

CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
MONDAY, OCTOBER 5, 2020

7:00 P.M.

This meeting was conducted by Zoom/Teleconference.

The public was able to listen to this meeting by calling a conference line.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Ganim called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

PRAYER

Mayor Ganim asked Council Member Brantley to lead those present in prayer.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Ganim asked Assistant City Clerk Frances Ortiz to lead those present in reciting the Pledge.

ROLL CALL

The Assistant 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
135th District: Rosalina Roman-Christy, Mary McBride-Lee
136th District: Avelino Silva, Alfredo Castillo
137th District: Maria Valle, Aidee Nieves
138th District: Maria Pereira
139th District: Ernest Newton, Eneida Martinez

A quorum was present.

Council President Nieves said Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia was absent due to a death in the family.

Council Member Martinez asked for a point of personal privilege. Once acknowledged by the Mayor, Council Member Martinez read the following statement into the record:

City of Bridgeport
City Council
Regular Meeting
October 5, 2020

Due to the nature of a pending investigation through the Bridgeport Police Department, where an unfortunate tragedy happened where this writer knows herself to be innocent this writer will temporarily refrain herself from participating in chairing or sitting in any committee meetings to allow ample time for the Bridgeport Police Department to conduct their investigation. Once the investigation is completed this writer will resume her duties as assigned.

- 1) Board of Police Commissions (Liaison)
- 2) Bridgeport Housing Authority (Liaison)

- 1) Co-Chair of Ordinance
- 2) Committee member to Public Safety and Transportation.

This decision is based on transparency to assure that all are comfortable during this investigation process into such tragedy.

Thank you,
Councilwoman
Eneida Martinez
139th District

MINUTES FOR APPROVAL:

• September 8, 2020

- ** COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON MOVED THE MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 8, 2020.**
- ** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY SECONDED.**

Council Member Pereira said that there were a number of significant errors in the minutes. She sent her proposed edits to the Council Members. She submitted the following corrections to the City Clerk:

Roll Call: Matthew McCarthy was initially on the call but departed as he was out-of-state. (Listed as absent)

Denese Taylor-Moye arrived at 7:11 PM

Mary-Evette Brantley arrived at 7:12 PM

Marcy McBride Lee- arrived at 7:23 PM (Zoning Meeting)

Rosalina Roman-Christy – arrived at 7:23 PM (Zoning Meeting)

Alfredo Castillo- arrived at 7:10 PM (Listed as absent)

Avelino Silva arrived at 7:27 (Listed as Absent)

Page 2 – Motion to Table the Minutes of June 18th Public Hearing does not identify the

individuals that made and seconded the motion. Matthew McCarthy was on the call for this vote but not listed as voting. Denese Taylor-Moye & Evette Brantley were not yet on the call but are identified as voting.

Page 2 – Motion to approve the July 28, 2020 Special Meeting does not identify who made and seconded the motion.

Page 7- Motion on 144-19 does not identify McCarthy as casting a vote although he voted on the following motion; therefore he was present for 144-19

Page 7- Councilwoman Maria Pereira was recognized by the Chair and was reading the following prepared statement into the record: **“Mr. Chair, I will be requesting a roll call vote on this matter. Just since 2013, the following issues regarding being a “bona-fide” resident of a district/and or Bridgeport have arisen.”**

- 1) State Representative Christina Ayala was arrested and prosecuted for representing and voting in a municipal and state district she did not reside in. She pleaded guilty to a felony and received one year suspended.**
- 2) Senator Andres Ayala was being investigated by the SEEC for registering to vote at 9 different addresses in ten years and whether he resided in the 23rd Senate District. Governor Malloy suddenly moved him into the position of Director of DMV prior to his taking his oath of office for his second senate term**
- 3) Civil Service Chair Eleanor Guedes was found to have registered to vote in a suburban town while serving on the Civil Service Commission**
- 4) 136th City Councilman Richard DeJesus was investigated by the SEEC for voting and representing the 136th District while residing in the 138th District. He resigned his seat on the City Council**
- 5) Board of Education Member Jessica Martinez is currently being investigated for serving on the 137th District Town Committee and voting in the 137th District while residing in the 136th District**
- 6) Mayor Ganim has utilized 5 different addresses from August 2015 –November 2019**
- 7) The SEEC just issued a finding that Board of Education member Chris Taylor was not residing in Bridgeport from at least December 2016-October 2019 which means he ran for office in Bridgeport illegally and is serving on the school board illegally and...”**

Councilman Ernest Newton and Councilwoman Eneida Martinez interrupted Councilwoman Pereira as did the Chair directing Councilwoman Pereira submit her statement to the City Clerk for the record.

Page 7- The motion to deny 36-19- Resolution 7 concerning Municipal Code of Ordinance Section 2.02.080- Residency Reporting of all municipal Elected Officials, Boards and Commissions

identifies City Council President Aidee Nieves as voting against the denial. She voted in favor. Castillo is not identified as voting which is incorrect.

Page 9 – The motion to approve 140-19 & 141-19 does not identify Castillo as voting which is incorrect.

Page 10- First paragraph should read, “Councilwoman Pereira stated all Zoning is required to do is to scan the two page application, not drawings/plans, to the respective city council members within three business days of receipt.” This will give City Council members plenty of notice of prospective businesses or projects being proposed in their district so that they can have time to organize in opposition or in favor.”

Page 10- Alfredo Castillo is not identified as voting which is incorrect.

Page 10 – Second paragraph, second sentence should read, “**Councilwoman Pereira stated that if there were excess bond funds due to a project being abandoned, another revenue source was located, or there were unspent funds at the completion of a project; the City Council must be notified within 30 days so that the City Council can either utilize those funds to pay down bonded debt or reallocate the funds to another Capital project....**”

Pages 12- Please add, “Councilwoman Pereira repeatedly objected that the Chair was recognizing other City Councilmembers although it was her resolution and stated, “Per **Robert’s Rules of Order, the individual(s) who introduce the resolution speak on the resolution first.**”

Council Member Brantley said that she would like to have the corrections read into the record. Discussion followed. The Council Members subsequently decided to table the minutes at that time.

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT NIEVES MOVED TO TABLE MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 8, 2020.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO TABLE THE MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 8, 2020 PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED TO TABLE THE MINUTES OF JULY 28, 2020 MEETING.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO TABLE THE MINUTES OF THE JULY 28, 2020 MEETING PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

ITEMS FOR IMMEDIATE CONSIDERATION:

173-19 Communication from Central Grants re: Grant Submission: State of Connecticut Department of Public Health – Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity (ELC) Cooperative Agreement (#20474), FOR IMMEDIATE CONSIDERATION.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED FOR IMMEDIATE CONSIDERATION AGENDA ITEM 173-19 COMMUNICATION FROM CENTRAL GRANTS RE: GRANT SUBMISSION: STATE OF CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH – EPIDEMIOLOGY AND LABORATORY CAPACITY (ELC) COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT (#20474).**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON SECONDED.**

Ms. DeJesus said that this was a three year grant to support public health regarding COVID-19 totaling just over \$1.2 million dollars over that time period.

Council Member Burns asked how the hiring would be handled. He also pointed out that the grant had been scheduled to start in May. Ms. DeJesus explained they were not losing out on any funding. Ms. Morrissey said that the employees would be subcontractors and gave a brief overview of the job package.

Council Member Pereira asked if they would be hiring an outside company or individuals. Ms. Morrissey said that they would be hiring individuals and gave the details.

Council Member Pereira indicated that on page three of all three grant descriptions indicated that the contracts would not go through the Contracts Committee. Ms. Morrissey said that the subcontracts would not go to the Contracts Committee but they would be reviewed by the Legal Department, go through the bidding process and possibly be reviewed by the Board of Public Purchases.

Council Member Pereira said that the Contracts Committee chairs can call a Special Meeting.

Council Member Newton asked if the employees would be working with the schools also. Ms. Morrissey said that the employees would be working with the entire community.

Council Member DeFilippo said he hoped they would be hiring Bridgeport residents rather than Danbury residents.

Council Member Valle encouraged them to consider hiring bi-lingual workers and not limit the languages to English and Spanish because there are many other different languages spoken in the City.

Council Member Castillo asked why that the Council was being asked to pass this since the Council has no input. Mayor Ganim said that he believed that the Council needs to accept the grant.

Atty. Anastasi said that the Council was being asked to do two things: the first was to approve the grant application process and secondly, delegate authority to various city officials to enter into contracts or agreements to implement the program.

Council Member Herron said that she agreed with her colleagues about having the subcontracts reviewed by the Contracts Committee. She said that an emergency meeting can be held if

needed. She wanted to see local R.N.s hired. Council Member Herron said it would have been nice to discuss this matter in Committee.

Council Member Cruz noted that the number of COVID cases was increasing in CT. This is urgent and there are no City funds involved.

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 173-19 COMMUNICATION FROM CENTRAL GRANTS RE: GRANT SUBMISSION: STATE OF CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH – EPIDEMIOLOGY AND LABORATORY CAPACITY (ELC) COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT (#20474) PASSED WITH SIXTEEN IN FAVOR (BURNS, MCCARTHY, CRUZ, TAYLOR-MOYE, BROWN, BRANTLEY, HERRON, LYONS, MCBRIDE-LEE, ROMAN-CHRISTY, SILVA, CASTILLO, VALLE, NIEVES, MARTINEZ AND NEWTON) AND TWO (2) OPPOSED (PEREIRA AND DEFILIPPO).**

174-19 Communication from Central Grants re: Grant Submission: Center for TECH and Civic Life (CTCL) – COVID-19 Response Grant, FOR IMMEDIATE CONSIDERATION.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED FOR IMMEDIATE CONSIDERATION OF AGENDA ITEM 174-19 COMMUNICATION FROM CENTRAL GRANTS RE: GRANT SUBMISSION: CENTER FOR TECH AND CIVIC LIFE (CTCL) – COVID-19 RESPONSE GRANT.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON SECONDED.**

Council Member Pereira said that there was funding for ballots drop boxes. She said that she would like 22 polling boxes placed because many people are afraid to mail their votes. There is a desperate need for drop boxes. She asked about Early Voting information and a section about cleaning facilities.

Ms. DeJesus said that the Early Voting and the section for cleaning the locations were simply items that were allowable. They will not be doing ballot drop boxes.

A discussion about additional drop boxes and concerns about absentee voting followed.

Council Member Burns asked who would be overseeing how the funds were spent. He was told that a combination of the Registrar of Voters and Ms. DeJesus would be overseeing the expenses.

Council Member Newton asked Ms. DeJesus to make sure the Town Clerk's Office and the Registrars of Voters were aware of the concerns.

Council Member Pereira asked why the Registrars of Voters would need more staff. Ms. DeJesus said that they were expecting an influx of voters for the election. The State has included a small amount of funding for that.

Council Member Brantley pointed out that the Presidential elections have a higher turnout and people are concerned about using mail in ballots.

Council Member Newton said that they will have to put extra protection for the poll workers at the sites.

Council Member Roman-Christy said that there will be a heavy burden on the Registrar's Office. At the last election, they were there until 3 a.m. in the morning.

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 174-19 COMMUNICATION FROM CENTRAL GRANTS RE: GRANT SUBMISSION: CENTER FOR TECH AND CIVIC LIFE (CTCL) – COVID-19 RESPONSE GRANT PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

175-19 Communication from Central Grants re: Grant Submission: State of Connecticut Office of Early Childhood – School Readiness Grant Program, FOR IMMEDIATE CONSIDERATION.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON MOVED FOR IMMEDIATE CONSIDERATION OF AGENDA ITEM 175-19 COMMUNICATION FROM CENTRAL GRANTS RE: GRANT SUBMISSION: STATE OF CONNECTICUT OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD – SCHOOL READINESS GRANT PROGRAM.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER CRUZ SECONDED.**

Ms. DeJesus said that this was a BOE grant, but the grant requires the Mayor's signature. It involves filling Early Childhood day care spots and the City has received this grant for over 20 years.

Council Member Pereira said that it was an \$11 million dollar grant and the resolution states the Mayor, his designee can execute contract. She said that the Mayor could not sign any document for the BOE. Ms. Helmrich explained that this was a joint grant for both the City and the BOE. The City agreed to be a fiduciary for the grant. Ms. Helmrich reviewed the details of the grant and the various entities involved in decision making. Discussion followed.

Council Member Pereira said that since the other entities were not named in the contract, and therefore she could not support it.

Council Member Newton asked about the in-kind contributions. Ms. Helmrich said that the larger cities were allocated up to \$75,000 in administrative costs but could receive up to \$100,000 if they have matching funds. Discussion followed about the details.

Council Member McBride-Lee asked if the funding could be used for other things in the classroom. Ms. Helmrich said that the classrooms could use it for administrators, paraprofessionals, or teachers. Each program, community and BOE will decide how to spend the money.

Council Member McBride-Lee said now that teachers are teaching two classes, they need assistance in the classrooms. She wished to know who would decide how the money is spent. Ms. Helmrich reviewed the details with the Council Members.

Council Member Brantley asked for a copy of the list. Ms. DeJesus said that she would send that out to the Council Members.

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 175-19 COMMUNICATION FROM CENTRAL GRANTS RE: GRANT SUBMISSION: STATE OF CONNECTICUT OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD – SCHOOL READINESS GRANT PROGRAM PASSED WITH SEVENTEEN (17) IN FAVOR (BURNS, MCCARTHY, CRUZ, TAYLOR-MOYE, BROWN, BRANTLEY, HERRON, DEFILIPPO, LYONS, MCBRIDE-LEE, ROMAN-CHRISTY, SILVA, CASTILLO, VALLE, NIEVES, MARTINEZ AND NEWTON) AND ONE (1) OPPOSED (PEREIRA).**

Mayor Ganim said that he would like to have these items be referred to Committee Meetings. Council Member McBride-Lee said that if the items go to Committee then there will not be debates on the floor.

COMMUNICATIONS TO BE REFERRED TO COMMITTEES:

168-19 Communication from City Attorney re: Settlement of Municipal Prohibited Practice Matter Pending before the State Labor Board MPP 33,523 relating to a Tentative Agreement between Bridgeport Firefighters Local 834 and City of Bridgeport concerning Firefighters working beyond the Age of 65, referred to Contracts Committee.

170-19 Communication from Central Grants re: Grant Submission: State of Connecticut Department of Public Health Per Capita Funding Allocation (#21220), referred to Economic and Community Development and Environment Committee.

171-19 Communication from Central Grants re: Grant Submission: Subrecipient Agreement between the City of Bridgeport and Ledge Light Health District regarding the State of Connecticut Department of Public Health – Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP) (#21221) and Medical Reserve Corp (MRC) (#21282) Grants, referred to Economic and Community Development and Environment Committee.

172-19 Communication from Central Grants re: Grant Submission: Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) – Lead Based Paint Hazard Reduction (LHR) Grant Program (#21372), referred to Economic and Community Development and Environment Committee.

176-19 Communication from City Attorney re: Proposed Lease Agreement with Marlin Business Services Corp. regarding Office Equipment for the City Attorney’s Office, referred to Contracts Committee.

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

169-19 Resolution presented by Council Member Herron re: Proposed resolution regarding a Police Chief Search Committee Transparency Bill, referred to Public Safety and Transportation Committee.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED TO COMBINE AND REFER THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:**

COMMUNICATIONS TO BE REFERRED TO COMMITTEES:

168-19 COMMUNICATION FROM CITY ATTORNEY RE: SETTLEMENT OF MUNICIPAL PROHIBITED PRACTICE MATTER PENDING BEFORE THE STATE LABOR BOARD MPP 33,523 RELATING TO A TENTATIVE AGREEMENT BETWEEN BRIDGEPORT FIREFIGHTERS LOCAL 834 AND CITY OF BRIDGEPORT CONCERNING FIREFIGHTERS WORKING BEYOND THE AGE OF 65, REFERRED TO CONTRACTS COMMITTEE.

170-19 COMMUNICATION FROM CENTRAL GRANTS RE: GRANT SUBMISSION: STATE OF CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH PER CAPITA FUNDING ALLOCATION (#21220), REFERRED TO ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE.

171-19 COMMUNICATION FROM CENTRAL GRANTS RE: GRANT SUBMISSION: SUBRECIPIENT AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF BRIDGEPORT AND LEDGE LIGHT HEALTH DISTRICT REGARDING THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH – PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS (PHEP) (#21221) AND MEDICAL RESERVE CORP (MRC) (#21282) GRANTS, REFERRED TO ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE.

172-19 COMMUNICATION FROM CENTRAL GRANTS RE: GRANT SUBMISSION: DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT (HUD) – LEAD BASED PAINT HAZARD REDUCTION (LHR) GRANT PROGRAM (#21372), REFERRED TO ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE.

176-19 COMMUNICATION FROM CITY ATTORNEY RE: PROPOSED LEASE AGREEMENT WITH MARLIN BUSINESS SERVICES CORP. REGARDING OFFICE EQUIPMENT FOR THE CITY ATTORNEY’S OFFICE, REFERRED TO CONTRACTS COMMITTEE.

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

169-19 RESOLUTION PRESENTED BY COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON RE: PROPOSED RESOLUTION REGARDING A POLICE CHIEF SEARCH COMMITTEE TRANSPARENCY BILL, REFERRED TO PUBLIC SAFETY AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER LYONS SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO COMBINE AND REFER THE COMMUNICATIONS TO BE REFERRED TO COMMITTEES AND THE RESOLUTIONS TO BE REFERRED TO BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, ETC. PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

MATTERS TO BE ACTED UPON (CONSENT CALENDAR):

***151-19 Miscellaneous Matters Committee Report re: Appointment of Denis Habza (R) to the Harbor Commission.**

***153-19 Miscellaneous Matters Committee Report re: Appointment of Nichola Hall (D) to the Food Policy Council.**

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

Assistant City Clerk Ortiz read the items into the record.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER PEREIRA MOVED TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING ITEMS AS THE CONSENT CALENDAR:**

***151-19 MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS COMMITTEE REPORT RE: APPOINTMENT OF DENIS HABZA (R) TO THE HARBOR COMMISSION.**

***153-19 MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS COMMITTEE REPORT RE: APPOINTMENT OF NICHOLA HALL (D) TO THE FOOD POLICY COUNCIL.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER LYONS SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Council President Nieves said that she had something to add to the agenda. She acknowledged Council Member Martinez's earlier statement and said that Council Member Martinez had discussed this action with her previously. This is being done for transparency.

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT NIEVES MOVED TO SUSPEND THE RULES ADD COMMITTEE RE-ASSIGNMENT FOR THE PURPOSE OF TRANSPARENCY.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO SUSPEND THE RULES ADD COMMITTEE RE-ASSIGNMENT PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Council President Nieves announced the following Committee re-assignments:

- **Ordinances:**

Brown, Roman-Christy, Valle, Lyons, Newton, Silva, Brantley

- **Public Safety:**

**Valle, Taylor-Moye, Herron, Lyons, Silva, McBride-Lee,
Vizzo-Paniccia**

- **Majority Leader - Jeanette Herron**

- **Deputy Majority Leader- Mary-Evette Brantley**

- **Housing Liaison - only removed Eneida Martinez**

- **Police Liaison- Mathew McCarthy & Maria Valle**

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT NIEVES MOVED THE COMMITTEE REASSIGNMENTS AS PRESENTED.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY SECONDED.**

Council Member Martinez said that she had not requested to be removed as Majority Leader and there was no voting involved with that position.

Council President Nieves explained that at this time, she felt that it would be prudent to do this as part of the leadership. It is not a normal circumstance and she believed it was in the best interest of the Council to do this.

Council Member McBride-Lee said that Council Member Martinez was putting the Council and the City before herself.

Council Member Herron said that it takes courage to make the statement Council Member Martinez made. As soon as things are settled, Council Member Martinez can have her position back.

Council Member Newton said that he was disappointed that so many of his colleagues were calling for her resignation. He hoped that the Council would not get caught up in emotions. It is important not to jump to conclusions or call for people's resignations. He said that he looked forward to Council Member Martinez returning to the Council.

Council Member Pereira said that she disagreed with the Council Members' positions regarding loyalty to one another, because they should be loyal to the residents and the City, not to one another.

Council Member Cruz said that the event was tragic and he was praying for her and the families involved.

Council Member Taylor-Moye said that she agreed with Council Member Newton. It is not the Council Members' place to ask for any other Members' resignation. Let Council Member Martinez do what she needs to do.

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE COMMITTEE REASSIGNMENTS AS PRESENTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

ADJOURNMENT

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

**** COUNCIL MEMBER CRUZ SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Telesco Secretarial Services