

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
PUBLIC SAFETY AND TRANSPORTATION
COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
OCTOBER 6, 2020**

ATTENDANCE: Maria Valle, Co-chair; Denese Taylor-Moye, Co-chair; Jeanette Herron, Mary McBride-Lee, AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia, Michelle Lyons (6:13 p.m.)

OTHERS: Council Member(s): J. Cruz, M Pereira, E. Newton, M. Brown, R. Roman-Christy, E. Martinez & M. E. Brantley; Council President A. Nieves; B. Lambert, Public Facilities Assistant Sp. Projects Coordinator; Lt. Paul Grech, Police Department; Ms. Melissa Oliveira, OPM Analyst

CALL TO ORDER

Co-chair Valle called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. A quorum was present.

APPROVAL OF COMMITTEE MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 1, 2020.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER TAYLOR-MOYE MOVED THE MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 1, 2020.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER VALLE SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED WITH THREE IN FAVOR (TAYLOR-MOYE, VALLE, AND MCBRIDE-LEE) AND TWO (2) ABSTENTIONS (HERRON, VIZZO-PANICCIA)**

Council Member Pereira asked about the roll call. Council Member Valle reviewed those present on the call.

138-19 Resolution regarding Commitments by the City Council to Reform Policing in the City of Bridgeport.

There was no one present to speak on the item.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON MOVED TO TABLE AGENDA ITEM 138-19 RESOLUTION REGARDING COMMITMENTS BY THE CITY COUNCIL TO REFORM POLICING IN THE CITY OF BRIDGEPORT.**

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

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

156-19 Honorary Naming of John Street as “Joseph J. Kaliko Way” with appropriate signage placed on the intersecting corners along John Street from Water Street to Fairfield Avenue.

There was no one present to speak on the item.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON MOVED TO TABLE AGENDA ITEM 156-19 HONORARY NAMING OF JOHN STREET AS “JOSEPH J. KALIKO WAY” WITH APPROPRIATE SIGNAGE PLACED ON THE INTERSECTING CORNERS ALONG JOHN STREET FROM WATER STREET TO FAIRFIELD AVENUE.**

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

**** THE MOTION TO TABLE PASSED WITH THREE (3) IN FAVOR (MCBRIDE-LEE, HERRON AND VIZZO-PANICCIA) AND ONE (1) OPPOSED (TAYLOR-MOYE).**

Council Member Martinez said that she was on the call but was not sure she could speak on the item. Council Member Pereira pointed out that the item had been tabled.

Atty. Anastasi said that it was his understanding that Council Member Martinez had voluntarily removed herself from serving on Committees. He said that he believed that she had the right to speak on the matter. Council Member Valle said that when she had called the item a second time, there was no response. Atty. Anastasi said that the item was tabled and they could take the item off the table. Council Member Valle said that after the Committee completed Agenda 162-19, the Committee would go back and revisit Agenda Item 156-19.

162-19 Proposed Resolution regarding 2020 Sidewalk Repair Pilot Program.

Ms. Lambert said that this was the last property with completed paperwork from 2019. The program was place on hold in March.

Council Member Taylor-Moye asked if there would be another round of applications. Ms. Lambert said that at the first of the year, she would be compiling a new list. This property is the last one that they can do before the end of construction season. The new list will start in the spring.

Council Member Herron asked if the contract would go out to bid. Ms. Lambert said that due to the hold that was enacted, the contract had been extended. Council Member Herron said that they had been asked to go out to bid again. Atty. Anastasi said that the City Attorney’s Office had worked with the company regarding the hold. The company will hold to the 2016 prices.

Council Member Herron said that the contractor had the highest rate. She said that she was uncomfortable. Atty. Anastasi said that the contractor had not been involved with the investigation and contractually, the company was entitled to a full three year contract. He said that he believed that the 2016 prices were 25% lower than the current State prices.

Ms. Lambert then reviewed the three contractor bids that were considered. The highest contractor went out of business, the current contractor was the second highest bidder. The third bidder did not complete all the paperwork. She listed the bid submissions.

Council Member Pereira asked about the Purchasing Ordinance expiration date. Atty. Anastasi said the contract was for three years, but if the City places the company on hold, they are entitled to the three year time period. He added that the City could refrain from allocating work to the contractor and outlined the details.

Council Member Pereira said that Atty. Anastasi had interrupted her, which is not allowed. She went on to say that they could not unilaterally extend the contract. It is a violation of the Purchasing Ordinance. She said she would like to see them sued for being part of an FBI investigation and a US Attorney's investigation. The contract has expired and they cannot unilaterally decide to extend the contract. They are not guaranteed work. They were told to go back out to bid.

Atty. Anastasi said that the contractor had their records subpoenaed but were not charged. The City Attorney made the decision to allow them to have the contract run.

Council Member Lyons stated that she had joined the call at 6:13 p.m.

Council Member Lyons said that the contractor had been subpoenaed and the court case was not settled. Nothing has changed from the previous scenario, but now winter is coming. She asked if the Council was dealing with the same issue again.

Atty. Anastasi pointed out that there are a number of sidewalks that could be finished before winter and Ms. Lambert was looking to complete the project. The company had their records subpoenaed, which happens all the time.

Council Member Lyons said that there was no new information on this item.

Council Member Newton said that it was strange that when they did the sidewalks, he had gotten three appraisals. There were companies that were lower than the selected vendor. The last thing that Council Member Newton heard was that they would be going back out to bid. He said that the Council needs to be above board with everything they are doing. There were many homeowners who felt the same way. He said that he did not agree with Atty. Anastasi.

Atty. Anastasi explained that they had put the contract on hold, they had not terminated the contract. This was done through public bidding and the other vendors apparently did not apply or were not qualified. Atty. Anastasi said that the City Attorney had stated that they were free to move forward with the contract. He repeated that there was nothing that required them to give them more work. It is not the City Attorney's recommendation to terminate the contract, but the Council is free to decide on the course of action.

Council Member McBride-Lee asked if the City of Bridgeport and the vendor had signed a contract. Atty. Anastasi said he thought the Purchasing Office had signed a contract. Council Member McBride-Lee said that the contract stands regardless of whether the Council likes the contractor.

Atty. Anastasi said that the contract had a fixed three year term. However, because they unilaterally stayed the contract, the question becomes whether they get the three year period or it has expired. He gave an overview of the possible outcomes.

Ms. Lambert said that she had done an extensive analysis of all the municipalities that had done sidewalk work. She said that she had found a company that did the same kind of work and that

they had done an estimate on Council Member Newton's property and the estimate was higher than the contractor's price.

Council President Nieves said that they had voted on the sidewalk projects and there was an understanding that they would resume the sidewalk project. The contractor has sent a letter to the City stating that they would honor the 2016 prices. Cement prices have increased. She said that she agreed with the City Attorney's Office on this issue. She asked if Ms. Lambert could send copies of the letter to the Council Members. Residents have been waiting for their sidewalks. The City did not end the contract, they just paused it until the end of the investigation. Winter is coming and they need to move forward.

Council Member Newton said that one of the quotes was lower. He then asked Atty. Anastasi if the contractor was cleared from the investigation. Atty. Anastasi said that the government rarely issues a statement that someone is cleared. The City Attorney spoke with Atty. DeVito about proceeding with the contract. There has been no activity or indication that there is a problem. Council Member Newton said that he would like to have a chance to review the letter.

Council Member Valle asked if copies of the letter could be sent to the Public Safety Committee. Council President Nieves said that the letter that she had mentioned involved a lock in on the pricing. Council Member Valle said that she would like to have the information included in the packet in the future.

Council Member Pereira said that the FBI investigations was not concluded. Staff met with the FBI yesterday. She said that she was contacted by the FBI regarding the amphitheater.

Council Member Pereira said that the contract has expired according to the Purchasing Ordinance. If they are the best bidder, they would get a new contract. She added that it was highly unlikely to get the sidewalks done before the temperature drops. The contract does not guarantee them work. She said that she would be providing all this information to the FBI as well as the documentation on the amphitheater.

Council Member McBride-Lee said that someone was trying to destroy the City of Bridgeport. She said that it was wrong to sit there and gloat while making trouble for the City. The Council is supposed to be helping the residents, but when people are negative toward the City, it does not help people.

Council Member Brown said in the world of contracts, it would not be right to try to get out of a contract because of something that the contractor did not do. The Council should not punish the residents because they do not like the contractor.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 162-19 PROPOSED RESOLUTION REGARDING 2020 SIDEWALK REPAIR PILOT PROGRAM.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

156-19 Honorary Naming of John Street as “Joseph J. Kaliko Way” with appropriate signage placed on the intersecting corners along John Street from Water Street to Fairfield Avenue.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON MOVED TO REINSTATE AGENDA ITEM 156-19 HONORARY NAMING OF JOHN STREET AS “JOSEPH J. KALIKO WAY” WITH APPROPRIATE SIGNAGE PLACED ON THE INTERSECTING CORNERS ALONG JOHN STREET FROM WATER STREET TO FAIRFIELD AVENUE.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER TAYLOR-MOYE SECONDED.**

Council Member Martinez said that she had sponsored the naming of John Street as “Joseph J. Kaliko Way”. She said that Mr. Kaliko had done a great deal for the disabled population. He is a resident of Greenwich, but has helped many disabled individuals and is still providing funds to food pantries for the homeless via the food truck at the John Street Bridge.

Council Member Taylor-Moye said that she would support this item.

Council Member Valle said that they could not rename a street because there are many legal documents that would have to be changed. She also mentioned a moratorium that was put into place to channel these actions to honor individual towards a walkway in a park or a bench rather than re-naming a street. She said that she was not in favor of this issue.

Council Member McBride-Lee said that she was not aware that there was a moratorium on the honorary street namings. She asked Council Member Martinez if she would consider an honorary renaming. Council Member Martinez replied that this was what she asking for. Council Member McBride-Lee said that she was in favor of the honorary street naming.

Council Member Lyons said that the moratorium was enacted some time ago. She pointed out that when there was a moratorium in place, things stop. The Council was supposed to find an alternative way to handle this.

Council Member Herron said that putting a street sign up while someone was still alive was a good idea. Naming a trail or putting in a park bench is not up to the Council. She will be supporting this.

Council Member Pereira said that Mr. Kaliko was an amazing person, but opposes this for a number of reasons because when people call for emergency services, it is too confusing. It looks terrible. John Street is named after St. John Episcopal Church which is one of the oldest Episcopal churches in the country. She said that she did not agree with any of the honorary renamings.

Council Member Martinez said that they were not renaming the street, but giving it an honorary naming of Joseph Kaliko Way. She then read a letter from the Public Facilities Department stating they approved the honorary re-naming of the street.

Council Member Taylor-Moye asked who was working on the moratorium issue. Council Member Valle said that she had been working on the issue with Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia and Council Member Brown. She said that they need to move this item forward.

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 156-19 HONORARY NAMING OF JOHN STREET AS “JOSEPH J. KALIKO WAY” WITH APPROPRIATE SIGNAGE PLACED ON THE INTERSECTING CORNERS ALONG JOHN STREET FROM WATER STREET TO FAIRFIELD AVENUE FAILED TO PASS WITH THREE (3) IN FAVOR (TAYLOR-MOYE, MCBRIDE-LEE AND HERRON) AND THREE (3) OPPOSED (VIZZO-PANICCIA, LYONS AND VALLE).**

Council Member McBride-Lee asked to see the copy of the Moratorium document. Council Member Valle said that she would get that to Council Member McBride-Lee.

Council Member Taylor-Moye said that she was very disappointed that they did not have all the paperwork and there were people across the nation who were giving streets honorary names.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that she thought that Council President Nieves needed to get a committee going on this issue.

Council Member Pereira said that the moratorium was in the Ordinance Committee and approved by the full Council.

Council Member Valle said that she would speak to the Council President Valle about a committee in the morning.

164-19 Grants Submission: re Resolution – U.S. Department of Justice FY 2020 Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Program (#21312).

Ms. Melissa Oliveira, the OPM Analyst, came forward and listed the equipment that would be purchased with grant funding including license plate readers and surveillance cameras. There is no local match for the grant.

Council Member Brantley said that she had been present for the meeting and would like to go back to Item 166-19 to hear the resolution. Council Member Valle said that she would let Council Member Brantley know at the end of the meeting.

Council Member Pereira asked if they were applying for the grant. Ms. Oliveira said that they had already been approved for it. Council Member Pereira said that it was dated in 2018. Ms. Oliveira said that it was a contract with the Department of Justice.

Council Member Pereira said that it indicated the cameras would be placed in high crime areas, which are usually minority areas. She asked what streets would be involved. Lt. Grech said that they place the cameras in areas where there are shootings. Council Member Pereira had several questions about the license plate readers, which Lt. Grech answered.

Council Member Lyons asked what topics that the Byrne Grant covers. Ms. Oliveira said that it was based on population and last year the grant provided funding for simulators. This year, it is for cameras.

Council Member Newton said that he takes exception to Council Member Pereira's statement that this was about minorities. There was a recent murder in Black Rock and there are minorities living everywhere in Bridgeport. It is not just the East End that sees murders.

Council Member Cruz said that the grant does not require matching funding. He added that he also took offense about where the cameras would be placed. Lt. Grech said that they would be placed where they need to be based on data. The Council Members should stand behind their Police Officers who need this.

Council Member Lyons said the Byrne Grant had been around for long time and helps the Police Department get the equipment they need without spending any money. She said that she has a lot of information on the Byrne Grant and this is one of the best grants for Police Departments.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER LYONS MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 164-19 GRANTS SUBMISSION: RE RESOLUTION – U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE FY 2020 EDWARD BYRNE MEMORIAL JUSTICE ASSISTANCE GRANT (JAG) PROGRAM (#21312).**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

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

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Telesco Secretarial Services