of Connecticut. Firsts are very important to recognize and honor. There is an opportunity with the new schools being built to honor such a trailblazer and provide a good image for Bridgeport. For clarification, he is asking to strike Mercer and School and replace it with Academy. Richard asks that Lorraine Farrar-James be given the floor.

Lorraine Farrar-James – She is spearheading the campaign to have this woman honored. Lillian Whiting Hamilton moved to Bridgeport from Virginia when she was 8 months old then went through the Bridgeport school system then on to the Normal School for teaching training. When she finished there was no job for her as they didn't have black teachers. She persevered and was given a job at McKinley School. She retired from that job when she married as they did not allow married teachers. Ms. James has gone before the Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Ramos with this proposal, the State Commission in the Status of Women, the State Commission of African American Affairs, State Representative Don Clemons and State Senator Ed Gomes are in support of this initiative. Ms. James noted that the school buildings are owned by the City, not the Board of Education.

Michelle Lyons – Notes that Lillian Whiting Hamilton certainly sounds like she would warrant the honor that is being proposed, an unsung hero. She wants to be respectful, though, of each people's district. This discussion belongs at the Board of Education. She is not comfortable with it coming to this committee. The initiative should be discussed between the people of each district and the Board of Education.

Lorraine Farrar-James – There are several new schools being built and any one of them could be considered.

Richard Bonney – The Council has the authority to name schools and streets.

Ezequiel Santiago – Lillian Whiting Hamilton certainly seems deserving – representatives from the district home to Waltersville and Barnum state that the residents want to keep the name the same. He needs to find out more regarding that. He noted that the North End and South End schools have not been named and perhaps they could be considered for this particular name.

Susan Brannelly – If it were established that it was within the scope of the Council to either name or make a recommendation for a name of a school, it would be short sighted of this committee to recommend one name without giving the public the opportunity to bring forth other recommendations if there are any others out there.

Andre Baker – co-sponsor of the resolution – He struggled with which direction to go with this. If you followed the path of the naming of the school for Jettie Tisdale, that was determined by the mayor. Everyone went along with it as she seemed very deserving of the honor.

Carlos Silva – noted that the Board of Education was not cc'd on the meeting notice.

Warren Blunt – It is incumbent upon us to look at this. What is the standard for naming a school? This woman represents education. Should we have a public hearing? It should fly. We need to come together on it.

Lorraine Farrar-James – The Board of Education Policy on the naming of schools was redone and remains unclear. Tisdale & Batalla were named without process. She wants to apologize to Maria Valle and Dan Martinez as she was not trying to bypass them (they represent the district Waltersville/Barnum are in). She is willing to take Waltersville off the table and turn to another unnamed school. She wants the curriculum to be stellar.

Carlos Silva – Lillian Whiting Hamilton very deserving. Not clear on the naming issues at Waltersville. Several councilmen asked this be tabled. He feels there has been a miscommunication. A public hearing would help. North End is his district - he would want to hear from his district. He is not sure what the process actually is. As the council, we should be able to do this. In the past, we've allowed the mayor to speak for us. Let's clarify what the rules actually are. It's our building, it's our money building them, it's our right to find out what's going on with the kids and their books, supplies. When we

ask we get shut down. We need to start doing something about this. We do need to respect what's going on in someone else's district. He prefers we consider this as any school that comes up moving forward.

Regarding the School Building Committee – Andre says he spoke to James Holloway about this.

Regarding BOE – Dr. Ramos has this on his desk for consideration.

Lorraine Farrar-James – According to the policy (? Policy # 7550 – Lorraine will let me know the policy name and # tomorrow) the Superintendent picks a name and presents it to the BOE.

Michelle Lyons – acknowledged that Lorraine Farrar-James is very respectful and notes that that is how she is trying to be, respectful of others. Stating that other names did not go through the process, she points out that the opinions of others in the districts are important and that perhaps the Board of Ed has the final say. It would be inappropriate for this committee to take on this task if it is out of our responsibility.

Andre Baker – Let's get together and decide what the process is.

Warren Blunt – We can make this too complicated. We should focus our energies and make it happen. Can we agree that some school should be named for Mrs. Hamilton?

Carlos Silva – Not opposed to naming the North End school for Mrs. Hamilton. Many families of all racial and socio-economic groups were displaced by the Nutmeg Apartments. He recommends that one of the unnamed schools be named for her.

Susan Brannelly – We have acknowledged that the recently re-named schools were named without a process and probably with disregard to the process. Perhaps it should be the task of this committee to solidify the process so that today as well as moving forward there is a very clear process in place for the naming or re-naming of schools taking into consideration the current Board of Education policy and what is stated in the Charter. It is suggested we table tonight's item until we can research the proper process and, if it is not clear, clarify it via ordinance. This should be clarified now as new schools are being built and will be built in the years to come.

Richard Bonney – Tonight we focused on Waltersville School and that was not the intent of the resolution. The intent was to bring forward an honorable woman. Regardless of how it's been done in the past, the Council should assume its rightful authority based on what's right.

Ezequiel Santiago – If the procedure doesn't make sense, let's fix it. We can create an ordinance.

Carlos Silva – Suggest we table the issue until we can research the charter, the BOE policy and any ordinance then take it to a public hearing.

Ezequiel Santiago – Made a motion to table resolution 36-07 until we research City Charter, BOE policy, determine our jurisdiction.

Michelle Lyons – Second motion

Unanimous Vote to table Resolution 36-07.

Susan Brannelly - Motion to adjourn

Seconded by _____

Adjourned 7:40pm

Respectfully Submitted

Susan Brannelly

EDUCATION and SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE
CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 13, 2008
6:30 p.m.

ATTENDANCE: Council member: Brannelly; Co-chair

OTHER(s): Board of Education Audit representatives

- The meeting was canceled at 6: 47 p.m. due to a lack of quorum –

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Graham
Telesco Secretarial Services