

**CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
PUBLIC SPEAKING  
MONDAY, MAY 6, 2019  
6:30 PM  
City Council Chambers, City Hall  
45 Lyon Terrace  
Bridgeport, CT**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Council President Nieves called the Public Speaking Session to order at 6:43 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

The City Clerk Lydia Martinez called the roll.

130th District: Christina Smith, Pete Spain.  
131st District: Jack Banta, Denese Taylor-Moye  
132nd District: Marcus Brown, Kyle Langan  
133rd District: Jeanette Herron, Michael Defilippo  
134th District: Michelle Lyons  
135th District: Rosalina Roman-Christy, Mary McBride-Lee  
136th District: Alfredo Castillo, Maria Zambrano Viggiano  
137th District: Aidee Nieves, Maria Valle  
138th District: Nessah Smith, Karen Jackson  
139th District: Ernest Newton, Eneida Martinez

A quorum was present.

**THE FOLLOWING NAMED PERSON HAS REQUESTED PERMISSION TO ADDRESS THE CITY COUNCIL ON MONDAY, MAY 6, 2019 AT 6:30 P.M., IN THE CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL, 45 LYON TERRACE, BRIDGEPORT, CT.**

**NAME**

**SUBJECT**

**Johnny Ray Moore**  
Greater Bpt. NAACP  
75 Baldwin Street, 3rd Fl.  
Bridgeport, CT 06607

Greater Bridgeport NAACP will be  
hosting its 2nd Connecticut Real Estate  
Foreclosure Forum.

Mr. Moore was called three times and did not respond.

**Cecil Young**  
99 Carroll Avenue  
Bridgeport, CT 06607

Unjust Termination Cover-up.

Mr. Cecil Young came forward. Mr. Young said that he felt bad Council Member Newton had said that he was going to vote against corruption, and this was a feel good vote. He said that the last time that he was here, he heard that Council Member Newton said some nice things about him. He said that he did not hear anything about his unjust termination. He pointed out that the new Health Director had closed down the building where the contaminated dirt pile was.

Mr. Young claimed he likes all people. As a pastor and a home owner, he felt that he had to keep coming back before the Council because he had something to say and was doing the right thing. He said that he had come before the people who looked like him. Then he spoke about a white man who took away his job and mentioned that Council Member Spain and Council Member Langan had looked into the situation. Then he mentioned Mr. Ricci and wondered about the situation in Public Facilities.

**Christine Connor**  
105 Linwood Avenue  
Bridgeport, CT 06605

Paving of street and Handicap  
Parking.

Christine Conner was called three times and did not respond.

**Dasha Spell**  
284 Beechwood Avenue  
Bridgeport, CT 06604

CSMA and BOE.

Ms. Dasha Spell was called three times and did not respond.

**Beth Lazar**  
1241 Main Street  
Bridgeport, CT 06604

Save Seaside Park – Protest Wall &  
Pollution.

Ms. Beth Lazar yielded her time.

**John Marshall Lee**  
30 Beacon Street  
Bridgeport, CT 06605

Fiscal Governance.

Mr. John Marshall Lee came forward and read the following statement into the record:

Good evening Council members....

What holds you to crafting a budget that the public can trust and fully support? Is it dedication to the Charter or Ordinances? Do you have enough time to learn about city operations and funding during 30-40 days per year? What happens to the lists of items discovered in that time and set aside for further study? Could it be that the fiscal story you are told year in and year out by the administration (plus more importantly the stories you have not been told with real backup numbers showing actual fiscal results) equals the real story?

Do you ask for credible help in the form of fiscal talent who can provide attentive oversight, month in and month out, observe best practices from other communities and do research for our City? If the limited assistance paid for with our dollars for the past three years are not adequate in quality or quantity, there is not one taxpayer I know who would object to your hiring one or more such tasked individuals full time to make your pursuit of fairness and equity for taxpayer citizens and public services equal in value, something to be proud of. Show the value of putting operations and finances in a spotlight.

Have you allowed your working conditions in the big picture to become unbalanced? Many of you spend the majority of your stipends on business expenses for attending meetings on better municipal practices. What happens then? The expenses are paid, but what did the taxpayer receive by paying your “business expenses” through a stipend that is neither open nor transparent to all? Are you accountable and honest about the stipends? More than \$100,000 annually is spent on transportation, hotels, meals and registrations of what value to the community?

Mayor Ganim has been Mayor for more than 15 years. Recent budgets show his actual priorities. They are what he presents to you. Funds for operating the public education system are not part of his plans for future economic development of the City or of meeting current needs. Instead this year, knowing the temper of the community for the massive tax increase three years ago, he offers a slight tax decrease, which you have further reduced. Please stop and consider that a tax decrease is an indication that the City is showing surpluses at year end because of a high mil rate? The City has enjoyed a “profit” from its budgets that have allowed lots of political appointments without accountability for fiscal results, and continuing long term pension and bond funding issues. So in an election year Ganim has “found some taxpayer money” that it can “return to taxpayers”? But nothing additional for the school age youth? Insulting? Political gamesmanship? And puts the question in your lap to resolve?

What about use of consultants by a Mayor with 15 years of operational experience?? Where is Joseph Jaffe hired by Guidepost Solutions in mid February nearly three months ago in his “review of city policies and procedures”? (I wrote to him on February 20 and am still awaiting a response.) I would direct him to City Print Shop to see why there is no recorded revenue at all but cash and checks come in? Why have Service Indicators of past years decreased (think of email and other technology advances) yet expenses continued to increase? And there are private clients served (at an increased expense? But those revenues are not shown?) At the end of the day who can prove that the work accomplished is worth the nearly \$750,000 requested and spent in recent years? Need another consultant?

Formats like Open Checkbook do not allow you to see where Capital funds are spent? Why not? The taxpayer must pay principal and interest on City borrowed funds each year. And yet cannot see how much money is left in each capital account and access how far the project has proceeded. Is this OPEN by any definition?

200,000 bulbs were planted last fall at what expense and by whom in time to show this spring? Beauty for weeks and to be remembered, but how many pre-school youth will not learn their alphabet, as a tradeoff for creating a 2019 political memory?

Last week revealed that \$10 Million of unpaid parking fines for the past seven years continues? \$1.5 M worth of annual scofflaws? The solution is to recognize the problems earlier in a year and deal with them, perhaps at your next conference attendance? Write off the problems! Ring in solutions. Is it Finch's or Ricci's fault? Will the Teflon endure? Time will tell.

Council President Nieves announced that this was the last of the speakers who had signed up in advance. She said that there was one speaker who had signed up on the sheet to speak at the meeting.

**Maria Pereira**

Board of Education  
45 Lyon Terrace  
Bridgeport, CT 06604

Ms. Maria Pereira came forward and said that she may be one of the few who attended all the Budget meetings. She said that she had a better attendance record than the Committee members themselves. Ms. Pereira pointed out that Council Member Defilippo was not present to hear the constituents speak.

Ms. Pereira said that during the Public Hearings, no one came forward to ask about the budgets for the City Attorney's Office, but every single speaker came forward to advocate for more funding for the public schools. The City has added positions to its staff every single year while the Board has cut 231 positions in the last three years. Ms. Pereira said that when Council Members asked about cutting vacant positions, Mr. Nkwo would say that the position was filled. Ms. Pereira wanted to know what that would have to do with anything. The BOE cut hundreds of filled positions.

Ms. Pereira said that Council Member Zambrano Viggiano had spoken in a very intelligent and articulate way in advocating for the children and the needs of the students. This year is a year of financial crisis for the Bridgeport Public schools. The deciding factor when people consider moving into an area is the condition of the public schools. For some reason, the Mayor and the majority of the Council Members don't comprehend this or how it impacts the community. There was a lot of discussion about the taxpayers, the seniors and impact of a .387 reduction in the mill rate, which would save the average tax payer slightly over a dollar a week.

Ms. Pereira then named a number of current Council Members from the previous Council who had voted on a tax increase which was the largest tax increase in history. She asked where their concern for the seniors and the taxpayers then.

Ms. Pereira said that when there is a school closure, it decimated the local property values and the neighborhood. It impacts the minority students because they are the ones that take the shot. This results in increased absenteeism, tardiness because it has disrupted their lives. The adults

that had previously been in their lives are now gone. She spoke about the wonderful school volunteers and outlined the benefits they bring to the students.

Ms. Pereira encouraged everyone to talk to their neighbors about what they wanted to do. She said that it would be important to focus on the City Council candidates and elect someone who supports public schools and the taxpayers. Those are the people that they should vote for. This is disgraceful. Some of the Council members have done great jobs, but it is important to have people on the Council who support the children.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Council President Nieves adjourned the Public Speaking portion of the Council meeting at 7:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

S. L. Soltes  
Telesco Secretarial Services

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT  
CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
MONDAY, MAY 6, 2019**

**7:00 PM**

**City Council Chambers, City Hall - 45 Lyon Terrace**

**Bridgeport, Connecticut**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Ganim called the meeting of the City Council to order at 7:06 p.m.

**PRAYER**

Mayor Ganim requested Council Member McBride-Lee to lead those present in an opening prayer.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mayor Ganim requested Council Member Herron in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ROLL CALL**

The City Clerk called the roll.

130th District: Christina Smith, Pete Spain.  
131st District: Jack Banta, Denese Taylor-Moye  
132nd District: Marcus Brown, Kyle Langan  
133rd District: Jeanette Herron, Michael Defilippo  
134th District: Michelle Lyons  
135th District: Rosalina Roman-Christy, Mary McBride-Lee  
136th District: Alfredo Castillo, Maria Zambrano Viggiano  
137th District: Aidee Nieves, Maria Valle  
138th District: Nessah Smith, Karen Jackson  
139th District: Ernest Newton, Eneida Martinez

Council President Nieves said Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia was not present due to a death in the family.

Council Member Newton announced that a former Council Member, the sister of Geraldine Johnson passed away at the age of 93. It was also noted that former Bridgeport Mayor Panuzzio had passed away. Mayor Ganim announced a moment of silence in recognition of these two former Bridgeport officials.

**MINUTES FOR APPROVAL:**

**Approval of City Council Minutes: April 1, 2019**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON MOVED TO APPROVE THE APRIL 1, 2019 CITY COUNCIL MINUTES.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE APRIL 1, 2019 CITY COUNCIL MINUTES AS SUBMITTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**COMMUNICATIONS TO BE REFERRED TO COMMITTEES:**

**73-18            Communication from Central Grants re: Grant Submission: State of Connecticut Department of Economic & Community Development – Urban Action Grant Program for McLevy Hall, (#19449), referred to Economic and Community Development and Environment Committee.**

**74-18            Communication from Labor Relations re: Proposed Tentative Agreement with Bridgeport Police Local #1159 and Council 4 AFSCME, AFL-CIO regarding their Bargaining Contract, referred to Contracts Committee.**

**75-18            Communication from Central Grants re: Grant Submission: State of Connecticut Department of Transportation Dial-A-Ride Municipal Grant Program for the Elderly and Disabled, (#FY20-22), referred to Economic and Community Development and Environment Committee.**

**76-18            Communication from Central Grants re: Grant Submission: State of Connecticut Department of Economic & Community Development – Urban Action Grant Program, referred to Economic and Community Development and Environment Committee.**

**77-18            Communication from OPED re: Proposed Professional Services Agreement with Metropolitan Council of Governments for the Administration of the Connecticut Avenue and Stratford Avenue Transportation Development and Safety Corridor Study, referred to Contracts Committee.**

**78-18            Communication from OPED re: Proposed Resolution Authorizing Execution of an Easement Agreement for 337 Knowlton Street and Ordering a Public Hearing May 20, 2019 (Full Council) Relative to the Same, referred to Economic and Community Development and Environment Committee.  
consent Calendar**

**71-18            Resolution presented by Council Member(s) Spain, Lyons, Banta, Langan, Herron, Roman-Christy, Valle, Nieves, Jackson, N. Smith & Martinez re: Proposed Amendments to the Municipal Code of Ordinances, Chapter 10.12 – Stopping, Standing**

and Parking Generally, amend to add New Section, 10.12.015 – Lawn Parking, referred to Ordinance Committee.

72-18 Resolution presented by Council Member(s) Valle & Nieves re: Request that the Intersection of Kossuth Street and Maple Street be designated as an “All-Way” Stop with appropriate signage and road markings, referred to Board of Police Commissioners.

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

79-18 Resolution presented by Council Member(s) Nieves & Valle, re: Proposed Amendments to the Municipal Code of Ordinances, Chapter 5.48 – Street Vendors, Itinerant Vendors and Motor Vehicle Vendors, amend to add New Section, 5.48.300 – Pedal Cabs (PediCabs), referred to Ordinance Committee.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ MOVED TO COMBINE AND APPROVE THE FOLLOWING COMMUNICATIONS TO BE REFERRED TO COMMITTEES WITH THE RESOLUTIONS TO BE REFERRED TO BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, ETC.:**

**COMMUNICATIONS TO BE REFERRED TO COMMITTEES:**

73-18 COMMUNICATION FROM CENTRAL GRANTS RE: GRANT SUBMISSION: STATE OF CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT – URBAN ACTION GRANT PROGRAM FOR MCLEVY HALL, (#19449), REFERRED TO ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE.

74-18 COMMUNICATION FROM LABOR RELATIONS RE: PROPOSED TENTATIVE AGREEMENT WITH BRIDGEPORT POLICE LOCAL #1159 AND COUNCIL 4 AFSCME, AFL-CIO REGARDING THEIR BARGAINING CONTRACT, REFERRED TO CONTRACTS COMMITTEE.

75-18 COMMUNICATION FROM CENTRAL GRANTS RE: GRANT SUBMISSION: STATE OF CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION DIAL-A-RIDE MUNICIPAL GRANT PROGRAM FOR THE ELDERLY AND DISABLED, (#FY20-22), REFERRED TO ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE.

76-18 COMMUNICATION FROM CENTRAL GRANTS RE: GRANT SUBMISSION: STATE OF CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT – URBAN ACTION GRANT PROGRAM, REFERRED TO ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE.

77-18 COMMUNICATION FROM OPED RE: PROPOSED PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH METROPOLITAN COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE CONNECTICUT AVENUE AND STRATFORD AVENUE TRANSPORTATION DEVELOPMENT

**AND SAFETY CORRIDOR STUDY, REFERRED TO CONTRACTS COMMITTEE.**

**78-18 COMMUNICATION FROM OPED RE: PROPOSED RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING EXECUTION OF AN EASEMENT AGREEMENT FOR 337 KNOWLTON STREET AND ORDERING A PUBLIC HEARING MAY 20, 2019 (FULL COUNCIL) RELATIVE TO THE SAME, REFERRED TO ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE. CONSENT CALENDAR**

**71-18 RESOLUTION PRESENTED BY COUNCIL MEMBER(S) SPAIN, LYONS, BANTA, LANGAN, HERRON, ROMAN-CHRISTY, VALLE, NIEVES, JACKSON, N. SMITH & MARTINEZ RE: PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE MUNICIPAL CODE OF ORDINANCES, CHAPTER 10.12 – STOPPING, STANDING AND PARKING GENERALLY, AMEND TO ADD NEW SECTION, 10.12.015 – LAWN PARKING, REFERRED TO ORDINANCE COMMITTEE.**

**72-18 RESOLUTION PRESENTED BY COUNCIL MEMBER(S) VALLE & NIEVES RE: REQUEST THAT THE INTERSECTION OF KOSSUTH STREET AND MAPLE STREET BE DESIGNATED AS AN “ALL-WAY” STOP WITH APPROPRIATE SIGNAGE AND ROAD MARKINGS, REFERRED TO BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS.**

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

**79-18 RESOLUTION PRESENTED BY COUNCIL MEMBER(S) NIEVES & VALLE, RE: PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE MUNICIPAL CODE OF ORDINANCES, CHAPTER 5.48 – STREET VENDORS, ITINERANT VENDORS AND MOTOR VEHICLE VENDORS, AMEND TO ADD NEW SECTION, 5.48.300 – PEDAL CABS (PEDICABS), REFERRED TO ORDINANCE COMMITTEE.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BROWN SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**MATTERS TO BE ACTED UPON (CONSENT CALENDAR):**

**\*56-18 Contracts Committee Report re: Lease Agreement with East Main Development, LLC for the East Side Senior Center located at 1053-1057 East Main Street and 440 Arctic Street.**

**\*49-18 Economic and Community Development and Environment Committee Report re: Grant Submission: State of Connecticut Department of Transportation for Local Bridge Program and Urban Act Grant Program for the Congress Street Bridge (#19202/8P663).**

**\*59-18 Miscellaneous Matters Committee Report re: Refund of Excess Payments – Corelogic Commercial Tax Services.**

Mayor Ganim asked if there was any Council Member who would like to remove an item from the Consent Calendar. There were no requests to remove items from the Consent Calendar.

City Clerk Martinez then read the consent agenda items into the record.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ MOVED THE FOLLOWING CONSENT CALENDAR ITEMS:**

**\*56-18 CONTRACTS COMMITTEE REPORT RE: LEASE AGREEMENT WITH EAST MAIN DEVELOPMENT, LLC FOR THE EAST SIDE SENIOR CENTER LOCATED AT 1053-1057 EAST MAIN STREET AND 440 ARCTIC STREET.**

**\*49-18 ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE REPORT RE: GRANT SUBMISSION: STATE OF CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FOR LOCAL BRIDGE PROGRAM AND URBAN ACT GRANT PROGRAM FOR THE CONGRESS STREET BRIDGE (#19202/8P663).**

**\*59-18 MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS COMMITTEE REPORT RE: REFUND OF EXCESS PAYMENTS – CORELOGIC COMMERCIAL TAX SERVICES.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**MATTERS TO BE ACTED UPON:**

**60-18 Contracts Committee Report re: Request by the Fire Chief Pursuant to and in accordance with C.G.S. §7-430 and their Collective Bargain Agreement, Fire Fighters Local 834 that Kevin Higgins having or soon to attain the age of sixty-five years or more to remain employed by the City for another year.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON MOVED AGENDA ITEM 60-18 CONTRACTS COMMITTEE REPORT RE: REQUEST BY THE FIRE CHIEF PURSUANT TO AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH C.G.S. §7-430 AND THEIR COLLECTIVE BARGAIN AGREEMENT, FIRE FIGHTERS LOCAL 834 THAT KEVIN HIGGINS HAVING OR SOON TO ATTAIN THE AGE OF SIXTY-FIVE YEARS OR MORE TO REMAIN EMPLOYED BY THE CITY FOR ANOTHER YEAR.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED WITH EIGHTEEN (18) IN FAVOR (C. SMITH, SPAIN, BANTA, TAYLOR-MOYE, BROWN, LANGAN, DEFILIPPO, HERRON, MCBRIDE-LEE, ROMAN-CHRISTY, ZAMBRANO VIGGIANO, CASTILLO, NIEVES, VALLE,**

**JACKSON, N. SMITH, MARTINEZ, AND NEWTON) AND ONE (1) ABSTENTION (LYONS).**

**61-18 Contracts Committee Report re: Request by the Fire Chief Pursuant to and in accordance with C.G.S. §7-430 and their Collective Bargain Agreement, Fire Fighters Local 834 that Daniel Magri having or soon to attain the age of sixty-five years or more to remain employed by the City for another year.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON MOVED AGENDA ITEM 61-18 CONTRACTS COMMITTEE REPORT RE: REQUEST BY THE FIRE CHIEF PURSUANT TO AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH C.G.S. §7-430 AND THEIR COLLECTIVE BARGAIN AGREEMENT, FIRE FIGHTERS LOCAL 834 THAT DANIEL MAGRI HAVING OR SOON TO ATTAIN THE AGE OF SIXTY-FIVE YEARS OR MORE TO REMAIN EMPLOYED BY THE CITY FOR ANOTHER YEAR.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED WITH EIGHTEEN (18) IN FAVOR (C. SMITH, SPAIN, BANTA, TAYLOR-MOYE, BROWN, LANGAN, DEFILIPPO, HERRON, MCBRIDE-LEE, ROMAN-CHRISTY, ZAMBRANO VIGGIANO, CASTILLO, NIEVES, VALLE, JACKSON, N. SMITH, MARTINEZ, AND NEWTON) AND ONE (1) ABSTENTION (LYONS).**

**\*\* COUNCIL PRESIDENT NIEVES MOVED TO SUSPEND THE RULES FOR THE PURPOSE OF ADDING TO THE AGENDA.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER CASTILLO SECONDED.**

Council Member Spain said that he did not receive the copy of budget until after 3 this afternoon, which gave him no time to contact his constituents. He pointed out that the budget was approved out of Committee on Saturday night. Going forward, Council Member Spain said that the information should be released at least 24 hours before the vote.

**\*\* THE MOTION TO SUSPEND THE RULES FOR THE PURPOSE OF ADDING TO THE AGENDA PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**\*\* COUNCIL PRESIDENT NIEVES MOVED TO ADD AN ITEM REGARDING THE MAYOR'S PROPOSED GENERAL FUND BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2019-2020 TO THE AGENDA.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER CASTILLO SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION TO ADD AN ITEM TO THE AGENDA PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**64-18 Resolved that the Mayor's Proposed General Fund Budget for Fiscal Year 2019-2020 be, and it hereby is approved as amended below and attached hereto:**

<b>a.) Revenue increases</b>	<b>\$4,458,744.00</b>
<b>b.) Revenue decreases</b>	<b>\$5,450,000.00</b>
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$ -991,256.00</b>

**c.) Appropriation Increases           \$ -1,702,666.00**

**d.) Appropriation Decreases         \$ 2,694,922.00**

**Total Appropriation                 \$ 991,256.00**

**e.) General Fund Budget Fiscal Year 2019-2020 as amended and attached hereto.**

Council President Nieves gave a brief explanation of the votes that would be required by the Council Members. Mayor Ganim gave a brief history of the current budget status.

Council Member Langan asked if it was possible to vote on the decreases via that would impact the increases. Mayor Ganim said that the item had to be moved first.

Council Member C. Smith said that she wanted to make a personal statement.

Last year I was new on the City Council and on the committee which sets our budget and the mill rate for the year. I voted yes on the work that we did because I believed in the efforts we took in putting together the City's budget. But they say ignorance is bliss, and over the last few weeks I've come to better understand the workings that truly determine our budget. It is not a negotiation and compromise as one would expect, but a system of patronage, politics, and threats that funnel money to where it should not go at the expense of the kids and the place it should be going to move the City forward. I cannot sit by and think that the efforts made on Saturday was the best that we could do, not when I know that a number of the budget changes made were done for reasons that have to do more with politics and patronage than doing what's best for our City.

They say it takes one to no one so perhaps the reason those who consistently harp on and question the validity of the BOE budget do so because they have seen firsthand or know that they are actively themselves taking part in patting the budget of other departments with patronage jobs and light items that should not be there, thus they can only assume the BOE is doing it too. Many may think a job or raise here or there is not just part of the politics game but when added up these patronage jobs and light items cost taxpayers millions of dollars while at the same time depriving the kids in our schools of the opportunity to get the education they need even to attempt to make it in a society that often puts undue barriers in front of them because of their skin color or ethnic ethnicity.

I try to do my best to live a life where I do no harm, and in particular, where my efforts for success are done in a way so as not to harm others. Not only does voting for this current budget go against the voices that spoke up to fund our schools, voices that did not ask for a tax cut, it goes against my own personal values – as a human being who believes in helping others, not for my own gain, but to support them so they may succeed. Bridgeport is not unique in the financial woes that plague the school system and the City overall, but it could be unique in taking the steps to support the systems that have caused our City and schools to languish in a hierarchy an structure that favors those who would step on others, including children, to advance themselves.

When I agreed to run for City Council, I did so naïvely, agreeing because I thought it would be yet another opportunity to work towards contributing to bringing prosperity back to a city that was once a leader in this nation. But I didn't know the extent to which others, public servants no less, would go to only enrich themselves. Society may paint large, for-profit corporation entities and capitalism as the evil against our fellow human beings, but here, in a role where we are meant to be public servants, too many are serving themselves, and either lie to or convince themselves that the actions they are taking our best for the City. At best it's willful ignorance, but in reality it's a blatant disregard for the citizens of this City. I am okay with those who want to advance themselves but I am not okay when it's dishonest and as at the expense of others. Systems, good and bad, are created by individuals. So each person participating in that system is responsible for the outcomes that result from the actions that the system takes. Given that as an individual, I play a part in this system, I refuse to be complicit in denying the students or Bridgeport the support they need support to thrive in a country where again many of them, because of their race, especially in our current national political environment, will already face numerous hurdles at a fair chance to succeed in life.

As we vote on the budget tonight or tomorrow if that may be the case, I know that most of you will vote yes, but I ask my fellow City Council members to ask themselves what they are really voting for, what they are really supporting. Thank you.

Council Member Newton said that as someone who was not on the Budget Committee said that the City needs to have some property tax cuts. He said that there are many people in his District who want tax cuts. Bridgeport is the highest taxed city in the State. Stratford has a mill rate of 39 mill rate and they recently gave their property owners a \$5.00 tax cut. He said that \$10.00, \$25.00, or \$100.00 might not mean a lot to people in Black Rock, but in his District it could be a meal on the table, a pair of shoes or other things. He said that he takes exception to being told that his constituents don't want a tax cut. Council Member Newton said that what goes around, comes around. When people cast stones, they need to look in the mirror. This was not an easy process because most of the money goes to salaries and pensions. He said that there is only so much that people can do with the revenue from car taxes and property taxes. He said that he hoped that the Council would accept the hard work that the Committee put into the budget. He said that he was there for every budget meeting.

Council Member McBride-Lee said that when she first ran for Council, she intended to do something about taxes. She said that she does not know how many people visit soup kitchens or go to their pastors asking for a couple of dollars to get through. She doesn't know how many people have been touched by someone who has died by violence. Money is not going to solve everything.

Council Member McBride-Lee said that she had taken a poll in her church yesterday and offered her parishioners the choice between a tiny tax cut and more money for schools. Some of her parishioners are on a fixed income. She said that she was tired of people telling her that she does not care about children. She knows what it means to be without. She said that she does not want to hear that she cannot think for herself. She said that she graduated from UB and the University of Southern Alabama.

Council Member Taylor-Moye thanked Council Member Newton and Council Member McBride-Lee. She said that the Committee worked very hard to get the budget to where it is. They worked hard to get the BOE \$1.3 million. She said that if the children are not safe in schools, what good is it. There are people out there who are shooting others, stabbing others, and swinging bats. It's not a good environment out there. Giving to the BOE was something that was on everyone's minds when they were working on the budget. Every year, the Council gives something to the BOE. It's very sad that people are saying do not vote these people in.

Council Member Spain said that he wanted to be clear. Black Rock has over 96% free lunches in their school and he named another school that has a very high free lunch school percentage. It's not fair to think that Black Rock can shrug off the tax cut. He said that there was a \$15 million dollar budget hole. The schools need \$10 million to cover the shortfall. He said that the assignment was not to give the schools something, but to help them and give them money to pay their bills. The Council gave the BOE 12% to pay their bills. You don't give a tax cut on the back of the kids. He said that his tax cut would be worth \$2.01 and he and his wife could go to Dunkin' Donuts and split a cup of coffee on the backs of the students.

Council Member Martinez said that she did not make many of the B&A meetings because she was recovering from illness. She said that she had a lot of concerns and always have concerns with six figure jobs. She said that she had concerns about grants for the Board of Education. She said that recently that the City of Bridgeport charges \$17 dollars for outside contract police work and suggests that the \$17/Hr go to the BOE.

Closing the schools in her district will end up with the children going to DCYF or to jail. She suggested that the City was now going to charge those who have been dumping frequently at the transfer station. She said that they should take those increased fees and give it to the BOE.

**\*\* COUNCIL PRESIDENT NIEVES MOVED THE FOLLOWING ITEM:**

<b>a.) Revenue increases</b>	<b>\$4,458,744.00</b>
------------------------------	-----------------------

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON SECONDED.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER LANGAN MOVED TO AMEND AGENDA ITEM 64-18 BY INCREASING THE LINE ITEM TITLED TAX COLLECTOR – 01040000 41693 – ALL CURRENT TAXES FROM \$310,334,792 BY \$2,322,244 TO \$312,656,036 TO THE GENERAL FUND FOR EDUCATION.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER SPAIN SECONDED.**

Council Member Langan said that regardless of what happens this is a sad moment because it does not even get close to funding the BOE. The Police Department has increased 17% and the City Attorney 25%. Over the same period of time, the BOE had to cut 231 positions. Council Member Langan said that no one that he had spoke with had preferred \$50.00 over a year instead of another \$2.3 million for the BOE. The largest benefits of the tax cut will be Wheelabrator, PSEG, Bridgeport Energy and UI. Bridgeport currently contributes the least amount per pupil as a percentage of the budget in all of Connecticut.



**b.) Revenue decreases                      \$5,450,000.00**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MAYOR'S PROPOSED GENERAL FUND BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2019-2020 REVENUE DECREASES OF \$5,450,000.00 PASSED WITH EIGHTEEN (18) IN FAVOR (C. SMITH, SPAIN, TAYLOR-MOYE, BROWN, LANGAN, DEFILIPPO, HERRON, LYONS, MCBRIDE-LEE, ZAMBRANO-VIGGIANO, ROMAN-CHRISTY, CASTILLO, NIEVES, VALLE, JACKSON, N. SMITH, MARTINEZ, AND NEWTON) AND ONE (1) OPPOSED (BANTA).**

**\*\* COUNCIL PRESIDENT NIEVES MOVED THE FOLLOWING ITEM:**

**c.) Appropriation Increases                      \$ -1,702,666.00**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER CASTILLO SECONDED.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER SPAIN MOVED TO AMEND THE MOTION TO INCREASE THE LIBRARY ACCOUNT (#017000) BY 1.3 MILLS WHICH IS EQUAL TO \$501,117.00.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER LANGAN SECONDED.**

**\*\*THE MOTION FAILED TO PASS WITH EIGHT (8) IN FAVOR (C. SMITH, SPAIN, BANTA, LANGAN, LYONS, ROMAN-CHRISTY, ZAMBRANO-VIGGIANO, AND JACKSON) AND ELEVEN (11) OPPOSED (TAYLOR-MOYE, BROWN, DEFILIPPO, HERRON, MCBRIDE-LEE, CASTILLO, NIEVES, VALLE, N. SMITH, MARTINEZ, AND NEWTON).**

**\*\* THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MAYOR'S PROPOSED GENERAL FUND BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2019-2020 APPROPRIATION INCREASES OF \$ - 1,702,666.00 PASSED WITH SIXTEEN (16) IN FAVOR (C. SMITH, BANTA, TAYLOR-MOYE, BROWN, LANGAN, DEFILIPPO, HERRON, LYONS, MCBRIDE-LEE, ROMAN-CHRISTY, CASTILLO, NIEVES, VALLE, N. SMITH, MARTINEZ, AND NEWTON) AND THREE (3) AGAINST (SPAIN, ZAMBRANO-VIGGIANO AND JACKSON).**

**d.) Appropriation Decreases                      \$ 2,694,922.00**

**\*\* COUNCIL PRESIDENT NIEVES MOVED THE FOLLOWING ITEM:**

**d.) Appropriation Decreases                      \$ 2,694,922.00**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON SECONDED.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER LANGAN MOVED TO REDUCE THE LINE ITEM TITLED CITY ATTORNEY LEGAL SERVICES (#01060000 56130) FROM THE PROPOSED AMOUNT OF \$650,000 BY \$100,000 TO \$550,000.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER SPAIN SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION FAILED TO PASS WITH SIX (6) IN FAVOR (C. SMITH, SPAIN, BANTA, BROWN, LANGAN, AND JACKSON) AND THIRTEEN (13) AGAINST (TAYLOR-MOYE, DEFILIPPO, HERRON, LYONS, MCBRIDE-LEE, ROMAN-CHRISTY, ZAMBRANO-VIGGIANO, CASTILLO, NIEVES, VALLE, N. SMITH, MARTINEZ, AND NEWTON).**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER SPAIN MOVED TO DECREASE THE LINE ITEM TITLED POLICE OVERTIME REGULAR 1.5X OVERTIME PAY (# 1250000 51108) BY \$175,000 FROM \$1,721,959 TO \$1,896,959.00.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON SECONDED.**

Council Member Lyons pointed out that at the budget meetings they announced that they had reduced it by \$1 million. She said that the account has been cut twice.

**\*\* THE MOTION FAILED TO PASS WITH SIX (6) IN FAVOR (C. SMITH, SPAIN, BROWN, LANGAN, ZAMBRANO-VIGGIANO AND JACKSON) AND THIRTEEN (13) AGAINST (BANTA, TAYLOR-MOYE, DEFILIPPO, HERRON, LYONS, MCBRIDE-LEE, ROMAN-CHRISTY, CASTILLO, NIEVES, VALLE, N. SMITH, MARTINEZ, AND NEWTON).**

**\*\* THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MAYOR'S PROPOSED GENERAL FUND BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2019-2020 APPROPRIATION DECREASES OF \$ 2,694,922.00 PASSED WITH FOURTEEN (14) IN FAVOR (BANTA, TAYLOR-MOYE, BROWN, DEFILIPPO, HERRON, LYONS, MCBRIDE-LEE, ROMAN-CHRISTY, CASTILLO, NIEVES, VALLE, N. SMITH, MARTINEZ AND NEWTON) AND FIVE (5) OPPOSED (C. SMITH, SPAIN, LANGAN, ZAMBRANO-VIGGIANO, AND JACKSON).**

Council President Nieves said that there was one more item to add to the agenda. However, the Council Members who have conflicts, must leave the meeting.

The following Council Members left the meeting:

130th District: Pete Spain.  
131st District: Jack Banta, Denese Taylor-Moye  
133rd District: Jeanette Herron  
134th District: Michelle Lyons  
135th District: Rosalina Roman-Christy  
136th District: Alfredo Castillo, Maria Zambrano Viggiano  
137th District: Maria Valle  
138th District: Karen Jackson  
139th District: Ernest Newton, Eneida Martinez

**\*\* COUNCIL PRESIDENT NIEVES MOVED TO SUSPEND THE RULES FOR THE PURPOSE OF ADDING AN ITEM TO THE AGENDA.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BROWN SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION TO SUSPEND THE RULES FOR THE PURPOSE OF ADDING AN ITEM TO THE AGENDA PASSED UNANIMOUSLY. (ITEM #70-18)**

**\*\* COUNCIL PRESIDENT NIEVES MOVED TO APPOINT THE FOLLOWING COUNCIL MEMBERS TO THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT.**

**NESSAH SMITH (CO-CHAIR)  
MARY MCBRIDE-LEE (CO-CHAIR)  
CHRISTINA SMITH  
AIDEE NIEVES  
KYLE LANGAN  
MICHAEL DEFILIPPO  
MARCUS BROWN**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BROWN SECONDED.  
\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**ADJOURNMENT**

**\*\* COUNCIL PRESIDENT NIEVES MOVED TO ADJOURN.  
\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BROWN SECONDED.  
\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

S. L. Soltes  
Telesco Secretarial Services