

CITY COUNCIL MEETING

PUBLIC SPEAKING FORUM

MONDAY, MARCH 15, 2021

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 6:32 p.m. She stated that Council Member Newton would not be present during Public Speaking due to a death in his family.

Council President Nieves noted that the speakers would have 3 minutes to speak and to give their names for the record.

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*

THE FOLLOWING NAMED PERSON HAS REQUESTED PERMISSION TO ADDRESS THE CITY COUNCIL ON MONDAY, MARCH 15, 2021 AT 6:30 P.M.

NAME

SUBJECT

John M. Lee
30 Beacon Street
Bridgeport, CT 06605

City Finances – Budget Formation.

There was no response when Council President Nieves called for Mr. Lee.

Brenda L. Fleming
Klein Memorial, ASK Program
910 Fairfield Avenue
Bridgeport, CT 06605

Discussion regarding an email that will be sent and to update everyone on the positive things happening in the program.

Ms. Fleming, the administrator for the After School Program. There are many parents who claim there are no programs for teenagers that are inexpensive. The Klein Memorial has a program for tuition free high school students. The program has continued throughout the COVID pandemic. The students have been pleased to be part of the program during this time because they can be part of the program.

Ms. Fleming said that she wished to give a quick overview of the program before they received the letter so that they would know who was involved. Ms. Fleming said that on the 25th at 7 p.m., the students will be giving a performance that is free. She thanked the Council for allowing her to share the information.

Ethan Book
144 Coleman Street
Bridgeport, CT 06604

Opposition to proposed resolution on increasing WPCA rates.

Mr. Book ceded his place to Mr. Lee.

John M. Lee
30 Beacon Street
Bridgeport, CT 06605

City Finances – Budget Formation.

Mr. Lee then read the following statement into the record:

Information for taxpayers: Want to keep it secret? Why?

Should I expect a City web site listing Boards and Commissions to provide info on the purpose and mission of those groups? The people who currently serve on them with terms of office remaining. The dates and times of meetings with agendas and minutes including documents produced at meetings that are (or should be listed as Exhibits) like financial statements?

Instead, when I ask Ed Adams a question about Boards and Commissions, I get referred. And when a similar question is asked of my City Councilperson, I find that he cannot locate where the School Building Committee is. I understand an expenditure for property was made recently in 2021 but agendas and minute info are not available. If the amount is \$6 Million, and Bassick Land purchase is the subject why aren't the details at hand?

I have often asked in past years why parent contributions for youth participation in Lighthouse programs is not listed in the monthly operations report. No answer in writing has ever been provided, but I have learned that City employees provide a receipt for cash or money orders, so the money comes in. What department does it come to? Why is it not showing as Lighthouse funding when the Department director does share this local revenue with State authorities when she makes a presentation? Why is this

income reported to the State but unreported as revenue for Lighthouse for curious City property owners?

And tonight, the WPCA is present with a fiscal emergency that requires approval as I read it because of State Consent Decrees with huge daily fines that get your attention. But 30 months ago, with \$100 Million getting applied, Ken Flatto was quoted in the CT Post as saying: NO Problem ON THE HORIZON!!! Actual quote was: "We don't see a spike coming with conservative management, good bill collections, annual budget surpluses, and rainy-day fund at 25% of operations."

Get your story straight. Give the public full info not just a BS story. Allow the public time to adjust to your story line, please. Time will tell.

Ethan Book
144 Coleman Street
Bridgeport, CT 06604

Opposition to proposed resolution on
increasing WPCA rates.

Mr. Book greeted the Council Members and the public and read the following statement into the record:

Good evening, Council President, Members of the City Council and public,

I am Ethan Book, Bridgeport resident at 144 Coleman Street in the 131st Municipal District.

I oppose the proposed WPCA rate increases.

In 2017 and 2018, I appeared before this Council several times regarding problems of rates, and collection and foreclosure practices for WPCA matters. That was also in the context of very serious issues that I personally had experienced in state courts, including regarding systematic court biases, judicial misconduct, a shadow government and the state mortgage foreclosure mill, all of which has made millionaires of various foreclosure attorneys. At that time, I was not alone. There were many who had experienced similar problems. I also had raised issues of the lack of City Council attention to many administrative matters, including budget review.

Since then there have been more very serious developments regarding my own personal experience, as is described in a message that I sent on February 24th to the legislative Judiciary Committee, a message that I also sent via email to Council members and will include with a hard copy of these comments that I will give to the City Clerk. I and many others continue to struggle with issues of systematic court biases, judicial misconduct, a shadow government and the state mortgage foreclosure mill, now with a particular focus on Superior Court Judge Walter M. Spader, Jr.

I only recently became aware of this present proposal, one which was presented to the City Council via a letter from the WPCA dated March 1st, quickly followed on March 8th by a Council Budget and Appropriations Committee unanimous action to move the matter to the full Council. Despite my multiple requests to my City Council representatives, I have received no further explanation.


City of Bridgeport
City Council Meeting
Regular Meeting
March 15, 2021

I only recently became aware of this present proposal, one which was presented to the City Council via a letter from the WPCA dated March 1st, quickly followed on March 8th by a Council Budget and Appropriations Committee unanimous action to move the matter to the full Council. Despite my multiple requests to my City Council representatives, I have received no further explanation.

For these reasons, I see no proper alternative than this Council either rejects or tables this matter.

I so propose!

Thank you for your attention!



Ethan Book

Helen Losak
306 Bradley Street
Bridgeport, CT 06610

WPCA.

There was no response when Council President Nieves called for Ms. Losak.

Sonia Kirkland
96 Ohio Avenue
Bridgeport, CT 06610

WPCA.

Ms. Kirkland said that she was very disappointed with the decision regarding the WPCA bill increases. She listed the amounts that her bill would be in 2033 and said that it would end up with many foreclosures and people living on the street. This will impact mental health. There will be increased costs for businesses because they will lose business due to this crazy decision. The decisions are being made for a small group and the Connecticut General Statutes don't mention [inaudible]. They need to get serious about this.

Lynn Cora
40 East Pasadena Place
Bridgeport, CT 06610

WPCA.

There was no response when Council President Nieves called Ms. Cora. Council Member Pereira said that Ms. Cora was having a problem with her phone.

Helen Losak
306 Bradley Street
Bridgeport, CT 06610

WPCA.

Ms. Losak identified herself as a homeowner and taxpayer. She said that she was opposed to the increase in the WPCA fees. This is not the way to do it. This will increase her bill by 66% and ultimately 119% in her WPCA bill, which she will not be able to pay. She added that Nancy Pelosi was looking into additional Federal funding for infrastructure.

She said that there were no public hearings held, but no cost of service done. Trumbull will also be impacted by this. Rents and condo fees will go up. The Council should not vote on this tonight without further consideration. She also questioned the inclusion Exploration Room in the proposal.

Dennis Bradley
853 Fairfield Avenue
Bridgeport, CT 06604

WPCA.

State Senator Bradley said that he was speaking in opposition to the increase in the WPCA rates. He said that the Board Members and Commissioners give their time for the best outcome for the citizens of Bridgeport. He said that as a Senator, he would look for new ways to fund this. It should not be the same old method of putting this increase on the taxpayers' backs. The neighboring towns would never allow a bill like this to pass. It is important to find other ways to handle this. It is wrong to pass a last minute deal and bypass protocols.

Maria Pereira
206 Bradley Street
Bridgeport, CT 06610

WPCA and its impact on property owners, renters & taxpayers and BPD Union Contract and City Attorney Salaries.

Council Member Pereira said that Bridgeport has until November 2029 to honor the Consent Decree, copies of which she emailed to the other Council Members. There will not be \$25,000 to \$50,000 daily fines imposed by simply tabling the massive bond resolution, which is likely the largest bond in Bridgeport's history. The Council already authorized a \$75 million dollar bond in 2018 to include design, rehabilitation and construction costs. Therefore the WPCA has the funds to move to at least the design phase for the West Side and East Side plants with both construction projects not being required to be completed until November 2029. In other words, there is time.

Ms. Mappa's comparison of treatment plant costs table also shows the WPCA is coming back to us for another \$215 million dollar bond for the East Side Treatment plant upgrades. Council Member Pereira said everyone was in favor of keeping Long Island Sound clean, however the burden cannot be shouldered by the rate payers of Bridgeport and Trumbull alone.

The Connecticut Post article indicates Trumbull was not engaged in these discussions. Senator Blumenthal indicated that the \$1.9 trillion dollar rescue bill that the President signed contains substantial sums of money for Connecticut that could be used to offset the sewer plant upgrades

because they are critical to public health. The President and the Democrats wish to pass a massive infrastructure bill that could provide relief.

The Council should table 24-20 for the following reasons: in 2018 the Council approved a \$75 million dollar bond and we know 30% of the costs should be paid by grants. Why does the resolution before the Council request \$375 million? Shouldn't the grant amount of \$75 million be subtracted from that amount? There needs to be answers to this. There needs to be schedules of each phase of the project provided along with components and associated costs for comparison with the requirements outlined in the DEEP consent decree. In an effort to assist the rate payers, the Council should call on their State and Federal delegations to secure the necessary State and Federal grants to pay for the entire cost associated with the projects. These are infrastructure projects and Long Island Sound and its well-being is not the sole responsibility of Bridgeport and Trumbull rate payers.

Trumbull needs to be at the table. 10,000 rate payers live in Trumbull and they have a direct stake in the outcome. We want them to pay their fair share and so they should be at the table. Let's do our due diligence. Blindly approving this \$395 million bond will cause every cooperative and condominium will have no choice but to raise their common charges and apartment buildings will have no choice but to raise their rents to absorb these exorbitant increases. The businesses, car washes and restaurants will be affected, too along with the cost to the public schools. Bridgeport has the highest foreclosure rate in Connecticut and the highest eviction rate in New England.

A massive rate increase as proposed will cause a spike in evictions and foreclosures across the City that will undoubtedly affect the poor, veterans, seniors and the disabled disproportionately.

Council Member Pereira said that she was not asking the Council Members to vote no, but to pause in order to get answers to reasonable questions. If Trumbull walks away from this, who will be left holding the entire bag? That is all she was asking her colleagues for.

George Estrada
556 Peet Street
Bridgeport, CT 06606

WPCA Rate Increases.



March 15, 2021

On behalf of Trumbull First Selectman Vicki Tesoro, I would like to thank the Bridgeport City Council for allowing me to address you this evening. My name is George Estrada, I am a resident of Bridgeport and Director of Public Works for the Town of Trumbull. Clearly Long Island Sound water quality is directly correlated to the health and welfare of the region as a whole. As the former Director of Facilities for Bridgeport I clearly understand the difficulties in maintaining the aging infrastructure. The challenge will be to balance and be sensitive to the financial impact unfunded mandates impose on our residents and rate payers. Significant increases will simply make economic development more challenging and place greater burden on residents struggling economically. Trumbull's 10,300 rate payers infused 6 million dollars last year into the WPCA, accounting for almost 16% of the annual budget. We value that relationship with The City of Bridgeport and the WPCA dating back 50 years. During the past year there have been informal conversations between the two agencies. Trumbull has not received official notification that a capital project of this magnitude is moving forward at this time.

Tonight the Council is being asked to support a very important first phase allowing for the securing of critically needed grant funding. Without this funding the entire burden would land squarely on the shoulder of ratepayers in both municipalities. Going forward The Town of Trumbull asks that planning for any major capital projects that will directly impact Trumbull rate payers, include The Trumbull WPCA early in the process.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "George Estrada".

Council President Nieves called for Ms. Cora. There was no response.

ADJOURNMENT

Council President Nieves closed the public speaking session at 7:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Telesco Secretarial Service.

CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
MONDAY, MARCH 15, 2021

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 7:05 p.m.

PRAYER

Council President Nieves said that Council Member Newton had a death in the family.

Mayor Ganim asked Council Member McBride-Lee to lead the Council in prayer.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Ganim asked City Clerk Martinez 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

During the roll call, there appeared to be no response from any individual whose name is listed in italics.

City Council Citation: Recognizing March 26, 2021 as Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Day.

Council President Nieves said that she had a citation for RYSAP. This is part of a need to acknowledge that there is a Social Emotional Learning component to education. She then read the citation into the record.

MINUTES FOR APPROVAL:

• February 16, 2021

**** COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON MOVED THE MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 16, 2021.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MCBRIDE-LEE SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 16, 2021 AS SUBMITTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

COMMUNICATIONS TO BE REFERRED TO COMMITTEES:

26-20 Communication from Sikorsky Memorial Airport re: Proposed Resolution regarding Sikorsky Memorial Airport Economic Study, referred to Joint Committee on Public Safety and Transportation & Economic and Community Development and Environment.

27-20 Communication from Mayor re: Appointment of Susan Tabachnick (D) to the Historic District Commission, referred to Miscellaneous Matters Committee.

28-20 Communication from Mayor re: Appointment of Stuart Sachs (D) to the Historic District Commission, referred to Miscellaneous Matters Committee.

29-20 Communication from Mayor re: Appointment of Kristen Alvanson (D) to the Historic District Commission, referred to Miscellaneous Matters Committee.

30-20 Communication from Mayor re: Appointment of Guy Horvath (D) to the Historic District Commission, referred to Miscellaneous Matters Committee.

31-20 Communication from Mayor re: Appointment of Timothy V. O'Connor (D) as an Alternate to the Historic District Commission, referred to Miscellaneous Matters Committee.

32-20 Communication from Board of Education re: Grant Submission: State of Connecticut Office of Early Childhood – School Readiness Preschool Grant – Priority and Quality Enhancement Grant Program, referred to Education and Social Services Committee.

33-20 Communication from Police Department re: Proposed Professional Services Agreement with Marshall K. Robinson regarding a Ballistics Expert for the Police Department, referred to Contracts Committee.

35-20 Communication from Central Grants re: Grant Submission: State of Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services – State Opioid Response Grant Program (#21258), referred to Economic and Community Development and Environment Committee.

36-20 Communication from Central Grants re: Grant Submission: U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) – Airport Coronavirus Response Grant Program (ACRGP), referred to Public Safety and Transportation Committee.

37-20 Communication from Central Grants re: Grant Submission: The Justice Center – Project Safe Neighborhoods (#21485), referred to Public Safety and Transportation Committee.

RESOLUTIONS TO BE REFERRED TO BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, ETC.:

34-20 Resolution presented by Council Member(s) Newton & Martinez re: Proposed resolution for an Honorary Naming of the paper street traversing the parking lot of the House of God Community Church on Stratford Avenue be designated as “Bishop Ronnie Brayboy Way”, referred to Public Safety and Transportation Committee.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA MOVED TO COMBINE AND REFER THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:**

COMMUNICATIONS TO BE REFERRED TO COMMITTEES:

26-20 COMMUNICATION FROM SIKORSKY MEMORIAL AIRPORT RE: PROPOSED RESOLUTION REGARDING SIKORSKY MEMORIAL AIRPORT ECONOMIC STUDY, REFERRED TO JOINT COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY AND TRANSPORTATION & ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT.

27-20 COMMUNICATION FROM MAYOR RE: APPOINTMENT OF SUSAN TABACHNICK (D) TO THE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION, REFERRED TO MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS COMMITTEE.

28-20 COMMUNICATION FROM MAYOR RE: APPOINTMENT OF STUART SACHS (D) TO THE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION, REFERRED TO MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS COMMITTEE.

29-20 COMMUNICATION FROM MAYOR RE: APPOINTMENT OF KRISTEN ALVANSON (D) TO THE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION, REFERRED TO MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS COMMITTEE.

30-20 COMMUNICATION FROM MAYOR RE: APPOINTMENT OF GUY HORVATH (D) TO THE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION, REFERRED TO MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS COMMITTEE.

31-20 COMMUNICATION FROM MAYOR RE: APPOINTMENT OF TIMOTHY V. O'CONNOR (D) AS AN ALTERNATE TO THE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION, REFERRED TO MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS COMMITTEE.

32-20 COMMUNICATION FROM BOARD OF EDUCATION RE: GRANT SUBMISSION: STATE OF CONNECTICUT OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD – SCHOOL READINESS PRESCHOOL GRANT – PRIORITY AND QUALITY ENHANCEMENT GRANT PROGRAM, REFERRED TO EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE.

33-20 COMMUNICATION FROM POLICE DEPARTMENT RE: PROPOSED PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH MARSHALL K. ROBINSON REGARDING A BALLISTICS EXPERT FOR THE POLICE DEPARTMENT, REFERRED TO CONTRACTS COMMITTEE.

35-20 COMMUNICATION FROM CENTRAL GRANTS RE: GRANT SUBMISSION: STATE OF CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION SERVICES – STATE OPIOID RESPONSE GRANT PROGRAM (#21258), REFERRED TO ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE.

36-20 COMMUNICATION FROM CENTRAL GRANTS RE: GRANT SUBMISSION: U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION (FAA) – AIRPORT CORONAVIRUS RESPONSE GRANT PROGRAM (ACRGP), REFERRED TO PUBLIC SAFETY AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE.

37-20 COMMUNICATION FROM CENTRAL GRANTS RE: GRANT SUBMISSION: THE JUSTICE CENTER – PROJECT SAFE NEIGHBORHOODS (#21485), REFERRED TO PUBLIC SAFETY AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE.

RESOLUTIONS TO BE REFERRED TO BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, ETC.:

34-20 RESOLUTION PRESENTED BY COUNCIL MEMBER(S) NEWTON & MARTINEZ RE: PROPOSED RESOLUTION FOR AN HONORARY NAMING OF THE PAPER STREET TRAVERSING THE PARKING LOT OF THE HOUSE OF GOD COMMUNITY CHURCH ON STRATFORD AVENUE BE DESIGNATED AS “BISHOP RONNIE BRAYBOY WAY”, REFERRED TO PUBLIC SAFETY AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY SECONDED.**

Council Member Pereira asked for clarification on Agenda 34-20. Mayor Ganim reminded everyone that this motion was just a referral to the Committees.

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

MATTERS TO BE ACTED UPON (CONSENT CALENDAR):

***24-20 Budget and Appropriations Committee Report re: Resolution Approving Financing for the Design, Rehabilitation, Upgrading and Construction of Various Renovations and Improvements to the City's Wastewater Treatment Plants.**

Mayor Ganim asked if any Council Member wished to have an item removed from the Consent Calendar. Council Member Cruz requested to remove Agenda Item 24-20.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BURNS MOVED AGENDA 24-20 BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT RE: RESOLUTION APPROVING FINANCING FOR THE DESIGN, REHABILITATION, UPGRADING AND CONSTRUCTION OF VARIOUS RENOVATIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS TO THE CITY'S WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANTS.**

Council Member Burns said that the item was passed out of committee unanimously. It is a project that is decades overdue. It is time to get both the West Side and East Side plants moving forward.

Council Member Newton said that even though he had lost a family member earlier in the day he wanted to set the record straight that the 2018 City Council decided it was time to stop kicking the can down the road regarding the wastewater that seeps into Long Island Sound. The City is acting as a guarantor if the WPCA defaulted, the City would pay. However, the WPCA has never defaulted on their payments. It is also important to remember that the WPCA never raised their rates for seven years. The last few administrations just kicked the can down the road. If the State or Federal Government find a way to come up with the money, that would be great. There have been numbers and percentages mentioned by Council Members, but Council Member Newton pointed out that no one asked Ms. Mappa if the increase percentages were correct.

Council Member Newton also stated that Capital Improvement bonds are separate from the Capital Budget. The project needs to be done. If the City does nothing, it sends the wrong message to the State. However, the Council can't raise the rates for the WPCA, only the WPCA can raise their own rates. It is time to stop with the piecemeal repairs and rebuild the plant.

Council Member Herron said that National League of Cities had their conference last week. She said that they had met with Jim Himes last week and asked him if they could use some of the American Relief funds for the WPCA. The staff said that they believed the City could do that.

Council Member Herron said they were setting up a meeting with Representative Himes' staff and NRC to give information to the Council. There are also discussions about more infrastructure improvements underway. The second amount of funding would be helpful to the WPCA in offset the cost.

Council Member Herron said that in the past, the policy has been to delay, delay and delay. If this continues, they will not get the project done.

Council Member Pereira said that she would ask for a roll call vote.

Council Member Pereira said that the 2018 bond had nothing to do with the Consent Decree. She said that her figures came from the WPCA packet that was distributed to the members. She added she was not asking anyone to vote this down. Council Member Pereira said that they should pause on this because the language states that they need \$395 million for the project.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER PEREIRA MOVED TO TABLE AGENDA ITEM 24-20 BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT RE: RESOLUTION APPROVING FINANCING FOR THE DESIGN, REHABILITATION, UPGRADING AND CONSTRUCTION OF VARIOUS RENOVATIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS TO THE CITY'S WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANTS.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER CASTILLO SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO TABLE FAILED TO PASS WITH NINE (9) IN FAVOR (CRUZ, DEFILIPPO, PEREIRA, SULIMAN, MARTINEZ, BRANTLEY, BROWN, CASTILLO, AND VALLE) AND TEN (10) OPPOSED (BURNS, MCCARTHY, TAYLOR-MOYE, HERRON, VIZZO-PANICCIA, MCCARTHY, ROMAN-CHRISTY, SILVA, NIEVES, AND NEWTON).**

Mr. Stafstrom said that the resolution authorizes the WPCA to seek grants or loans up to \$350 million dollars. The resolution is not in addition to the \$70 million dollars, but includes it. The City is not bonding for this. The WPCA applies to the State Clean Water Fund and is given grant funding, which does not need to be repaid. Any additional costs can be covered by a loan at 2%. This is a City guarantee of the bonding. The WPCA has never defaulted on loan payments.

Mr. Stafstrom said that the American Relief Fund is for infrastructure and there is a second infrastructure bill in discussion. He added that if the WPCA can get grant funding they will and the residents need to trust the WPCA to do the right thing. The reason to do this is not because of the Consent decree, but because it is the right thing to do since these plants needs to be updated.

Council Member Cruz thanked the attorneys he had spoken with. However, after speaking with some constituents, he has to weigh his decision with what he read in the paper. The general public has not been informed. The public has not been informed and while there were public meetings, the Town of Trumbull was not informed. This is disturbing. He said that when he heard that this was the way this was always done, it was disturbing. He voted to table because he understands that there is time to work on this with the potential grant funding pending. The WPCA should get together with Trumbull and come up with a better plan of how to handle this, along with educating the community about how this will be done. The people at PT Barnum have to live with the sewage plant right behind them and they live with the smell all the time. This is not the time to be rushed.

Council Member Brown expressed his sympathy to Council Member Newton [Loss of audio] He said he was sad that the motion to table failed [inaudible].

Council Member Brantley said that she did not understand why they could not be given more time to consider this. As one of the more senior members of the Council, she had family living at PT Barnum. She said that Iranistan Avenue often floods. She has been able to pay her water bill but if she retires, she may not be able to pay it. It is important to understand how it will affect the seniors, the veterans and even the new developments. It is important to make sure their constituents can afford to live there and that the infrastructure is not messed up.

Council Member Taylor-Moye said that she hears all the concerns from her constituents and understands their feelings. She said that the infrastructure was critical to the residents. If anyone thinks that she rubber stamps her decisions, they are wrong. She read the bill and asked questions.

Mayor Ganim reminded everyone that Bond Counsel Stafstrom was present on the call along with Ms. Mappa.

Council Member Brown expressed his condolences to Council Member Newton family. He said that he was sad that the vote to table failed because he needs something to show his constituents. It is ridiculous to only have one meeting on this \$395 million dollar bond while renaming the streets took six meetings. After hearing all the homes that were lost through foreclosure, he was reluctant to increase the WPCA rates. It will be important to have some conversations with their State delegations and their Federal delegations.

Council Member Burns also expressed his condolences to Council Member Newton. This is an important matter and too many Councils have punted this down the road. It is also an environmental justice matter since the residents of PT Barnum have to live with it. This is a generational project and the Council needs to work with Ms. Mappa closely because the project needs to move forward, the sooner, the better.

Council Member Martinez said that the WPCA issues have been a long battle for her. The residents can't go to the City for bonding when they have to repair their sewers. The Council needs to consider the information that Council Member Pereira provided. When there are storms and floods, the WPCA does not clean the gutters, the residents have to do it. The residents pay high rates and get nothing in return. This is not about re-elections, but what is right and she will be voting no.

Council President Nieves said that they did their first bonding in 2018 and there was a conversation back in 2017 about this future. She said that there were public meetings about this in the past. Council President Nieves agreed with Council Member Martinez regarding it was not about re-elections, it was about dealing with the long overdue repairs. She said that she was amazed that Trumbull didn't know about this because it was in the CT Post in 2018.

Council President Nieves said that in 2018, the Council voted unanimously to move forward on the bonding in order to upgrade the WPCA ordinances regarding foreclosures. If the WPCA was a private company, the Council would not be voting on this.

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT NIEVES MOVED TO TABLE AGENDA ITEM 24-20 BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT RE: RESOLUTION**

APPROVING FINANCING FOR THE DESIGN, REHABILITATION, UPGRADING AND CONSTRUCTION OF VARIOUS RENOVATIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS TO THE CITY'S WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANTS IN ORDER TO HAVE QUESTIONS SUBMITTED.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER CASTILLO SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO TABLE AGENDA ITEM 24-20 BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT RE: RESOLUTION APPROVING FINANCING FOR THE DESIGN, REHABILITATION, UPGRADING AND CONSTRUCTION OF VARIOUS RENOVATIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS TO THE CITY'S WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANTS PASSED WITH THIRTEEN (13) IN FAVOR (CRUZ, BROWN, BRANTLEY, HERRON, DEFILIPPO, SILVA, CASTILLO, VALLE, NIEVES, PEREIRA, SULIMAN, MARTINEZ AND NEWTON), SIX (6) OPPOSED (VIZZO-PANICCIA, BURNS, MCCARTHY, MCBRIDE-LEE, ROMAN-CHRISTY AND TAYLOR-MOYE) AND ONE (1) ABSTENTION (LYONS).**

Council Member Newton left the meeting at 8:12 p.m.

MATTERS TO BE ACTED UPON:

09-20 Public Safety and Transportation Committee Report re: Grant Submission: Subrecipient Agreement between the Bridgeport Police Department and the University of Bridgeport UB Safer Campus Project.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA MOVED AGENDA ITEM 09-20 PUBLIC SAFETY AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE REPORT RE: GRANT SUBMISSION: SUBRECIPIENT AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE BRIDGEPORT POLICE DEPARTMENT AND THE UNIVERSITY OF BRIDGEPORT UB SAFER CAMPUS PROJECT.**

****COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

11-20 Public Safety and Transportation Committee Report re: Reappointment of Stuart Rosenberg (U) to the Board of Fire Commission.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER VALLE MOVED AGENDA ITEM 11-20 PUBLIC SAFETY AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE REPORT RE: REAPPOINTMENT OF STUART ROSENBERG (U) TO THE BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSION.**

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

Council Member Pereira said that she would be voting against this because the members of the Committee did not receive any documentation. Since the Public Safety meeting was held, no documentation has been received.

Council Member Silva said that he had his hand up at the last item and was disappointed in Mayor Ganim because the Mayor did not recognize him. Mayor Ganim apologized.

Council Member McBride-Lee said that she had served with Commissioner Rosenberg on the Fire Commission. She said that he was fair and did not think he missed a meeting. She said that she would recommend Commissioner Rosenberg be reappointed.

Council Member Lyons said that Mr. Rosenberg has been on the Commission and has come before her in the past. Otherwise she would be voting against the candidate since she did not receive the paperwork.

Council Member Herron said that if the meetings were live, the situation would be different. However they are digital. The process has become abusive towards the candidates.

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 11-20 PUBLIC SAFETY AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE REPORT RE: REAPPOINTMENT OF STUART ROSENBERG (U) TO THE BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSION PASSED WITH EIGHTEEN (18) IN FAVOR (BURNS, MCCARTHY, CRUZ, TAYLOR-MOYE, BROWN, BRANTLEY, HERRON, DEFILIPPO, VIZZO-PANICCIA, LYONS, SILVA, CASTILLO, VALLE, MCBRIDE-LEE, ROMAN-CHRISTY, NIEVES, SULIMAN, AND MARTINEZ) AND ONE (1) OPPOSED (PEREIRA).**

12-20 Public Safety and Transportation Committee Report re: Reappointment of Joseph Larcheveque (R) to the Board of Fire Commission.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER VALLE MOVED AGENDA ITEM 12-20 PUBLIC SAFETY AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE REPORT RE: REAPPOINTMENT OF JOSEPH LARCHEVEQUE (R) TO THE BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSION.**

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

Council Member Pereira said that she would be voting against this because the members of the Committee did not receive any documentation. Since the meeting, no documentation has been received. She said that she had served on the BOE with Mr. Larcheveque but could not vote for him.

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 12-20 PUBLIC SAFETY AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE REPORT RE: REAPPOINTMENT OF JOSEPH LARCHEVEQUE (R) TO THE BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSION PASSED WITH EIGHTEEN (18) IN FAVOR (BURNS, MCCARTHY, CRUZ, TAYLOR-MOYE, BROWN, BRANTLEY, HERRON, DEFILIPPO, VIZZO-PANICCIA, LYONS, SILVA, CASTILLO, VALLE, MCBRIDE-LEE, ROMAN-CHRISTY, NIEVES, SULIMAN, AND MARTINEZ) AND ONE (1) OPPOSED (PEREIRA).**

22-20 Contracts Committee Report re: Assignment of Tax Liens for Fiscal Year 2021.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MCCARTHY MOVED THE ITEM 22-20 CONTRACTS COMMITTEE REPORT RE: ASSIGNMENT OF TAX LIENS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2021.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON SECONDED.**

Council Member Pereira said that in Committee they were told that they could not have a list of the potential list of the pending liens. She said that the Tax Collector could not provide them because the owners have until March 31st to pay the outstanding taxes.

Council Member Cruz said that he had asked Ms. Jones about the list of tax liens and pointed out that during the seven years that the WPCA did not raise the rates, but many foreclosures had happened. This is troubling. He mentioned a resident who was living in a home that had already been sold. The Tax Collector cannot tell anyone about any potential liens. There need to be changes made. Whatever the Council Members asks for, they should receive.

Council Member Herron said that in 2015, the WPCA had many foreclosures. Council Member Herron worked with Council Member Martinez and Council Member Feliciano to change this. She said that they have now put regulations in place to prevent the attorneys from charging more fees that increased over time. She said that Atty. Liskov was on the line and could answer questions. Council Member Herron said that the resident Council Member Cruz mentioned had been involved in the foreclosure before things were corrected. She cautioned people about making the information public before the lien is actually placed because the owner could pay off the lien.

Council Member Pereira said that the assignment of tax liens were for property, not the WPCA. Mayor Ganim said that this was so.

Atty. Liskov said that they had been assigning tax liens for 12 years. This is giving the Tax Collector the authorization to sell. People have the opportunity to pay off the liens before the liens are assigned.

Council Member McBride-Lee said that they need to be careful about making the information public. She agreed with Council Member Herron's comment. It would be more helpful to help the owners pay the bills rather having them lose their homes.

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 22-20 CONTRACTS COMMITTEE REPORT RE: ASSIGNMENT OF TAX LIENS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2021 PASSED WITH FIFTEEN IN FAVOR (BURNS, MCCARTHY, TAYLOR-MOYE, BROWN, BRANTLEY, HERRON, VIZZO-PANICCIA, LYONS, SILVA, CASTILLO, VALLE, MCBRIDE-LEE, ROMAN-CHRISTY, NIEVES AND MARTINEZ), THREE (3) OPPOSED (PEREIRA, DEFILIPPO AND CRUZ) AND ONE (1) ABSTENTION (SULIMAN).**

Council Member Suliman said that she had personal conflict.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED TO SUSPEND THE RULES TO ADD THE FOLLOWING AGENDA ITEM:**

23-20 PROPOSED PROGRAM YEAR 47 ANNUAL ACTION PLAN:

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG)

HOMELESS EMERGENCY SOLUTION GRANT (HESG)

HOME INVESTMENT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

**HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES FOR PERSONS WITH AIDS
(HOPWA)**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON SECONDED.**

Council Member Pereira said that she was trying to understand why the Committee had already met and receiving training. She wished to know why they were acting on this now. Council Member Brantley said that this vote was for the information they would be working on.

Council Member Lyons asked who could vote on this since many Council Members have conflicts. Attorney Anastasi said that the only people who had conflicts should not vote.

The following Council Members left the meeting at 8:41 p.m.: Council Member Burns, Council Member Lyons, Council Member Taylor-Moye, and Council Member Brantley.

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE SUSPENSION OF THE RULES TO ADD AGENDA ITEM 23-20 PASSED WITH THIRTEEN (13) IN FAVOR (MCCARTHY, CRUZ, BROWN, HERRON, VIZZO-PANICCIA, SILVA, CASTILLO, VALLE, MCBRIDE-LEE, ROMAN-CHRISTY, NIEVES, MARTINEZ AND SULIMAN) AND TWO (2) OPPOSED (PEREIRA AND DEFILIPPO).**

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT NIEVES MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 23-20 PROPOSED PROGRAM YEAR 47 ANNUAL ACTION PLAN: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG); HOMELESS EMERGENCY SOLUTION GRANT (HESG); HOME INVESTMENT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM, AND HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES FOR PERSONS WITH AIDS (HOPWA).**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL MEMBER COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT NIEVES SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO ADJOURN PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Telesco Secretarial Services

City of Bridgeport
City Council Meeting
Regular Meeting
March 15, 2021