

CITY COUNCIL MEETING

PUBLIC SPEAKING FORUM

MONDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2020

6:30 P.M.

This meeting was conducted by Zoom/Teleconference.

CALL TO ORDER

Council President Nieves called the Public Speaking portion of the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m.

ROLL CALL

The City Clerk Lydia Martinez 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, DECEMBER 21, 2020 AT 6:30 P.M.:

NAME

SUBJECT

Maria Pereira
206 Bradley Street
Bridgeport, CT 06610

Open, honest & transparent
governance, conduct of M. Valle &
M. Brown in their capacity as co-chairs, etc.

STATEMENT OF CITY COUNCIL MARIA PEREIRA TO CITY COUNCIL ON
DECEMBER 21, 2020

I JUST WANT TO PLACE ON THE RECORD THAT ANYONE ENGAGED IN ORCHESTRATING SECRET MEETINGS WHERE MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC ARE PROHIBITED FROM PARTICIPATING SHOULD NOT THEN CLAIM TO BE COMMITTED TO OPEN AND TRANSPARENT GOVERNMENT BECAUSE YOU JUST HAVE NO CREDIBILITY. THIS SECRET COMMITTEE ON POLICE FUNDING, REFORM AND ACCOUNTABILITY INCLUDES BRIDGEPORT GENERATION NOW THAT HAS CONSTANTLY AND PUBLICLY PREACHED ABOUT OPEN, HONEST AND TRANSPARENT GOVERNMENT INCLUDING DURING THE NATIONAL CHIEF OF POLICE SEARCH. PRACTICE WHAT YOU PREACH.

ON NOVEMBER 19, 2020, I ATTENDED A MEETING OF THE SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEE BEING CHAIRED BY CITY COUNCIL MEMBER MARCUS BROWN.

WHEN I RAISED MY HAND TO BE RECOGNIZED VIA ZOOM TO SPEAK ON A MATTER BEFORE THE COMMITTEE; MARCUS BROWN REFUSED TO RECOGNIZE ME. AS TO NOT DISRUPT THE MEETING I TEXTED HIM AND ASKED WHY HE WAS REFUSING TO RECOGNIZE ME AS A MEMBER OF THE CITY COUNCIL. HE RESPONDED WITH AND I QUOTE,"MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ARE NOT ALLOWED TO SPEAK. THIS IS NOT A COMMITTEE OF THE COUNCIL SO BEING A COUNCIL MEMBER DOES NOT INCLUDE COMMENT." I RESPONDED WITH, "THE SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEE IS A CREATION OF THE CITY COUNCIL BY STATE STATUTE." COUNCILMAN BROWN RESPONDED WITH," THIS COMMITTEE IS NOT A COMMITTEE OF THE CITY COUNCIL THEREFORE THE COUNCIL RULES, WHICH IS THE RULE THAT ALLOWS COUNCIL MEMBERS TO SPEAK DO NOT GOVERN THIS COMMITTEE. .."

I DECIDED TO DO WHAT I DO BEST; I RESEARCHED THE MATTER WITH SIGNIFICANT ASSISTANCE FROM MY MENTOR , THE HONORABLE CARMEN LOPEZ.

CHAPTER 5-CITY COUNCIL, SECTION 5(g) (2) STATES "NO PERSON WHILE HOLDING OFFICE AS A MEMBER OF THE CITY COUNCIL SHALL BE A MEMBER OF ANY OF THE BOARDS OF THE CITY...," WHICH MEANS ANY COMMITTEE A CITY COUNCIL MEMBER SERVES ON AS A VOTING MEMBER IS CLEARLY A COMMITTEE OF THE CITY COUNCIL.

CONNECTICUT GENERAL STATUTES SECTION 10-291 AUTHORIZES THE LEGISLATIVE BODY OF MUNICIPALITIES TO ESTABLISH SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEES.

ON MAY 4, 1981, THE CITY COUNCIL APPROVED A SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEE PURSUANT TO STATE STATUTE.

ON APRIL 2, 2001, THE CITY COUNCIL APPROVED BY-LAWS FOR THE SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEE AS REVIEWED AND APPROVED BY THE OFFICE OF THE CITY ATTORNEY. THE CITY COUNCIL PRESIDENT IS PROHIBITED FROM SERVING ON THE COMMITTEE AS THEY SERVE AS THE ALTERNATE WHICH IS NO DIFFERENT THAN EVERY OTHER CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE. THE ONLY OFFICERS ARE THE PRESIDENT AND VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE COMMITTEE WHICH ARE THE TWO ASSIGNED CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS WHO SERVE AS CO-CHAIRS. THE BYLAWS SPECIFICALLY STATES THE BYLAWS MAY ONLY BE AMENDED BY THE CITY COUNCIL.

ON NOVEMBER 5, 2007, THE CITY COUNCIL APPROVED A MISCELLANEOUS MATTER COMMITTEE REPORT APPROVING THE PROPOSED BY-LAWS CHANGES; THE AMENDED BY-LAWS ARE ATTACHED TO THE REPORT.

COUNCILMAN BROWN TEXTED ME "YOU COULDN'T BE MORE INCORRECT," WHEN I REPEATEDLY ASSERTED THE SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEE WAS A CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE, HOWEVER I SENT ALL THE SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION TO ALL MY COLLEAGUES, THEREFORE IT APPEARS COUNCILMAN BROWN WAS THE ONE THAT "COULDN'T BE MORE INCORRECT."

GOING FORWARD, REGARDLESS OF OUR PERSONAL FEELINGS TOWARDS EACH OTHER; WHEN WE ARE PERFORMING OUR DUTIES IN OUR OFFICIAL CAPACITY AS CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS WE ARE REQUIRED AND RESPONSIBLE FOR PUTTING PERSONAL DIFFERENCES ASIDE AND RESPECTING OUR COLLEAGUES AS EQUALS WITH ALL THE RIGHTS THAT ENTAILS.

Alexandria Heredia
63 Alanson Road
Bridgeport, CT 06607

Defunding Police.

Ms. Heredia said that she was here to discuss defunding the police, which has been discussed many times with the Council members. She stated that Council Member Pereira had noted that redirecting the Police funding they would still be running at full capacity. She did not understand why people were opposed to defunding the police and re-invest the money in the community. [Inaudible followed by loss of call]

Victoria Majewski
378 Willow Street
Bridgeport, CT 06610

Defund the Police.

Ms. Majewski said that she was actively involved with Justice for Jason and had helped facilitate providing the mental health resources for the community. At the public forum, she had stated that the healing starts by investing in the community rather than the police. The Connecticut ACLU had released a study indicating that 77% of the voters were in favor of taking \$50 million dollars from the Police Department and redirecting funds to the community. This would still leave the Police Department with over \$52 million dollars, the highest budget in the State not including the extra \$100 million they get in overtime. Justice for Jason is actually speaking for what the majority of Bridgeport residents have indicated they want.

She said she was ashamed of how the City Council handled issues from the community and had several articles about handling mental illness successfully. The experts are in favor of a Total Continuity of Care approach that addresses all the areas that people need help, not just quick fix solutions. Training the police in crisis intervention or separate programs that try to help to divert them has statistically been proved to fail. She said that the mentally ill don't have access to safe and affordable housing. Investing in the community includes food security, the public school system, safe and affordable housing, and responding to mental health issues that don't involve the police. Just asking for training reform for the police is a scapegoat demand. She added that if the Council did not listen to them, they will be voted out. The Police are not the judge and

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executioners. They cannot just run around murdering people in the community without repercussions.

Jazmarie Melendez
316 East Pasadena Place
Bridgeport, CT 06610

Defunding Police.

Ms. Melendez said that she has lived in Bridgeport for all 22 years of her life. She said that she was the sister of Jason Negrón, who was murdered by a Bridgeport Police Officer. She announced that if the Council Members pointed out that Jason Negrón was involved in committing a crime, then they were complicit in committing murder. A crime, let alone a misdemeanor does not give the officers the right to pull a trigger. Jason was just one of the many names of the people killed by the Bridgeport Police Department. There are officers who were directly connected to multiple murders, cases of brutality, cases of rape, cases of drinking and driving, cases of fraud, domestic violence and working for the Police Department.

When Council Members like Council Member McBride-Lee said that the City had a pretty good department and the people in the community are the agitators, she needs to check her information. Justice for Jason Negrón, justice for [inaudible] Cooper, justice for Ryan Stokes, justice for Carlos Williams, justice for Fred Rick Devon, justice for Demar Mauro, justice for Raylin George, and justice for [inaudible] which are just some names, the Council needs to think about the fact that the Chief of Police has been arrested by the FBI and indicted.

No one is using Ms. Melendez's grief for anything other than highlighting the fact that Jason's life is going to stand for [inaudible] in the City of Bridgeport, firing the officer and defunding the police department. When people say that the movement behind George Floyd [inaudible] they need to look at the fact that the organizers [inaudible] commit City funding to the Police department [inaudible]. She said that she was aware that all the Council Members were connected to Mayor Ganim's corruption, so she wanted to state that they would not be leaving the power in the Council's hands. They need a real City Council, not a Council filled with individuals that are worried about their personal gain and Council President Nieves' illegal Committee that needs to be shut down because not one person cares [inaudible] about their personal gain. They want a committee that is concerned about the City because all the members are corrupt. They need all new members of the Police Commission Board and to fire a bunch of officers that are harming the community. They need to invest in the community and that will curb the violence. That will not gentrify the City but how the residents will gain power.

Julissa Santiago
432 Brooks Street
Bridgeport, CT 06608

Defunding Police.

Ms. Santiago said that she was a 22-year resident of Bridgeport and a member of Justice for Jason. She stated that she had seen the majority of the City Council Members stand against anything that includes the words "Jason" or "Justice". She said she did not understand why seeking justice for a 15 year old boy was a problem when it addresses corruption that runs deeper than Jason's life. When the group speaks about Justice for Jason, it goes beyond just firing the

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officer involved. The system cannot give them true justice for Jason but they can reduce the problems in the community.

The first move would be to defund the Bridgeport Police Department. The community is not safer because of the police. Safe communities exist where people live above the poverty line, the elected officials are rooted in the needs of the community and the money is reallocated to human resources because the residents have food and health security. The City Council should be leading this change or step aside for others to take charge.

Jorge Berrios
492 Noble Avenue
Bridgeport, CT 06608

Defunding Police.

There was no response from Mr. Berrios when his name was called to speak.

Mikaela Adams
1232 Reservoir Avenue
Bridgeport, CT 06606

Defund Police.

Ms. Adams said that during the past six months, the Council Members have been working against the community. Promises were made and then broken, lies were told and corruptions took place. As a resident of Bridgeport for the past 26 years, her entire life, it is starting to become evident why the City is the way it is. The majority of the people on the Committee utilize their positions for their own gain, whether it be a job for a family member or protection from the police.

Both Council Members Eneida Martinez and Mary McBride-Lee stated that they rely on the police but they can't speak for the hundreds of residents who call for help where the police never show. While the Bridgeport Police Department is riding by Council Members' homes to make sure they're safe, others who need protection and also contribute to their salaries are the ones that are dying. The black and brown people are the ones being brutalized and murdered. The majority of these men and women don't resemble Bridgeport. Many people work here but have no clue how to handle people in the street, like Jason Negron, a 15-year-old boy who drove 100 feet down a one way street. The white male officer from Ansonia was enraged by Jason's brown body and opened the driver's side door and killed him. Yet a 15-year-old white boy from Stamford who stole a dump truck and took the police on a high-speed chase and lived to tell about it. The officers don't need more training because it has been psychologically proven that the practice is to incarcerate and punish by any means necessary. More times than not, they will use force and murder over de-escalation. The officers have quotas to meet, which means that they are more aggressive with traffic stops.

Maria Pereira brought up a very [inaudible] about officers being arrogant and rude. As a child, Ms. Adams said she was met with curse words and disrespectful remarks on many occasions.

Council President Nieves informed Ms. Adams her time was up. Ms. Adams continued to talk over Council President Nieves.

Byron Bigelow
1232 Reservoir Avenue
Bridgeport, CT 06606

Defund Police.

Mr. Bigelow started to speak and said that he would like to explain what they mean when they mention defunding the police.

Another speaker claiming to be Byron Bigelow took over the call. He said that he was going to be rude and disrespectful and cut everyone off like the Council Members do. Council President Nieves said that the first speaker had claimed to be Mr. Bigelow before the second speaker interrupted. She warned the second speaker that if he indulged in attacking personalities, she would stop him from speaking.

The speaker claimed that Council Member McBride-Lee claimed something. At the end of the day, it comes down to right or wrong. he can't vouch for half of the City Council. McCarthy is his man and Pereira is his new homie. Everyone else can all go. They are coming for the Council Members' seats, the rest of the Council will be gone. They will occupy this Council until they find someone who can do the job. You're not doing the right thing for the people the speaker claimed. You have your own agendas. You do things to benefit you and your families. That's not how it goes. This is the City Council, stop doing things for your own benefit. It has to stop now. The Chief of Police has gone and Mayor Ganim has been too quiet. There are kids dying in the street and the Mayor has not said anything.

At the end of the day, your time is up. We are not politicians, we don't care about being political. We occupy space just like we did in front of the Police Department. We are occupying this space of the City Council until we find somebody more suitable for these positions. Thank you and have a good one. I gotta go.

Alexandria Heredia
63 Alanson Road
Bridgeport, CT 06607

Defunding Police.

Ms. Heredia was able to rejoin the call.

Ms. Heredia said that the Police Department utilizes the power that the Council gives to them but the community wants that power back. The Police Department has murdered multiple people starting with Jason Negron, [inaudible] Cooper, Jonathan Mosely, [inaudible] Williams and many more. They have brutalized our community and criminalized us with no basis. When they speak on the divestment of the police, know that it includes the re-investment in education, health care, along with safe housing and the termination of every officer who murdered or brutalized someone starting with the officer who killed Jason Negron. Many of the Council have heard our demands but our intention is work on the entire list for the safety of the community. The Bridgeport Police Department has never protected the safety of the community.

In order to fulfill these demands, they will not allow the City Council to have de facto meetings to talk about divesting the Police without the same people who are causing the havoc and

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allowing the police to get away with murder. The Police have murdered community members including children and been unjust towards the community with Police terror. This includes the thousands who have been watched, harassed, arrested and knocked down. They do this every day. These are some of the ways they use the system of policing. They do not protect the community. They only show up after the fact. Community mobility begins and ends with us, so the Council needs to think about their intentions because it is clear the Council is investing in keeping the Police Department as it is because they only serve and protect the Council.

ADJOURNMENT

Council President Nieves adjourned the public speaking at 6:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Telesco Secretarial Services

CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
MONDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2020

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 7:04 p.m. He wished everyone Happy Holidays.

PRAYER

Mayor Ganim asked Council Member Brantley 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 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

MINUTES FOR APPROVAL:

Approval of City Council Minutes: November 16, 2020

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED THE MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 16, 2020.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BURNS SECONDED.**

Council Member Suliman said that she had been marked absent for the Public Speaking on November 16, 2020.

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 16, 2020 AS CORRECTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

ITEMS FOR IMMEDIATE CONSIDERATION:

03-20 Communication from Board of Education re: Grant Submission: State of Connecticut Office of Early Childhood – School Readiness Grant Quality Enhancement Program, FOR IMMEDIATE CONSIDERATION.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED TO APPROVE IMMEDIATE CONSIDERATION OF AGENDA ITEM 03-20 COMMUNICATION FROM BOARD OF EDUCATION RE: GRANT SUBMISSION: STATE OF CONNECTICUT OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD – SCHOOL READINESS GRANT QUALITY ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON SECONDED.**

Council Member Pereira said it was a \$5 million dollar grant. She said that there a number of items on the agenda that were not going to committee for approval.

Council Member Lyons asked what the emergency basis was for the requirement for Immediate Consideration. She said they had been presented with numerous Emergency Consideration proposals lately.

Mayor Ganim said that an Emergency Consideration usually involved time sensitivity. Ms. DeJesus said that the item was submitted from the Board of Education.

Ms. Lee Helmerich from the BOE Office of Early Childhood gave a brief summary of the grant. The grant was not released until after the School Readiness Grant was already underway. The OEC wanted to ensure they could fill the slots. Ms. Helmerich said that they processed it as quickly as possible and would not be able access the funding without a signed letter.

Council Member Pereira wanted to know how this grant could be presented when it did not go through the BOE. Ms. Helmerich said that the funding comes from the Office of Early Childhood and the BOE does not have control over the funds.

Council Member Brantley called the question.

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE IMMEDIATE CONSIDERATION OF AGENDA ITEM 03-20 COMMUNICATION FROM BOARD OF EDUCATION RE: GRANT SUBMISSION: STATE OF CONNECTICUT OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD – SCHOOL READINESS GRANT QUALITY ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM PASSED WITH NINETEEN (19) IN FAVOR (BURNS, MCCARTHY, CRUZ, TAYLOR-MOYE, BROWN, BRANTLEY, HERRON, DEFILIPPO, VIZZO-PANICCIA, LYONS,**

MCBRIDE-LEE, ROMAN-CHRISTY, SILVA, CASTILLO, NIEVES, VALLE, SULIMAN, MARTINEZ, AND NEWTON) AND ONE (1) OPPOSED (PEREIRA).

****COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 03-20 COMMUNICATION FROM BOARD OF EDUCATION RE: GRANT SUBMISSION: STATE OF CONNECTICUT OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD – SCHOOL READINESS GRANT QUALITY ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM.**

****COUNCIL MEMBER CASTILLO SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE IMMEDIATE CONSIDERATION OF AGENDA ITEM 03-20 COMMUNICATION FROM BOARD OF EDUCATION RE: GRANT SUBMISSION: STATE OF CONNECTICUT OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD – SCHOOL READINESS GRANT QUALITY ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM PASSED WITH NINETEEN (19) IN FAVOR (BURNS, MCCARTHY, CRUZ, TAYLOR-MOYE, BROWN, BRANTLEY, HERRON, DEFILIPPO, VIZZO-PANICCIA, LYONS, MCBRIDE-LEE, ROMAN-CHRISTY, SILVA, CASTILLO, NIEVES, VALLE, SULIMAN, MARTINEZ, AND NEWTON) AND ONE (1) OPPOSED (PEREIRA).**

05-20 Resolution presented by Council President Nieves re: Proposed Resolution approving the City Council President issuing her December 16, 2020 letter to the City Council Membership to provide clear and timely advance notice that henceforth improper, inappropriate, disruptive and/or disorderly behavior that violates the City Charter, Ordinances, Council’s Rules of Order and/or any other governing legal authority will no longer be tolerated and will be subject to disciplinary action as appropriate, FOR IMMEDIATE CONSIDERATION.

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT NIEVES MOVED FOR IMMEDIATE CONSIDERATION OF AGENDA ITEM 05-20 RESOLUTION PRESENTED BY COUNCIL PRESIDENT NIEVES RE: PROPOSED RESOLUTION APPROVING THE CITY COUNCIL PRESIDENT ISSUING HER DECEMBER 16, 2020 LETTER TO THE CITY COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP TO PROVIDE CLEAR AND TIMELY ADVANCE NOTICE THAT HENCEFORTH IMPROPER, INAPPROPRIATE, DISRUPTIVE AND/OR DISORDERLY BEHAVIOR THAT VIOLATES THE CITY CHARTER, ORDINANCES, COUNCIL’S RULES OF ORDER AND/OR ANY OTHER GOVERNING LEGAL AUTHORITY WILL NO LONGER BE TOLERATED AND WILL BE SUBJECT TO DISCIPLINARY ACTION AS APPROPRIATE.**

Council President Nieves said that they had requested information from the City Attorney’s Office back in August. There have been many requests to address the disrespect and disruptive behavior in the Council. This will be a clean slate and disruptive behaviors will no longer be tolerated. A letter has been sent out regarding this. It is time for everyone to be held accountable.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY SECONDED.**

Mayor Ganim said that the reason that this was for Immediate Consideration because this was the last meeting of the year.

Council Member Pereira repeated that this had never been referred to the City Attorney because there was no vote called for. She said that this was illegal. The new City Council year had already started in December and this was a crazy letter from City Attorney Meyer.

Council Member Lyons said that in December, a Governance Committee was set up and she felt this item should be referred to them rather than having it as an Emergency Consideration. This would allow it to be considered properly and discuss the letter from the City Attorney.

Council Member Lyons said that she had mentioned in November, there should be a letter issued before any disciplinary actions are taken. This needs to be done properly because it has become such an issue. She will not be voting for it tonight.

Council Member McCarthy said he basically agreed with the previous two speakers and did not see the need for emergency consideration.

Council Member Newton reminded everyone that he had served in the State House of Representatives and on the Council. He never had witnessed the kind of behavior he has witnessed on the Council. While he believes in Freedom of Speech, people do not have the right to run people down. The Council Rules states that if a Council member disrespects another Council Member, they need to apologize at that meeting or the following one. This Council has crossed the line too many times and it has to stop.

Council Member Newton said that he had served on the Council for four years and never had Mayor Ganim or Mr. Testo pick up the phone and tell him how to vote. That's just a conspiracy theory. He asked the Council to approve this item for Immediate Consideration so that they would have stronger rules.

Council Member DeFilippo said that it was another five minutes he had lost. This was garbage leadership. He will not support this and wanted a roll call vote.

Council Member Brantley said that she would like a roll call vote. She will support item. Council Member Herron moved the question.

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE IMMEDIATE CONSIDERATION OF AGENDA ITEM 05-2020 RESOLUTION PRESENTED BY COUNCIL PRESIDENT NIEVES RE: PROPOSED RESOLUTION APPROVING THE CITY COUNCIL PRESIDENT ISSUING HER DECEMBER 16, 2020 LETTER TO THE CITY COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP TO PROVIDE CLEAR AND TIMELY ADVANCE NOTICE THAT HENCEFORTH IMPROPER, INAPPROPRIATE, DISRUPTIVE AND/OR DISORDERLY BEHAVIOR THAT VIOLATES THE CITY CHARTER, ORDINANCES, COUNCIL'S RULES OF ORDER AND/OR ANY OTHER GOVERNING LEGAL AUTHORITY WILL NO LONGER BE TOLERATED AND WILL BE SUBJECT TO DISCIPLINARY ACTION AS APPROPRIATE PASSED WITH SIXTEEN (16) IN FAVOR (BURNS, CRUZ, TAYLOR-MOYE, BROWN, BRANTLEY, HERRON, VIZZO-PANICIA, MCBRIDE-LEE, ROMAN-CHRISTY, SILVA, CASTILLO, NIEVES,**

VALLE, SULIMAN, MARTINEZ, AND NEWTON) AND FOUR (4) OPPOSED (MCCARTHY, DEFILIPPO, LYONS AND PEREIRA).

**** COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 05-2020 RESOLUTION PRESENTED BY COUNCIL PRESIDENT NIEVES RE: PROPOSED RESOLUTION APPROVING THE CITY COUNCIL PRESIDENT ISSUING HER DECEMBER 16, 2020 LETTER TO THE CITY COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP TO PROVIDE CLEAR AND TIMELY ADVANCE NOTICE THAT HENCEFORTH IMPROPER, INAPPROPRIATE, DISRUPTIVE AND/OR DISORDERLY BEHAVIOR THAT VIOLATES THE CITY CHARTER, ORDINANCES, COUNCIL'S RULES OF ORDER AND/OR ANY OTHER GOVERNING LEGAL AUTHORITY WILL NO LONGER BE TOLERATED AND WILL BE SUBJECT TO DISCIPLINARY ACTION AS APPROPRIATE.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY SECONDED.**

Council Member Pereira said that she did not understand the point of the letter and [inaudible] analysis by the City Attorney [inaudible] by the State of Connecticut [inaudible] removed by [inaudible] Ordinance [inaudible] removing appointed officials. Clearly the Mayor has the authority to remove [inaudible] Connecticut Supreme Court has already ruled that you cannot remove an elected official [inaudible] based on your behavior, regardless, ratify the letter [inaudible] does not speak to the fact to a City Ordinance that [inaudible] remove an elected official. I keep telling you that [inaudible] That's just politics and the most protected speech is political speech.

Council Member McCarthy asked if a City Attorney was on the call. Council President Nieves said that she believed that Attorney Anastasi was present on the call.

Attorney Anastasi said that the City Attorney's letter speaks for itself and was not a threatening letter. If there is a question at any point, where there was to be charges brought against a Council Member, it was intended to educate the elected representatives.

Council Member McCarthy asked what the disciplinary actions would be. Attorney Anastasi said that it would depend on the action and what the facts were. There are provisions for sanction, but CT does not have the ability to recall an elected official. The goal is to have a functioning body. It is the Council Membership itself that would police itself. There is a difference between vigorous debate and insulting one another.

Council Member McCarthy said everyone would have to be held accountable. He said that he would be voting for it but wished that the item had been brought to Committee.

Council Member Lyons said that she agreed with Council Member McCarthy about having order in the meetings. She said she believes that one month would not make a difference to discuss the proper thing to do in order to do it correctly. When they are in a hurry, mistakes are made and it causes problems down the line. The Council needs to abide by their own Rules. She asked why they should have the Governance Committee if they do things from the floor anyway.

Council Member Herron said she had been adamant when the Council meetings have gotten out of control. She said that she would support this. If the Governance Committee wants to address this, they can. There is already a Council Rule Book and Roberts Rules addresses the general practices.

Council Member Newton said that the document gives the Council latitude and discretion about disciplining Council Members. The Council Members often don't pay attention to the Council Rules. This lets Council members know they mean business.

Council Member Burns said that he likes most of what has been presented. He said that he would like more time to digest the item.

****COUNCIL MEMBER BURNS MOVED TO AMEND THE DOCUMENT AND REFER IT TO THE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER PEREIRA SECONDED.**

Council Member Herron requested a roll call.

Mayor Ganim said that he was unsure whether it could be taken off Immediate Consideration. Discussion followed as to the status of the item.

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 05-20 RESOLUTION PRESENTED BY COUNCIL PRESIDENT NIEVES RE: PROPOSED RESOLUTION APPROVING THE CITY COUNCIL PRESIDENT ISSUING HER DECEMBER 16, 2020 LETTER TO THE CITY COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP TO PROVIDE CLEAR AND TIMELY ADVANCE NOTICE THAT HENCEFORTH IMPROPER, INAPPROPRIATE, DISRUPTIVE AND/OR DISORDERLY BEHAVIOR THAT VIOLATES THE CITY CHARTER, ORDINANCES, COUNCIL'S RULES OF ORDER AND/OR ANY OTHER GOVERNING LEGAL AUTHORITY WILL NO LONGER BE TOLERATED AND WILL BE SUBJECT TO DISCIPLINARY ACTION AS APPROPRIATE PASSED WITH FOURTEEN (14) IN FAVOR (CRUZ, TAYLOR-MOYE, BROWN, BRANTLEY, HERRON, VIZZO-PANICCIA, MCBRIDE-LEE, ROMAN-CHRISTY, SILVA, CASTILLO, NIEVES, VALLE, MARTINEZ AND NEWTON) AND FIVE (5) OPPOSED (BURNS, MCCARTHY, DEFILIPPO, LYONS AND PEREIRA) AND ONE (1) ABSTENTION (SULIMAN).**

06-20 Communication from Central Grants re: Grant Submission: State of Connecticut Department of Transportation – DUI Enforcement Program (#21317), FOR IMMEDIATE CONSIDERATION.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON MOVED FOR IMMEDIATE CONSIDERATION OF AGENDA ITEM 06-20 COMMUNICATION FROM CENTRAL GRANTS RE: GRANT SUBMISSION: STATE OF CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION – DUI ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM (#21317).**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY SECONDED.**

Ms. DeJesus said that the item was a time sensitive matter. The City was invited to participate but the grant requires the Mayor's signature on the documents.

Council Member Burns asked if the grant funding would cover the fringes and overtime. Ms. DeJesus said that it would.

Council Member Pereira said that she was voting against this because this would allow the Mayor to sign contracts or amendments without the Council approval.

Council Member Valle asked about the breathalyzer tests and why they were spending more money on it. Ms. DeJesus said that they need to upgrade the equipment. Council Member Valle said that she did not buy the explanation that they needed to upgrade.

Council Member McCarthy asked when the grant was made available. Ms. DeJesus said that it became available 3 weeks ago. If they applied during the regular cycle, the patrols would not have the DUI patrol.

Council Member Silva asked what would happen if the grant funding was not available to the officers. Mayor Ganim said that they would just continue as they have been doing.

Council Member Brown asked where the DUI set ups would be. Ms. DeJesus listed a number of streets where there would be patrols.

**** THE MOTION FOR IMMEDIATE CONSIDERATION OF AGENDA ITEM 06-20 COMMUNICATION FROM CENTRAL GRANTS RE: GRANT SUBMISSION: STATE OF CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION – DUI ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM (#21317) PASSED WITH NINETEEN (19) IN FAVOR (BURNS, MCCARTHY, CRUZ, TAYLOR-MOYE, BROWN, BRANTLEY, HERRON, DEFILIPPO, VIZZO-PANICCIA, LYONS, MCBRIDE-LEE, ROMAN-CHRISTY, SILVA, CASTILLO, NIEVES, VALLE, SULIMAN, MARTINEZ, AND NEWTON) AND ONE (1) OPPOSED (PEREIRA).**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 06-20 COMMUNICATION FROM CENTRAL GRANTS RE: GRANT SUBMISSION: STATE OF CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION – DUI ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM (#21317)**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER CASTILLO SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 06-20 COMMUNICATION FROM CENTRAL GRANTS RE: GRANT SUBMISSION: STATE OF CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION – DUI ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM (#21317)) PASSED WITH EIGHTEEN (18) IN FAVOR (BURNS, MCCARTHY, CRUZ, TAYLOR-MOYE, BRANTLEY, HERRON, DEFILIPPO, VIZZO-PANICCIA, LYONS, MCBRIDE-LEE, ROMAN-CHRISTY, SILVA, CASTILLO, NIEVES, VALLE, SULIMAN, MARTINEZ, AND NEWTON) AND TWO (2) OPPOSED (BROWN AND PEREIRA).**

07-20 Communication from Finance re: Grant Submission: State of Connecticut Office of Policy and Management – Coronavirus Relief Fund Municipal Program Grant (CRF) for COVID-19 Eligible Expenses, FOR IMMEDIATE CONSIDERATION.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED FOR IMMEDIATE CONSIDERATION OF AGENDA ITEM 07-20 COMMUNICATION FROM FINANCE RE: GRANT SUBMISSION: STATE OF CONNECTICUT OFFICE OF POLICY AND MANAGEMENT – CORONAVIRUS RELIEF FUND MUNICIPAL PROGRAM GRANT (CRF) FOR COVID-19 ELIGIBLE EXPENSES.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER CASTILLO SECONDED.**

Council Member Pereira cited the Charter and the City Council Rules regarding the fact that items for Immediate Consideration had to submit the item by a certain time. This item arrived late.

Mr. Flatto said that they had received a resolution last summer and the State indicated that they wanted to hear from the City

**** THE MOTION FOR IMMEDIATE CONSIDERATION OF AGENDA ITEM AGENDA ITEM 07-20 COMMUNICATION FROM FINANCE RE: GRANT SUBMISSION: STATE OF CONNECTICUT OFFICE OF POLICY AND MANAGEMENT – CORONAVIRUS RELIEF FUND MUNICIPAL PROGRAM GRANT (CRF) FOR COVID-19 ELIGIBLE EXPENSES PASSED WITH NINETEEN (19) IN FAVOR (BURNS, MCCARTHY, CRUZ, TAYLOR-MOYE, BROWN, BRANTLEY, HERRON, DEFILIPPO, VIZZO-PANICCIA, LYONS, MCBRIDE-LEE, ROMAN-CHRISTY, SILVA, CASTILLO, NIEVES, VALLE, SULIMAN, MARTINEZ, AND NEWTON) AND ONE (1) OPPOSED (PEREIRA).**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM AGENDA ITEM 07-20 COMMUNICATION FROM FINANCE RE: GRANT SUBMISSION: STATE OF CONNECTICUT OFFICE OF POLICY AND MANAGEMENT – CORONAVIRUS RELIEF FUND MUNICIPAL PROGRAM GRANT (CRF) FOR COVID-19 ELIGIBLE EXPENSES.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON SECONDED.**

Council Member Pereira said that this was over \$5.5 million dollars in funding with no details as to how it would be spent and the Mayor would be authorized to sign documents without Council approval.

Council Member Burns pointed out this was money that the City has been spending regarding COVID-19.

Council Member Newton thanked the State for releasing the \$5 million dollars in COVID-19 funding. Council Member Newton said that on the Consent Agenda was an item for the Airport to repair the damage to the airport. He asked that the half a million be put back into the Contingency Fund to replace the cost to the repair of the airport.

Mr. Flatto said that there was a process that could be worked on to address this.

Council Member Cruz asked if this was a reimbursement to the money that was spent on COVID emergency. Mr. Flatto said that it was.

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 07-20 COMMUNICATION FROM FINANCE RE: GRANT SUBMISSION: STATE OF CONNECTICUT OFFICE OF POLICY AND MANAGEMENT – CORONAVIRUS RELIEF FUND MUNICIPAL PROGRAM GRANT (CRF) FOR COVID-19 ELIGIBLE EXPENSES PASSED WITH NINETEEN (19) IN FAVOR (BURNS, MCCARTHY, CRUZ, TAYLOR-MOYE, BROWN, BRANTLEY, HERRON, DEFILIPPO, VIZZO-PANICCIA, LYONS, MCBRIDE-LEE, ROMAN-CHRISTY, SILVA, CASTILLO, NIEVES, VALLE, SULIMAN, MARTINEZ, AND NEWTON) AND ONE (1) OPPOSED (PEREIRA).**

COMMUNICATIONS TO BE REFERRED TO COMMITTEES:

04-20 Communication from City Attorney re: Pursuant to Resolution No. 152-19 Requesting Legal Assistance from the City Attorney’s Office. (For Informational Purpose Only – No Action to be Taken)

MATTERS TO BE ACTED UPON (CONSENT CALENDAR):

***02-20 Budget and Appropriations Committee Report re: Budget Transfer to Fiscal Year 2020-2021 General Fund Budget From: Citywide Contingency Account #01610000-57005 (\$560,000) To: Airport Department Public Safety Equipment Account #01375000-55175 (\$560,000) for the purpose of replacing damaged components of the Engineered Materials Arresting System (EMAS) associated with Runway 6 located at Sikorsky Memorial Airport.**

***198-19 Contracts Committee Report re: On-call Bridge Inspection and Structural Engineering Professional Services Agreement with RHS Consulting Design, LLC; A. DiCesare Associates, P.C. and Wengell McDonnell & Costello, Inc.**

Mayor Ganim asked if any Council Member wished to have an item removed from the Consent Calendar. Council Member Pereira requested both items be removed from the Consent Calendar.

02-20 Budget and Appropriations Committee Report re: Budget Transfer to Fiscal Year 2020-2021 General Fund Budget From: Citywide Contingency Account #01610000-57005 (\$560,000) To: Airport Department Public Safety Equipment Account #01375000-55175 (\$560,000) for the purpose of replacing damaged components of the Engineered Materials Arresting System (EMAS) associated with Runway 6 located at Sikorsky Memorial Airport.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BURNS MOVED AGENDA ITEM 02-20 BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT RE: BUDGET TRANSFER TO FISCAL YEAR 2020-2021 GENERAL FUND BUDGET FROM: CITYWIDE CONTINGENCY ACCOUNT #01610000-57005 (\$560,000) TO: AIRPORT DEPARTMENT PUBLIC SAFETY EQUIPMENT ACCOUNT #01375000-55175 (\$560,000) FOR THE PURPOSE OF REPLACING DAMAGED COMPONENTS OF THE ENGINEERED MATERIALS ARRESTING SYSTEM (EMAS) ASSOCIATED WITH RUNWAY 6 LOCATED AT SIKORSKY MEMORIAL AIRPORT.**

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

Council Member Pereira said that Mr. Flatto has indicated that every dollar had to be put into the Rainy-Day fund and no additional funding for the schools. Now half a million has to go to the airport. She asked why the homeless, the students and the other residents need support. No one in her District cares about the airport.

Council Member Newton said that whether they like it or not, the airport belongs to the City. If someone gets hurt on the property, the City would be liable. He said that Mr. Flatto and Mr. Nkwo would be working on this matter.

Council Member Lyons said that she agreed with Council Member Newton about the funding being replaced. She reminded everyone that there had been a serious accident at the airport and the City could have been held fully liable. Now if someone gets hurt, the City would be responsible. While she would like to see money go to education, the City has a responsibility.

Council Member Silva said that if they don't take action now and something happens, it would come back and cost the City more.

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 02-20 BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT RE: BUDGET TRANSFER TO FISCAL YEAR 2020-2021 GENERAL FUND BUDGET FROM: CITYWIDE CONTINGENCY ACCOUNT #01610000-57005 (\$560,000) TO: AIRPORT DEPARTMENT PUBLIC SAFETY EQUIPMENT ACCOUNT #01375000-55175 (\$560,000) FOR THE PURPOSE OF REPLACING DAMAGED COMPONENTS OF THE ENGINEERED MATERIALS ARRESTING SYSTEM (EMAS) ASSOCIATED WITH RUNWAY 6 LOCATED AT SIKORSKY MEMORIAL AIRPORT PASSED WITH NINETEEN (19) IN FAVOR (BURNS, MCCARTHY, CRUZ, TAYLOR-MOYE, BROWN, BRANTLEY, HERRON, DEFILIPPO, VIZZO-PANICCIA, LYONS, MCBRIDE-LEE, ROMAN-CHRISTY, SILVA, CASTILLO, NIEVES, VALLE, SULIMAN, MARTINEZ, AND NEWTON) AND ONE (1) OPPOSED (PEREIRA).**

198-19 Contracts Committee Report re: On-call Bridge Inspection and Structural Engineering Professional Services Agreement with RHS Consulting Design, LLC; A. DiCesare Associates, P.C. and Wengell McDonnell & Costello, Inc.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER CRUZ MOVED AGENDA ITEM 198-19 CONTRACTS COMMITTEE REPORT RE: ON-CALL BRIDGE INSPECTION AND STRUCTURAL ENGINEERING PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH RHS CONSULTING DESIGN, LLC; A. DICESARE ASSOCIATES, P.C. AND WENGELL MCDONNELL & COSTELLO, INC.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER ROMAN-CHRISTY SECONDED.**

Council Member Pereira spoke about massive corruption and kickbacks. She said that the City Engineer would be able to amend every contract whenever there was a change order without coming back to the Council. This is unethical.

Council Member Newton said when it was brought before the Committee, the contracts would have a scope of the work. There will be a survey of the bridges that would need repair. This is why when people speak about conflicts of interest and people being corrupt. This is why people need to change their rules.

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 198-19 CONTRACTS COMMITTEE REPORT RE: ON-CALL BRIDGE INSPECTION AND STRUCTURAL ENGINEERING PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH RHS CONSULTING DESIGN, LLC; A. DICESARE ASSOCIATES, P.C. AND WENGELL MCDONNELL & COSTELLO, INC. PASSED WITH NINETEEN (19) IN FAVOR (BURNS, MCCARTHY, CRUZ, TAYLOR-MOYE, BROWN, BRANTLEY, HERRON, DEFILIPPO, VIZZO-PANICCIA, LYONS, MCBRIDE-LEE, ROMAN-CHRISTY, SILVA, CASTILLO, NIEVES, VALLE, SULIMAN, MARTINEZ, AND NEWTON) AND ONE (1) OPPOSED (PEREIRA).**

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

204-19 Miscellaneous Matters Committee Report re: Workers' Compensation Stipulation in the Matter of Robert Sapiro, DENIED.

Council Member Roman-Christy asked why this item has been denied by the Committee in the first place.

Attorney Anastasi suggested that the matter be tabled and he would explain why it was denied in Committee. It is not time sensitive.

Council Member Pereira said that it was properly on the agenda. It failed due to lack of a seconded.

Council Member Brantley asked if they could move forward on the item.

Council Member Burns confirmed it was denied coming out of committee. He said that the merits for the claim was insufficient.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED TO MAINTAIN THE COMMITTEE DENIAL OF AGENDA ITEM 204-19 MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS COMMITTEE REPORT RE: WORKERS' COMPENSATION STIPULATION IN THE MATTER OF ROBERT SAPIRO.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BURNS SECONDED.**

Council Member Pereira said that only the Miscellaneous Matters Committee members know why the City would be spending \$80,000 on this.

Council Member Brantley called the question.

Council Member Newton said that they had moved the question but he had something to say. This is why they should have an Executive Session before they vote on matters like this. He recommended that the Council go into Executive Session.

Council Member Cruz said it was difficult to vote on something that a Committee has approved. He will support it because he respects the Committee.

**** THE MOTION TO SUPPORT THE COMMITTEE DENIAL OF AGENDA ITEM 204-19 MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS COMMITTEE REPORT RE: WORKERS' COMPENSATION STIPULATION IN THE MATTER OF ROBERT SAPIRO PASSED WITH ELEVEN (11) IN FAVOR (BURNS, MCCARTHY, CRUZ, BROWN, BRANTLEY, HERRON, SILVA, CASTILLO, PEREIRA, SULIMAN AND NEWTON), SEVEN (7) OPPOSED (ROMAN-CHRISTY, VIZZO-PANICCIA, MARTINEZ, MCBRIDE-LEE, NIEVES, VALLE, AND DEFILIPPO) AND TWO (2) ABSTENTIONS (LYONS AND TAYLOR-MOYE).**

Council Member Taylor-Moye asked for a point of personal privilege. She said they were City Council Members and there were previous Council Members who disagreed. A prior Council Member referred publicly to someone by an animal name. This is very disrespectful.

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL MEMBER COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER SILVA SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Telesco Secretarial Services