

**CITY COUNCIL PUBLIC SPEAKING SESSION  
FEBRUARY 1, 2010  
6:30 p.m.**

ATTENDANCE: Council members: Brannelly, M. McCarthy, Taylor-Moye, Brantley, T. McCarthy, Austin, Lyons, dePara, M. Ayala, Martinez, Paoletto, Curwen, Baker, Holloway

ABSENT: Council members: A. Ayala, \*Walsh, \*Vizzo-Paniccia, Bonney, Blunt, \*Silva

*\*= members delayed in Misc. Matters Committee meeting*

Council President McCarthy called the public speaking session to order at 6:45 p.m.

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

Council President McCarthy announced that there some of the council members had been delayed in a council committee meeting.

THE FOLLOWING NAMED PERSONS HAVE REQUESTED PERMISSION TO ADDRESS THE CITY COUNCIL ON MONDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2010, AT 6:30 P.M., IN THE CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL, 45 LYON TERRACE, BRIDGEPORT, CT.

**NAME**

**SUBJECT**

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Cecil C. Young  
99 Carroll Avenue  
Bridgeport, CT 06607

Taxes and City & State Officials  
unethical tactics

Council President McCarthy called Mr. Young to come forward three times; he wasn't present to address the city council.

Lloyd Nicholson  
54 Island Brook Avenue  
Bridgeport, CT 06606

P. T. Barnum Fire

Mr. Nicholson stated that he was there to propose something to the city council, in regard to the situation that occurred in P.T. Barnum. He expressed that it should never happen again. He said he was calling for all the apartments in P.T. Barnum to be equipped with sprinkler systems and a connection signal to 911. He stated that this should also be implemented for Marina Village Apartments and Greens Apartments. There should also be

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safety classes held for all tenants of these apartment complexes. In addition, all the apartments should be equipped with a back door exit. He further noted that New Haven has this system in place at schools and the fire signal should be directly linked to all the apartments. He explained that the system can't be tampered with and if it is, a fine will be imposed on the person(s) caught tampering with it. He expressed that although they couldn't do anything about what happened in P.T. Barnum, future measures should be taken to avoid it happening again. He hoped the city council would implement his suggestions; in addition to adopting the City of Bridgeport codes. He also noted that all fire systems should be equipped.

Council President McCarthy stated that his requests didn't seem like they were unreasonable expectations. He thanked Mr. Nicholson for addressing the council.

*The following speaker signed up tonight to address the city council:*

Sam Wellington

Topic not identified

Mr. Wellington stated he has been a resident of Bridgeport all his life. He expressed that he tries to make Bridgeport better. He spoke about the problem of towing cars in the city. He relayed his story of the boot put on his vehicle. He said he called to find out what he needed to do to get his car back, but was eventually told his car had been crushed. He pointed out that the car was still in good condition. He subsequently went to the police and he was told to file a loss complaint in relation to the business that is known as scam artists. He stressed that the practice of crushing cars that owe back taxes is common and has happened to other people in the city, so he cautioned everyone to be aware. He asked the city council to stand up and make sure that people of these types of unscrupulous businesses abide by the law. He hoped the council would investigate the company that is encouraging bad business practice by taking people's money and stop it.

Council member Martinez asked the name of the company. Mr. Wellington said the company was **Jim's Auto Salvage**.

*Cecil Young showed up to the public speaking session at 6:55 p.m.*

Cecil C. Young  
99 Carroll Avenue  
Bridgeport, CT 06607

Taxes and City & State Officials  
unethical tactics

Council President McCarthy reminded Mr. Young that the public speaking session began at 6:30 p.m.

Mr. Young stated that he tried to bring information forth to the city council that he thought they should have. He offered an apology to those that he has offended in the past by his comments and statements.

He spoke about two lawsuits that were pending with the health department for unjust termination, allegedly for not coming to work. He explained that he didn't go to work, because at the time, he was on medical leave due to depression. He held up documents that he said were proof of this. He held up another document that was related to the sheriff work he did in the past. He went on to say that the two lawsuits were filed in Superior Court and he asked that the city council look the lawsuits up and review them. He further noted how his medical coverage was dropped. He then relayed a conversation he said he had with City Attorney Mark Anastasi, when he was told he had a right to work in the city. He noted that he eventually received a settlement for \$23k compensation. He thanked Attorney Anastasi for his assistance in that matter. He further asked the Civil Liberties Union to investigate the matter. And he requested that the city council consider his rights like everyone else, pointing out that they have been violated in the past. He said he hoped when all is said and done, justice will be seen. He expressed that he will still continue to speak up.

The public speaking session ended at 7:00 p.m.

## **CITY COUNCIL MEETING**

**Monday, February 1, 2010**

**7:00 pm.**

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

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

**ABSENT:** Council members: A. Ayala, Bonney

Mayor Finch called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance -the pledge was led by Pierre d'Haiti.

It was noted that Officer Gaye recently returned from Haiti. He updated and shared with the city council and audience members the current situation in Haiti.

Prayer the prayer was offered by Bishop Jean Gerard.

Mayor Finch thanked Officer Gaye for dedicating his time to help out in the country of Haiti.

Council President McCarthy noted that Council member Brantley was soliciting donations for the Haiti Relief cause.

He further thanked the visitors in the audience for coming out tonight to update the council on the situation in Haiti.

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

Council President McCarthy noted that Council member A. Ayala was delayed at work.

He mentioned that Council member Silva has been nominated to receive the National Cultural Award.

**MINUTES FOR APPROVAL:**

Approval of City Council Minutes: January 4, 2010

Approval of Committee of the Whole Minutes: January 11, 2010

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER AUSTIN SECONDED**

**\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

Correction to January 4, 2010 – Public Speaking Session

Page 1; Add Council member Martinez as being in attendance

**COMMUNICATIONS TO BE REFERRED TO COMMITTEES:**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO MOVED TO APPROVE THE REFERRALS**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER CURWEN SECONDED**

**30-09** Communication from Labor Relations and Benefits Administration re Proposed Agreement with The Hartford Life and Accident Insurance Company for Group Life and Accidental Death and Dismemberment Benefits for City Employees, referred to Contracts Committee.

**31-09** Communication from Labor Relations and Benefits Administration re Proposed Agreement with Medco Health Solutions, Inc. to provide prescription drug benefits to covered employees and retirees of the City and Board of Education. (Term of Agreement is from 10/01/08-12/31/2011), referred to Contracts Committee.

**32-09** Communication from Central Grants and Community Development re Grant Submission: American Institute of Architecture (AIA) Sustainable Design Assessment Team Program, referred to Economic and Community Development & Environment Committee.

**\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

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

There weren't any requests to remove items from the consent calendar.

The city clerk read the items into the record.

**\*14-09** Economic and Community Development and Environment Committee Report re Consolidated Plan for Housing and Community Development Program Year 35 Annual Action Plan: Community Development Block Grant Program.

- \*24-09** Economic and Community Development and Environment Committee Report re Grant Submission: U.S. Department of Energy Efficiency Block Grant Competitive Program for funds to develop an Energy Efficiency Capital Buy-Down Loan Program.
- \*25-09** Economic and Community Development and Environment Committee Report re Grant Submission: U.S. EPA Brownsfield Job Training Program for 2010 clean-up activities.
- \*26-09** Economic and Community Development and Environment Committee Report re Grant Submission: U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development, Healthy Homes Demonstration Program 2010.
- \*08-09** Miscellaneous Matters Committee Report re Appointment of Cynthia S. Maignan (D) to Board of Assessment Appeals.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO MOVED TO APPROVE  
\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER CURWEN SECONDED  
\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**ADDENDUM ADDED:**

**COMMUNICATION TO BE REFERRED TO COMMITTEES:**

- \*\* COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO MOVED TO REFER THE ITEM TO  
\*\* COMMITTEE  
\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER dePARA SECONDED**
- 33-09** Communication from City Attorney re Proposed Severance Agreement with Ralph Jacobs, referred to Contracts Committee.
- \*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**OTHER BUSINESS:**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA MOVED TO SUSPEND THE RULES FOR THE PURPOSE OF ADDING AN ITEM TO THE AGENDA  
13-09 Reconsideration of Proposed Approval of 2010-2012 Citizens' Union Committee (Additional names pending)**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER CURWEN SECONDED  
\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA MOVED TO APPROVE  
\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER CURWEN SECONDED**

Council member Vizzo-Paniccia stated that there were four other slots to be submitted at a later date. They will be submitted to Alanna Kabel in the Grants Department.

*\*It was noted the names added to date will be submitted to the city clerk's office.*

Council member Holloway stated that for the last sixteen years he has served on the council, he has talked to people around the country. He expressed that although the Citizen's Union has done a great job distributing money throughout the city, there isn't any other city in the country that has a Citizen's Union, because the city council makes the final decisions. He suggested that the Citizen's Union be abolished. He pointed out that at the end; they have the Citizen's Union and the council committee, who sit down and decide what to do. He stressed that it wasn't fair after all that, for the programs requesting funds to come out and make their requests, and ultimately, the decision is made by the city council anyway. He reiterated that they needed to abolish the Citizen's Union.

Council member Baker agreed with Council member Holloway. He added that they needed to come up with a better process, because some programs get large amounts of money, when others receive less and less. They also need to look at some of the city departments that rely on these monies and don't really need it. He urged his colleagues to weed out those programs.

Council member Brantley noted that she understood the issue with the Citizen's Union. However, she explained that having been involved herself, she felt it was a good process to allow community input into what programs are funded. She questioned if there was a requirement that they have a Citizen's Union Committee per the CDBG process. Ms. Kabel responded and said that HUD requires some type of process that involves citizens review of the requests. They have to have some mechanism in place that involves the public.

Council member Brantley urged her colleagues to follow Ms. Kabel's input and follow the process.

Council member Brantley commented that she didn't think it was their role to dictate the number of times an agency can come forward to request funding.

Ms. Kabel said that HUD leaves a lot of discretion on how to administer funding.

Council member dePara spoke to Council member Brantley's comments. He stated that the ECDE Committee handles the CDBG process. He said that abolishing the Citizen's Union would have to be done through charter revision. He further noted that although the ECDE Committee doesn't agree 100% with the Citizen's Union recommendations, he did think it was good to have another set of eyes to peruse the funding requests that provide vital funds to varied programs. Overall, he thought the Citizen's Union played a vital part in the process. He agreed the process could be improved upon and made more user friendly. He relayed that the process was being worked on, wherein they could empower agencies to remain intact, especially those that are crucial to community needs. So they are looking to better the initiative. He implored each council member to be part of the initiative and offer feedback, to ensure that all the agencies remain effective in what they're doing.

Mayor Finch commented that all the comments weren't relevant to the motion on the floor. He noted that he spoke to City Attorney Anastasi, who will provide some research as to whether the Citizen's Union can be abolished.

Mayor Finch recalled the motion that was on the floor. There were gestures from some of the council members to speak. Mayor Finch suggested they hear once again from Council member Holloway and then move the item. He reiterated that research on the matter would be forthcoming.

Council member Holloway deferred to his colleague from the 136<sup>th</sup> District. He stated that he served for six years on the ECDE Committee. He stressed that CDBG money was only meant to be an incubator, wherein everyone has access to funding. It's not welfare to take care of people. He noted once again that he has been on the council for sixteen years and everyone he has spoken to in small and large cities has a Citizen's Union. He said that what ends up happening is that the Citizen's Union makes the recommendations and then the city council shoots down selected requests.

Mayor Finch commented the overall problem was that there isn't enough money to distribute.

Council member Vizzo-Paniccia asked Council member Holloway in his sixteen years and as co-chair of the ECDE Committee, did he ever submit a resolution to abolish the Citizen's Union. Council member Holloway replied no.

Council member T. McCarthy stated that he was in favor of keeping the Citizen's Union intact for the purpose of receiving their input. He said that although he understood Council member Holloway's comments, he also applauded co-chairs Curwen and dePara for trying to reform the process and coming up with the idea to help agencies who have come to rely on the funding. He said they will now encourage and urge these agencies to research and seek out other funding sources.

Council member Lyons commented that she served on the ECDE Committee. She noted that there are some programs that seek CDBG money numerous times, noting that last year, one program was taken care of with one-time funding. She said the ultimate goal is to do the same with other programs.

Council member Blunt stated that the process won't change this year. He felt that the fact that only the committee was making the decisions wasn't a bad thing and the Citizen's Union representatives did a good job. He relayed that now wasn't the time to debate the issue and it should be done in the proper committee.

Council member Curwen stated that if at all possible, he suggested that the Mayor's office compose a letter to request an increase in CDBG block grant money, so that it can go where it's needed.

**\*\* MOTION PASSED TO REFER THE ITEM TO COMMITTEE**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BAKER MOVED TO SUSPEND THE RULES FOR THE PURPOSE OF REFERRING AN ITEM TO COMMITTEE**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER HOLLOWAY SECONDED**

**\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BAKER MOVED TO REFER RE: RESOLUTION TO ESTABLISH A STANDING COMMITTEE RELATED TO STEEL POINT PROJECTS FOR THE 137<sup>th</sup> AND 139<sup>th</sup> DISTRICTS. AND THREE (3) COUNCIL MEMBERS APPOINTED TO OVERSEE, THE REVIEW AND PROCESSING OF ALL STEEL POINT PLANS (ITEM # 34-09)**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER HOLLOWAY SECONDED**

Mayor Finch read the by-laws as they pertained to the matter of creating and appointing special committee members that must be initiated by the Council President.

Council member Martinez asked the number of people that will be appointed to the special committee. Mayor Finch responded that there wasn't any limit on the number appointed.

Council member Brantley asked Council member Baker to clarify what he was asking for. Mayor Finch answered the question and said the request was to create a special committee to track the Steel Point projects. Council member Baker concurred that was correct. He noted that he would like to appoint a standing committee to monitor and oversee the projects on a day to day basis; as well as receive updates for all the projects and all aspects of each project. He said this will enable the committee to get a clearer idea of the projects progress.

Mayor Finch stated that when the committee is appointed, the recommendations will be made.

Council member Brantley asked the rationale behind the east end and east side council members being appointed to the committee. She further questioned why the council president should be focused on just those two districts. Mayor Finch said the matter could be discussed when the item is referred to committee.

Council member Martinez commented that it sounded like the committee would be run like the Schools Building Committee. She noted it will be a good thing to find out what's going on with the Steel Point projects.

## ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Graham  
Telesco Secretarial Services