

CITY of BRIDGEPORT
CITY COUNCIL
PUBLIC SPEAKING SESSION
OCTOBER 17, 2011
6:30 PM

ATTENDANCE: Council members: Brannelly, M. McCarthy, Taylor-Moye,
T. McCarthy, Lyons, Vizzo-Paniccia, Bonney, dePara, Silva, M. Ayala,
Paoletto, Curwen

Council President McCarthy called the public speaking session to order at 6:40 pm.

The city clerk took the roll call and announced there was a quorum.

THE FOLLOWING NAMED PERSON HAS REQUESTED PERMISSION TO ADDRESS THE CITY COUNCIL ON MONDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2011, AT 6:30 P.M., IN THE CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL, 45 LYON TERRACE, BRIDGEPORT, CT.

NAME

SUBJECT

John Marshall Lee

signed up to speak prior to the public session

Mr. Marshall spoke about the issue of the broken fiscal government, in reference to the charter and what's discussed and what's not discussed as it pertains to best governmental practices. He mentioned the operating budget deficit, noting that city taxpayers have a concern about high property taxes. He questioned the city council about what role they played in the decision; in terms of appropriations and making financial decisions. He further questioned what the \$19,000 stipend was used for and he suggested that if the financial reports were made available, there wouldn't be a need to question the matter. He emphasized the need for financial reports that outline what city activities are financed. He stated that the information hasn't been available to date. He stressed the need for a more transparent process to enforce better governmental practices.

Cecil Young
99 Carroll Avenue
Bridgeport, CT 06607

Conditions in P.T. Barnum Apartments and
videos of Council Meetings not posted on line.

Mr. Young spoke about the raw sewage flowing into P.T. Barnum. He recalled that two council members were supposed to look into the problem. He further spoke about the issue of him having to come before the council for the last three years to talk about the raw sewage problem. He stressed that the problem needs to be corrected. He noted that you could see two trash cans overflowing with waste on his website www.cecilyoung.com. He stressed that sooner or later someone will listen to him and go over to P.T. Barnum and check out the problem.

He recalled a past incident regarding the removal of fire doors that he claimed resulted in the loss of life. He quoted the phrase that "If he sees something, he's going to say something"! He mentioned that Dr. King died for the right of people to be heard and that's what he intends to do. As a taxpayer, he urged someone to look into the problem, specifically the council members from that district.

The public speaking session was closed at 6:55 pm.

CITY COUNCIL MEETING

Monday, October 17, 2011

7:00 p.m.

City Council Chambers, City Hall - 45 Lyon Terrace
Bridgeport, Connecticut

Mayor Finch called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm.

Prayer - Father Gustavo Falla, St. Augustine Cathedral offered the prayer.

Hispanic Heritage Flag Ceremony

Mayor Finch expressed that it's always special to recognize Hispanic Heritage month. He introduced the members of the committee as: Rosa Correa, Alma Maya, Lydia Martinez, and Carmen Colon. And it was noted that State Representative Andres Ayala was present to speak.

The Bridgeport Police Department Honor Guard presented the flags processional at the front of council chambers.

Ms. Correa announced that they would present the twenty flags processional, by displaying the official flag including all twenty Latino countries that represents the Hispanic Heritage community. *The flag was displayed by persons from the Bridgeport Fire Department: FF Marcus Maya and Commissioner Ana Garcia*

Pledge of Allegiance - Carmen Colon led the pledge for all to recite.

Ms. Colon introduced the Las Sevillanas (a traditional Latino dance) that was performed by Eliane Kauck.

Ms. Colon expressed a few words about the amazing culture the community experiences. She emphasized that everyone should continue to work together for the betterment of the community.

Ms. Correa stated that it was an important moment to look at and recognize the past, present and future. She thought it would be a good opportunity to pay tribute to the people that fit those categories. She noted that there are many talented people in the Latino community, noting that they will pay tribute to three people in the community.

Awards Presentation – Alma Maya came forward to begin the presentations:

Juan “Popo” Vargas – *his son Johnny Vargas and his daughters were present to accept the plaque on behalf of his father.* Ms. Maya emotionally expressed that Mr. Vargas recently passed away. She said he was being honored for his past leadership in the community. She said he was a humble person and very instrumental in supporting his church. In addition, he was a pioneer in directing the first Hispanic program for ABCD.

A picture was taken with the family members and Mayor Finch.

Ms. Correa expressed that it gave her great joy to have Juan “Popo” Vargas receive the plaque.

Ms. Correa came forward to present the plaque to Felisa Roman “Dona Bibi” – *her son Louis and her grandson Nicholas were present to accept the plaque on behalf of Felisa Roman.*

Ms. Correa stated that the award was given to Felisa Roman posthumously. She expressed that her and “Popo” were like brother and sister. She further expressed that it was a great pleasure to present the award. She shared some background about Felisa Roman and she highlighted that she helped many in the community. She noted that she helped pave the way for future Hispanic leaders and she acknowledged the other esteemed accomplishments she made.

A picture was taken with the family members and Mayor Finch.

State Representative Andres Ayala came forward to present the plaque to BPD Lieutenant Rebeca Garcia. He acknowledged that his colleague Ezekiel Martinez was present to share in the presentations.

Andres Ayala offered some background about Rebeca Garcia. He stated she is being recognized for her leadership in the community and for serving as the sergeant of Internal Affairs. He noted that she headed the first domestic violence unit and she began as a lieutenant. She is currently the Commander of the Internal Affairs Unit. He expressed that he was extremely proud of her, noting that he was especially proud of the fact that she’s the result of home grown talent. He added that she served as a role model to children in the community and she broke through in a job that is traditionally closed to women and Latino persons.

A picture was taken with the family members and Mayor Finch.

Ms. Correa came forward to present the plaque to Javier Colon. *Mr. Colon's family members were present to accept the plaque on his behalf: Pablo DeJesus Colon and Hijo and Pablo Colon.*

Ms. Correa expressed that they will now look at and recognize the future from Stratford, CT. She stated that the country recognized a young man whose family is from Columbia. She stated that it was quite an achievement that he won the competition that was featured on the TV show "*The Voice*". She said all his achievements centered around his family. She noted that Javier Colon had a previous engagement and was unable to attend tonight, but he sent his sentiments and thank you for being honored.

A picture was taken with the family members and Mayor Finch.

Ms. Maya announced that Mayor Finch could be heard on radio station 1450 once per month, noting that he addresses the community.

Ms. Maya introduced Jessica Galan-Guzman who resides in Fairfield. She stated that Ms. Guzman is researching a book on Connecticut Puerto Ricans.

Ms. Guzman addressed the city council, the Heritage Committee and the guests present. She offered an account of history and information from the book she's writing. She highlighted the contributions of the Hispanic community dating back to the 1800's to the present. She further highlighted the historical, social and political contributions of renown Latino persons.

Ms. Correa thanked The Workplace, Inc. for providing the plaques and she thanked the Director of the The Workplace, Inc. Joe Carbone for his involvement and participation. She also thanked the staff of Career Resources.

Mayor Finch expressed some words about the Hispanic Heritage Committee. He congratulated them for their leadership and for the events that celebrated their history that he said contributed to the fabric of this great country. He thanked the committee.

Mayor Finch took a picture with Rosa Correa.

State Representative Andres Ayala shared a few words to express the pride and acknowledgement of those who have worked hard to nurture a strong foundation in the Latino community. And he recognized his family for their guidance through the years. He highlighted the struggles that many have seen in the Latino community and he recognized the efforts of so many that resulted in him standing before them tonight to speak and represent the community in Hartford. He further expressed how we stand on the shoulders of so many, to represent the city. He emphasized that there was still so much more to be done on the local, state and national level in all sectors – *he expressed that "many have worked hard and many have progressed"*! He further stated that they have to work hard and demand more of themselves to cash in on the window of opportunity. He thanked all

the members of the committee, *to a round of applause*. And he thanked Mayor Finch and the honorable city council members for allowing them to share their heritage and culture with them.

Mayor Finch thanked everyone for participating in the program tonight on behalf of the city council. He expressed that it was very moving and meaningful – *he added that he was in favor of immigration, noting that all are welcomed in Bridgeport!*

City Council Citation: Craig Anton Davis in recognition of Outstanding Contributions to Youth and Community.

Mayor Finch and Council members: Blunt, T. McCarthy and Bonney presented the citation.

Council member Blunt expressed that so often, they hear about youth. He stated that Mr. Davis teaches them what has been lacking for a long time, which is *“Respect”!*

Council member Blunt read the citation and he presented it to Mr. Davis in recognition of his outstanding contribution to the youth in Bridgeport – *a group picture was taken with Mayor Finch.*

Mayor Finch reconvened the city council meeting at 8:05 pm.

Roll Call - the city clerk took the roll call and she announced there was a quorum.

ATTENDANCE: Council members: Brannelly, M. McCarthy, A. Ayala, Taylor-Moye, Brantley, Walsh, T. McCarthy, Lyons, Vizzo-Paniccia, Bonney, Blunt, dePara, Silva, M. Ayala, Martinez, Paoletto, Curwen, Baker, Holloway

ABSENT: Council members: A. Ayala, Austin, Holloway

124-10 Public Hearing regarding Disposition of City Owned properties to Habitat for Humanity.

- 673 Barnum Avenue Vacant Lot (1765-7)
- 302 Berkshire Avenue Vacant Lot (1719-1)
- 1247 Pembroke Street Condo (1737-15k)
- 348 Wilmot Avenue Vacant Lot (635-5)
- 65 Whittier Street Vacant Lot (212-22)
- 84 Maple Street Vacant Lot (1649-15)
- 1076 Kossuth Street Vacant Lot (1727-3)

Iris, of Habitat for Humanity approached the council to speak. She stated that there has been a lot of discussion about providing homes to those in need. During the past years, they've built (136) homes in Bridgeport. She stated that the property in question will be used to build a small home for a small hardworking family. She expressed that she would appreciate the opportunity to give a family a piece of the American dream. She added that the property is currently vacant.

Mayor Finch asked if there was anyone to testify about the item

John, a resident of the city said he had a question about the property being on a nonconforming lot. He explained that his question was in regard to tax revenue, noting that he felt a single family dwelling would be best for the area.

Max Perez, OPED spoke to the matter. He said regarding the smaller lot, Habitat for Humanity would buy the property subject to P&Z Commission review for approval to build. He recalled that in the past, they have built homes on lots that were approximately 2,000 sq. ft. He said as far as tax revenue, that matter was for the Tax Assessor to address.

Another resident of Bridgeport stated that he didn't feel the properties were big enough to build anything. He stressed that he pays taxes and he's not comfortable with building anything that will change the neighborhood by not fitting in properly.

The public hearing was closed at 8:15 pm.

MINUTES FOR APPROVAL:

Approval of City Council Minutes: September 19, 2011

**** COUNCIL MEMBER dePARA MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES
** COUNCIL MEMBER CURWEN SECONDED
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

COMMUNICATIONS TO BE REFERRED TO COMMITTEES:

- 144-10** Communication from City Attorney re Twenty day notice to Settle Litigation pursuant to Municipal Code Section 2.10.130: Nicole Woehrle, **ACCEPTED AND MADE PART OF THE RECORD.**
- 145-10** Communication from City Attorney re Twenty day notice to Settle Litigation pursuant to Municipal Code Section 2.10.130: Lina Salazar, **ACCEPTED AND MADE PART OF THE RECORD.**
- 146-10** Communication from Mayor re Appointment of Reginald Norman (U) to the Police Commission, referred to Public Safety and Transportation Committee.
- 147-10** Communication from Health and Social Services re Proposed Lease Agreement with Community Health Network of CT Foundation to occupy space at the Department of Health and Social Services Building, Third Floor, 752 East Main Street, referred to Contracts Committee.

- 148-10** Communication from Civil Service Commission re Proposed change to Civil Service Commission Rule XV – Resident Preference, referred to Miscellaneous and Matters Committee.
- 150-10** Communication from OPM, re Budget Transfer for FY 2011-2012 City Clerk From: City Required Reserve Account To: Salaries and Wages Account (\$47,859), referred to Budget and Appropriations Committee.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO MOVED TO REFER
COMMUNICATIONS TO BE REFERRED TO COMMITTEES:
** COUNCIL MEMBER LYONS SECONDED
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

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

- 149-10** Resolution presented by Council members Walsh, Baker and Silva re Resolution concerning Due Diligence Performed on Developers of Seaview Plaza, referred to Economic and Community Development and Environment Committee.

- 151-10** Resolution presented by Council members Brannelly, Curwen and dePara re Resolution to establish the review of the Monthly Financial Report as a standing agenda item for the regular monthly meetings of the City Council Budget and Appropriations Committee, referred to Budget and Appropriations Committee.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER CURWEN MOVED TO REFER
RESOLUTIONS TO BE REFERRED TO BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, ETC.:
** COUNCIL MEMBER LYONS SECONDED
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

MATTERS TO BE ACTED UPON (CONSENT CALENDAR):

Mayor Finch asked if there were any items to be removed from the consent calendar:

Council member Brannelly requested to remove item ***127-10** Public Safety and Transportation Committee Report re: Application for Driveway Permit: #2101 Commerce Drive (State Street Extension).

** **COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO MOVED TO APPROVE**
** **COUNCIL MEMBER dePARA SECONDED**

Council member Brannelly said the item to be approved was awaiting approval from the fire department – *she noted the information was distributed*. She stated that the fire marshal signed off and gave his approval to go forward.

** **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

***128-10** Public Safety and Transportation Committee Report re: Streetlight Installation on utility pole (unnumbered) in front of 128 Milne Street.

** **COUNCIL MEMBER CURWEN MOVED TO APPROVE**
** **COUNCIL MEMBER dePARA SECONDED**
** **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

Other Business:

** **COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO MOVED TO SUSPEND THE RULES FOR THE PURPOSE OF ADDING AN ITEM TO THE AGENDA**
** **COUNCIL MEMBER CURWEN SECONDED**
** **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

Council member Paoletto stated that item **79-10 Proposed Amendment of the current agreement between the Town of Stratford and the City of Bridgeport and their respective Water Pollution Control Authorities** went through the committee and passed. He explained that the item wasn't on the agenda because the final language had to be clarified by the city attorney. He said the amendment was made in committee and he stressed that the language was given to him before the meeting tonight. He explained that the item was a time sensitive issue on the part of the entity they have the agreement with – *he read the amendment into the read as it was distributed and submitted to the city clerk's office*.

He went on to say that if the council members had any questions, he would be glad to answer them. He urged approval of the item, noting that everyone worked hard on the item. He clarified that the matter pertained to an amendment to the original amendment – being amended by substitution.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO MOVED TO AMEND THE ITEM BY SUBSTITUTION**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER CURWEN SECONDED**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO MOVED TO APPROVE AS AMENDED**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER T. McCARTHY SECONDED**

Council member T. McCarthy stated the item was in committee a long time and they came to a reasonable conclusion at the last meeting. He noted a mistake was made regarding the item being added to the agenda that should be submitted to the council president. He apologized for that not being done. He agreed the language was changed earlier today when it was received from the city attorney. He stated if a caucus was required to discuss the issue, they could do that.

Mayor Finch clarified that the matter involved three towns and the WPCA, regarding the town boundaries. He pointed out the need for approval when these things come forward.

Council member Brannelly stated that she wouldn't approve the item tonight, because she was unaware of its important nature and she stated that aspects of the item being presented at the last minute wasn't agreed to. She asked to send the item to committee, noting that they shouldn't be asked to vote on such an important issue when they weren't previously informed.

Council member Vizzo-Paniccia thanked the committee for the work they did. She stated that she would vote against the item, because she didn't feel that \$50k was enough to take care of the city's needs and the taxpayers. She felt that the city should be compensated more; noting that she needed added information.

Council member Brantley agreed with Council member Vizzo-Paniccia. She said she didn't feel that \$50k was sufficient. She relayed that once again, another town is riding on the heels of Bridgeport without sufficient compensation.

Council member Walsh stated that if it was the Town of Stratford they were talking about instead of the City of Bridgeport; they could be sure that they wouldn't facilitate economic development. He still thought they should receive something from the Town of Stratford, in terms of compensation.

Council member Curwen stated that the committee members should attend the meetings more often to obtain the information. He recalled the environmental impact to a district regarding a prior project. He agreed that the amount was a pittance. However, when they're talking about senior homes flooding, he pointed out that there isn't any state

money; so sometimes, they have to scrounge to do the best they can for the residents. He strongly expressed that he would be appalled if the item wasn't supported.

Council member Brannelly clarified that she questioned the item, because it wasn't on the agenda. She asked for the item to be brought to the table for discussion. She stressed that the agreement was changed and the language and she didn't know it would be voted on tonight. She stated that it was a shame that the co-chair of the committee didn't let them know. She said although time sensitivity is important, the committee chair should have let everyone know it would be discussed tonight.

Council member Brantley stated that she took offense to Council member Curwen's tone. She repeated that compensation of \$50k wasn't enough.

Council member Lyons stated that during the committee meetings that were held, she was one of the members that asked questions to make sure they did things right, although she didn't address compensation. She further stated that the co-chairs Paoletto and Curwen did their due diligence to try to ensure that the problem was taken care of. And although she agreed the compensation wasn't a lot, the problem consists of a sewage issue that needs to be addressed and to avoid leakage into other districts.

Council member Paoletto addressed the comments about the item not being on the agenda. He said it was because it wasn't known that the item would be presented before the city council tonight. He clarified that there was no disrespect or any intention to pull something quick. He agreed that \$50k wasn't enough and he noted that the city doesn't have the money to do the project to address the flood control issue. He recalled that funds from the state have been extremely sparse in past years. He urged the council to take the matter under consideration. He didn't feel that not voting in favor, just because the compensation wasn't enough, wasn't a good reason. He pointed out that the language that was changed was very minor. He repeated that if they chose not to vote because it wasn't enough money was disagreed with. He stressed that they received more money from the town than from the state.

Council member Brantley stated that if he felt the compensation was enough to repair the problem, then she would support it. However, she had a concern that it wouldn't entirely solve the problem.

Council member Curwen recalled that years ago, they discussed the Environmental Impact Study, but they found out it would cost \$18 million. He stated that this project won't completely solve the problem, but it will help curb it. He emphasized that sometimes they have to look for a band aid, when the bigger picture isn't available.

Council member Martinez stated she would say yes for someone helping even a little bit if it helps the east side of Bridgeport. She said she was in support of the item.

Council member T. McCarthy summed up that the item was in committee a long time and they went back and forth with negotiations. He said that initially he didn't feel progress was being made and that \$50k is a far cry than where they started with the developer. He said

although it won't fix the problem, it will help alleviate some of the problem. He thought the Town of Stratford tried to be a good neighbor, noting that Bridgeport is always a good neighbor. He felt it was as good a deal as they could get to mitigate some flood control and it will be helpful to save ten to twenty neighbors from experience flooding issues.

Council member Taylor-Moye stated that she was told by Council member Paoletto what exactly was going on, so she was in support of the item since she had more information.

**** MOTION PASSED WITH THIRTEEN VOTES IN FAVOR AND FOUR VOTES IN OPPOSITION (COUNCIL MEMBERS: VIZZO-PANICCIA, WALSH, BRANNELLY and BONNEY)**

Announcements

Council President McCarthy stated that Council member Austin called in sick.

He announced that Betsy McHale retired and the city council will send her flowers to express that they wish her well.

He announced that Ann Murray's father passed away on Thursday.

He also acknowledged Pat Falla and Sonia Dewitt Smith.

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO MOVED TO ADJOURN
** COUNCIL MEMBER T. McCARTHY SECONDED
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

The meeting adjourned at 8:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Graham
Telesco Secretarial Services

City of Bridgeport
City Council Meeting
October 17, 2011
Page 13 of 13