

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS
COMMITTEE
SPECIAL MEETING
SEPTEMBER 21, 2016**

ATTENDANCE: Scott Burns, Co-Chair; Tom McCarthy, Council President;
M. Evette Brantley, Aidee Nieves, Jose Casco, Anthony Paoletto

*AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia joined the meeting at 6:20.
Jeanette Herron joined the meeting at 7:20.*

STAFF: John Olson, Council Member; Jack O. Banta, Council Member;
Kenneth Flatto, Finance Director; Nestor Nkwo, OPM Director;
Thomas Gill, OPED Director; Bill Coleman, OPED, Deputy
Director; Lynn Haig, OPED, Director of Planning; John Ricci,
Public Facilities Director; Michael J. Andreana, Bond Counsel,
Pullman and Comley; Tom Gaudett, Mayor's Office
Angel dePara, CAO's Office

OTHERS: One member of the general public.

CALL TO ORDER

Co-Chair Burns called the meeting to order at 6:10 PM.

He reviewed the procedures of the meeting to all those present.

AGENDA

Co-Chair Burns stated that there were two items in front of the Committee members which were going to be substituted with new items. He said this procedural matter could be taken care of and asked Mr. Flatto if he would like to distribute the informational hand-outs.

Mr. Flatto stated that the first item, Resolution 186-15, is the authorization for new bonding in the amount of \$443,669,347, and the exhibit contained no substantive changes, just a couple of typos, but none of the numbers had changed. He said he would explain how it all fits together, and would leave the number unchanged until the Committee decides if it wants to make any adjustments.

ITEM 186-15

**PROPOSED APPROVAL OF GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS – TO FUND CERTAIN
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED TO MARK AS EXHIBIT 9.21.16-1,
APPROVAL OF GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO SECONDED.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Co-Chair Burns asked Mr. Flatto if this new document was the same as the document entered as an exhibit from the previous week to which Mr. Flatto answered there were a few slight changes, e.g. where the word “renovation” was changed to “school”, but that was it.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED TO AMEND BY SUBSTITUTION
EXHIBIT 9.21.16-1.
** COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO SECONDED.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The second exhibit distributed by Mr. Flatto was a substitute motion for the next agenda item, 187-15, Proposed Approval of Amendment to Adopted FY2017-2021 Capital Plan, and will be addressed under that agenda item.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia joined the meeting at 6:20.

Mr. Flatto distributed a third and fourth informational hand-out which were not part of the resolution, the first being a spreadsheet which laid out previous authorizations by previous City Councils, the second a graph depicting historically low interest rates.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED TO MARK AS EXHIBIT 9.21.16-3,
SPREADSHEET SHOWING PREVIOUS PLANS AND AUTHORIZATIONS BY
PREVIOUS CITY COUNCILS.
** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA SECONDED.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED TO MARK AS EXHIBIT 9.21.16-4,
MUNICIPAL G.O. INTEREST RATES AT HISTORICAL LOWS.
** COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO SECONDED.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mr. Flatto began his presentation by referring to the exhibit showing the currently low interest rates and stressed the importance of the timing in this respect, saying the rates are the lowest they have ever been and that the approval should be done, if possible, by the election. He mentioned the Federal Reserve possibly raising rates, but said it is a sure thing that the rates will remain at the low end, adding that every point raises costs for the City.

Mr. Flatto refreshed the Committee's memory regarding the meeting from the previous week, capital plan in the spring and a bond issue in the fall or winter. He said that the Council approved the Capital Plan last spring and most of the items in Resolution 186-15 are from that Capital Plan or, in some cases, from the 2015 Capital Plan.

ITEM 187-15
PROPOSED APPROVAL OF AMENDMENT TO ADOPTED
FY2017-2021 CAPITAL PLAN

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED TO MARK AS EXHIBIT 9.21.16-2, APPROVAL OF AMENDMENT TO ADOPTED FY2017-2021 CAPITAL PLAN.**
**** COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO SECONDED.**
**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED TO AMEND BY SUBSTITUTION EXHIBIT 9.21.16-2.**
**** COUNCIL MEMBER NIEVES SECONDED.**
**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mr. Flatto stated that there are three items regarding the downtown revitalization program which he had introduced the previous week and which require amendments to the Capital Plan approved last spring.

1. Mr. Flatto stated he wanted a large increase in capital authorization for bonding, so that the City can bond for a large-scale downtown revitalization program. The Council, in its plan from two years ago, he said, had already put \$2,000,000 in the Capital Plan of which \$1,000,000 had already been authorized by the Council without returning to the Council for approval. Mr. Flatto stated he is seeking a total of \$20,000,000 and, in order to arrive at that figure, the Capital Plan needs to be increased by \$18,000,000 and, in the Bond Resolution, they will be asking for \$19,000,000 in bonding because \$1,000,000 was approved, another \$1,000,000 in capital was approved for bonding, but had not been bonded yet, and then the \$18,000,000, if it were approved, would be a new allocation for making this a much larger project.
2. In addition, we have a slight adjustment to the Seaview Avenue Corridor Waterfront Project of \$400,000 because that is the amount needed by Mr. Ricci and OPED to complete the project. He stated the Council had approved \$1.5 million last year in the Capital Plan, but the total necessary is \$1.9 million, and he is asking for a \$400,000 amendment to the Capital Plan.
3. Mr. Flatto said this is a new item that the administration and some Council members are talking about, i.e. the Congress Street Bridge. He recognized that this is a big project which will require federal and state money, but explained that seed money of \$400,000 for which he is requesting an amendment to make a new item will allow OPED to do a study, update the old study, and come up with a rational plan. Mr. Flatto said he had talked to Mr. Gill from OPED and told the Committee that while they are requesting \$400,000, if it had to be cut down to \$250,000 or \$200,000, he and Mr. Gill would work with that.

Mr. Flatto then returned to talking about Resolution 186-15, telling the Committee he wanted the members to have the whole picture, and referred to Exhibit 9.21.16-3. He explained that everything he is requesting for bonding comes from the Capital Plan from last spring, except for the three items he previously mentioned. Mr. Flatto read off the list of items approved in that Capital Plan, calling attention to the ones in bold which reflect the added requests. Mr. Flatto introduced Attorney Andreana who Mr. Flatto said has reviewed the documents with him, and

stated that Attorney Andreana can confirm that these are all in the adopted plans and resolutions the Council members have already had before them. Mr. Flatto then referred to a column, Fiscal Year 2016, which showed items already authorized to be bonded by Councils in past years, but were never bonded, and he provided the example of bonding for Central and Harding High Schools in 2011-2012 in the amount of \$15,000,000 per school, but of which only \$1,000,000 per school was bonded. He said that he had come to the Committee with the urgent request to put about \$15,000,000 of bonding for those schools out of those old approvals, as he had discovered at the last minute that the money had never been bonded, adding that the State had been providing funding, but is expecting the City to pay its 21% share. Mr. Flatto stated that, because Central has grown in funding needs, he is asking the Committee to approve what is in the Capital Plan for the extra \$3,000,000 that was not approved in the bond resolutions from four years ago. He stated that this extra amount will bring the project close to completion, and should suffice for the next fifteen months. He said he did not have to ask for any bonding for Harding because the Council had already approved it in 2012, but he wanted to make sure that Committee members understood that this money has already been approved in case they should read anything in the paper about bonding money for Harding.

Council Member Brantley asked Mr. Flatto about the status of the Central and Mr. Flatto deferred to Mr. Ricci for an update. Mr. Ricci stated that the project is about 70% finished with a completion goal of next year. Council Member Brantley asked if the students were still in school there to which Mr. Ricci answered in the affirmative. Council Member then asked Mr. Ricci if he had any reports on how things are working out with the students being in the school while the construction is taking place to which Mr. Ricci answered that his department has asked for reports to make sure there is no conflict between the students and the construction. Council President McCarthy interjected that they have been doing it by wings, thereby shutting other wings off from students. He added that the issue was the entrance, and they had pushed hard to have a new entrance created which solved the problem.

Mr. Flatto stated there was one last thing - a copy of the 2011-12 Capital Plan approved by the Council which Scott had asked him to bring to the meeting. During those years, he said, the Council approved \$16,000,000 for Central and \$18,500,000 for Harding, adding that he is going to need over \$20,000,000 for each at the end, but is not going to ask for anything for Harding because Harding is just starting. For Central, however, he stated that it is near completion and he wants to up the \$18,000,000 to \$21,000,000. Mr. Nkwo interjected that the City did not bond early for Central, so the City was using state money and now has to use its own money. Mr. Flatto added that the state may not provide any more money if the City does not pay its share.

Still referring to Exhibit 9.21.16-3, Mr. Flatto mentioned the money allocated two or three years ago for demolition and clean-up of Marina Village. He said the Council approved \$2.6 million for this project, but it was never bonded and does not, therefore, need to vote on again. The Council asked the City to bond that to finish the project, so Mr. Flatto said he is going to roll that into the bond issue this year. Similarly, Mr. Flatto stated that there is some paving money ... Council Member interrupted Mr. Flatto through the Chair, to ask what that money is being rolled under. Mr. Flatto explained that the \$1,000,000 for bonding being asked for at the meeting is for the demolition program that the Council approved last spring, but the Marina Village money is earmarked for Marina Village, so it cannot be used for demolition of other City-owned properties which are blighted. Council Member Brantley wanted to know if there any other specific demolition projects the City has in mind, and Mr. Flatto deferred to Mr. Ricci to answer the

question. Mr. Ricci stated that there are 24 dilapidated properties which have been cited to be taken down, and the first four will be taken down, hopefully, within the next month. Council Member Brantley wanted to know what the properties were to which Mr. Ricci listed the following properties which are on the East End:

- Carroll Avenue
- Connecticut Avenue
- The Hollow
- Stillman Street

Mr. Coleman had information on these properties and offered it to the Council citing locations at the corner of 6th Street and Stratford Avenue, 1081 Stratford Avenue between 5th and 6th, and he talked about five properties on that Civic Block which, when removed, will make a big impact. He said OPED is working with Mr. Ricci in Public Facilities, saying also that the money for demolition with work in concert with the money for renovation. Mr. Coleman spoke about another demolition project which is the AGI site – a burned-out factory near the train station - is located between two new downtown revitalization projects and needs to come down. Council Member Brantley stated that she thought that site was supposed to have come down a while ago to which Mr. Coleman stated that it has partially come down, but then got hung up on some extraordinary environmental costs, and added the bond funds being requested would help with that. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked if there was litigation regarding this issue to which Mr. Coleman answered in negative, saying that the City owns this property and that, perhaps, Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia was thinking about the perfume factory. Council Member Brantley said she thought someone wanted to buy the AGI site to which Mr. Coleman stated that the potential buyer had run into the extraordinary environmental costs in addition to waterfront costs which made the property not ready to go and the deal fell through.

Mr. Flatto asked whether there were any questions about Exhibit 9.21.16-3. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia commented that this is a sizeable amount of money and thought it would be wise for the City to wait to invest this money until the developers are done with the projects, saying that there is a total, but there is no other documentation showing how the total was reached. Mr. Flatto stated that there is a narrative about the \$20,000,000 which Mr. Gill and Mr. Coleman will address in more detail, and he reiterated the need for locking the low rates now, even if the money is not spent right away. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked if there were any adjustments for that toward the State Historical Society to come because of the historical downtown buildings which would need special treatment, further stating that everything needs to be all-inclusive and itemized to avoid problems at the end with a lack of funds. Mr. Flatto suggested that the Committee could receive a report from OPED every six months updating the information on the downtown projects.

Co-Chair asked Mr. Gill and Mr. Coleman to come forward to speak on the Downtown Revitalization Project. Mr. Gill introduced himself, Mr. Coleman and Ms. Haig, saying he wanted to provide a three-point informational summary related to the projects that have recently been completed and are currently underway as follows:

- the public/private investment dollars that are associated with these projects and how to leverage further public/private investment dollars
- projects being planned with the goal of enhancing the traffic flow downtown, making the downtown more pedestrian-friendly, and connecting the contiguous neighborhoods into

- downtown; and
- an overview of the use of investment funds.

Mr. Coleman came forward and distributed some informational hand-outs to the members. He began by acknowledging the Committee's question as to whether it is reasonable to consider this amount of an investment, saying that the private to public investment ration is at least 10:1, with about \$226,000,000 private investment in downtown Bridgeport to public investment of \$20,000,000 if approved. One of the hand-outs was a map of downtown investments and showed public/private investment, completed projects and projects in development. He stated that most of the investment in on Main Street and the whole idea is to support the spine of the downtown, but to make sure they then connect out south, west and east. He said the downtown is becoming a residential neighborhood, but it needs to go south to University of Bridgeport, west to at least Park Avenue and east to Washington Park, otherwise the whole point is missed. Council Member Brantley asked Mr. Coleman to clarify whether he was speaking about the same thing that Mr. Gill alluded to when talking about connecting the neighborhoods to which Mr. Coleman answered in the affirmative.

Mr. Coleman referred to a hand-out which listed the number of downtown residential units and Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia, noticing that the document was updated on 7/15/14, asked if that was okay to which Mr. Coleman answered in the affirmative, saying he had just thrown that in. The next hand-out was entitled, "Public Dollars", showing matching and Mr. Coleman stated that what they are really trying to do is to match private investment, and mentioned some matching relative to the grants. Mr. Gill commented that he had met with the Deputy Commissioner for Economic Development and the Housing Commissioner the previous week, and he reported that they are very familiar with Bridgeport and the projects because of the investment and the commitment they have made, but he stated that the question asked by the state is whether Bridgeport is committed to continuing this type of development.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA MOVED TO MARK AS EXHIBIT 9.21.16-5, PROJECT LIST – TOTAL INVESTMENT.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** COUNCIL VIZZO-PANICCIA MOVED TO MARK AS EXHIBIT 9.21.16-6, PUBLIC DOLLARS.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA MOVED TO MARK AS EXHIBIT 9.21.16-7, DOWNTOWN RESIDENTIAL UNITS.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER CASCO SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA MOVED TO MARK AS EXHIBIT 9.21.16-8, DOWNTOWN INVESTMENT MAP.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mr. Coleman referred to the map, starting south and going north and mentioning McLevy Square and the old Peoples Bank building, done by Four Stone, which is now a 37 unit, \$15,000,00 project, \$5,000,000 of which is provided by the State Department of Housing. Mr. Coleman stated that, when they met the State Commissioner of Housing, Yvonne Klein, she pointed out that about \$100,000,000 of State DOH has gone into Bridgeport. Referring to the total amount on Exhibit 9.21.16-5, Mr. Coleman said that a lot of the \$226,000,000 total investment has come from the State which is to Mr. Gill's point about the State wanting to know whether Bridgeport was committed. He mentioned the Landmark Building, also done by Four Stone, which is a 30-unit, \$30,000,000 project, and said that Four Stone had purchased the 948 Main Street building. He talked about the CitiTrust project which is back on the board because the developer, Ginsberg Corporation, has now re-positioned itself and is now starting to spend money on a pool hall being run by Bridgeport locals. He then talked about the Arcade Mall and the ill-fated supermarket, and the property has now been re-positioned as a regional asset and part of a national chain called Artists and Craftsmen and will draw the creative class that they are seeing coming to downtown. He continued north on the map to the Securities project, being done by Spinnaker, which he said is the only new news as it is just in the process of getting a Certificate of Occupancy, adding that Bridgeport is fortunate to have such a good caliber of developers who have invested in Bridgeport, and a short discussion followed about developers who own property in downtown. He went on to talk about Jayson Newfield, a \$37,000,000 which is anticipated to close with the State, he said Golden Hill is already done, and said Davidson Block is not yet done. Mr. Coleman pointed out that, when all these projects are added up, it is a pretty big number – over \$200,000,000 – so the City bond is supporting a lot of private leverage.

Mr. Coleman said there was another project which he will mention, and referring to the shape of the downtown area, he stated that downtown is not just the “teardrop” anymore. He pointed to Steelpoint, stating that the investment is probably at \$50,000,000 already. Going south, he said they would pick up University of Bridgeport's investment, the future project 60 Main Street he said will be a significant investment, and the Marina Village complete renovation. Going west, Mr. Coleman mentioned the 570 State Street building which cost \$7,000,000, and the 515 West Street building, under construction with a cost of \$13,000,000. He summarized with the comment that there a lot of private investment happening. Council Member Brantley wanted to know what they want to do with Marina to which Mr. Coleman answered that public dollars would be used for environmental clean-up and demolition with a possible cost of \$5.200,000. Council Member Brantley asked about what is being done to enhance the appearance of the area to which Mr. Coleman answered that what they want to do with the dollars it to spiff-up the connections from downtown. He said that there has recently been a meeting of developers who came in to look at downtown, and who see the neighborhoods as assets to downtown, saying that they talked about dealing with overpasses – highway and railroad - and those areas, e.g. lower Park Avenue and Iranistan Avenue where is the appearance is not what it ought to be. Mr. Coleman pointed to the areas in blue on the map, saying that those are the areas to be spiffed-up, mentioning Congress Street which goes to Washington Park and the East Side, roads going south in downtown like Main, Broad, Lafayette, Park, Iranistan, and extending west to Fairfield Avenue, John Street and State Street, which have significant overpasses. He said that these kinds of challenges in enhancing the appearance of downtown is one of the things they will be focusing on and what public dollars will be spent on.

Co-Chair Burns commented that a lot of conceptual plans have been presented, and he wanted to know if there are working concretely toward building the connections to which Mr. Coleman

answered in the affirmative, saying he will provide examples and clarifying that working concretely means working hand-in-hand with public facilities. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia commented on the historic interior of the CitiTrust building and asked if was something that was going to be preserved. Mr. Coleman assured Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia that Mr. Ginsberg, the developer and architect, is extremely aware of and interested in the historic aspects of the building and he wants to play them up. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia commented that signage need to be displayed for the advantage of businesses, customers, tenants and to get them to stay, and mentioned the Arcade Mall where there were rules against putting signs in certain places which made it difficult to know which businesses were inside the building.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia also commented that she did not see any allowance of space for parking on the map, saying that there is already a problem with parking space downtown. She continued that, in respect to the overpasses, they will have to work with the State to clean them up, i.e. have proper lighting and secured sidewalks, or it will be a no-win.

Council Member Brantley asked about the Congress Street Bridge and wanted to know if some paving had been done there. Mr. Ricci answered in the affirmative, saying that there an area of access off Congress Street where illegal dumping had been happening, so it was cleaned out and paved. Mr. Ricci stated that there is a design plan for the bridge which will cost \$40,000,000 to complete, saying that the bridge had to be navigable and needs to open and close and that the \$400,000 will pay for a study to determine whether there is a need for the bridge. Mr. Gill added that the Congress Street Bridge is the only bridge to the Steelpoint area and will be critical as it continues to develop. Council Member Brantley wanted to know what they want to do with the bridge. Mr. Ricci answered, saying that the study to determine the cost of a new bridge has been done, but a study to determine the need for it has not been done. Mr. Gill injected to speak about the options for the Congress Bridge, asking whether it should be a pedestrian/bike bridge or should it be fully-functional, and saying that they should look at two studies to determine feasibility. Council Member Brantley asked how a pedestrian/bike bridge would benefit Steelpoint to which Mr. Coleman answered it would benefit the East Side and downtown north. Council Member Brantley asked about the businesses to which Mr. Coleman answered that it would not be solving the issue of traffic, but he said that the way that Steelpoint is developing is going to result in a public promenade and economic development, and would lend itself to a pedestrian/bike bridge. Council Member Brantley asked how money they would need to study the options to which Mr. Coleman answered that although Mr. Gill had stated that a lower amount of around \$200,000 could be worked with, considering the nuts and bolts engineering study which investigates all options, he is comfortable with \$400,000.

Council Member Olson commented that, historically, business built the city and not government is building it, and asked if they are involving any businesses and corporations in getting their advice. Mr. Gill answered the question by stating that they meet regularly with the Regional Business Council and the Downtown District Board, in addition to taking input from local business people. Council Member Olson asked whether they welcome the input of local businesses to which Mr. Gill answered in the affirmative. Mr. Gill added that they are joining forces with the universities, especially the University of Bridgeport, saying it would be a great idea to bring the university into downtown Bridgeport.

Council Member Nieves commented on the Congress Bridge, saying that is her district and this is the third feasibility study that has been done, and stating she had a concern about the turn-

around time and also wanted to know if this project can be tied to intermodal money to help subsidize the costs. She also wanted to see both options for the bridge fully studies, but said she wants the best plan for a shovel-ready project. Mr. Coleman answered the question about the intermodal money, saying that it can be tied into that money and he would have to look at the rules. Mr. Flatto interjected that, to his knowledge, the intermodal money does not pay for the design aspect of the project, but said it was possible that they could get a special grant.

Mr. Gill spoke about the window of opportunity to which Mr. Flatto referred previously in regard to the timing of this resolution, saying that OPED is facing the same situation with the developers and are in Bridgeport. He said they are looking to move up the line up north Main Street, but if the City is not ready for them, they will look at other opportunities, and that there is great opportunity with these developers now.

Council Member Brantley stated that she had heard everything that has been presented and it all sounds great and she would like to see it happen and, addressing Mr. Ricci, she asked what is being planned for development of their neighborhoods, e.g. the road repairs and the tree roots which are growing out the sidewalks. Mr. Ricci stated that there is a Sidewalk Ordinance going before the Council to address sidewalk issues which are the responsibility of the homeowner. He explained that the ordinance would allow the City to remove the trip hazards, but ultimately it would have to be paid by the homeowner either now or later. Mr. Ricci stated that the owner is cited and then given an opportunity to correct the problem, but if the City makes the repairs, the property is liened. He stated that the average sidewalk costs between \$2,500 and \$3,000 per house and it would cost the City a lot of money to make all the repairs. Council Member Brantley remarked that the Mayor had made a campaign promise to fix the sidewalks which Mr. Ricci affirmed, further stating that she had serious concerns about residents who cannot pay this expense and asked if there is any help for them. She said it is not right to blame the homeowners for a situation that has taken a long time to evolve, again showing concern for seniors who cannot afford this. Mr. Ricci stated that the ordinance is coming before the Ordinance Committee and the issues can be addressed at that time.

Mr. Flatto turned the topic to the roadway and sidewalks, stating that the Capital Plan approved a total for \$6,500,000 for paving and sidewalks and suggesting that one idea might be to add another \$1,500,000 to this specifically for sidewalks out of the plan recommendation. He said that this would give Mr. Ricci the opportunity and flexibility to take care of sidewalks, stating that he agreed the City needs to do something beyond asking homeowners to help.

Co-Chair Burns asked Ms. Haig if she wanted to speak and Mr. Haig asked the members if they had any questions. Co-Chair also asked the members if they had any questions on the proposal, the development issues or anything else for Ms. Haig. Council Member Brantley asked who Ms. Haig was to which Co-Chair Burns remarked that he had introduced Ms. Haig, and then introduced Ms. Haig again. Ms. Haig brought attention through use of the map to the Lafayette Circle Realignment Project, saying that it was more than just realigning the circle, but it is working along Fairfield Avenue to enhance the connection into the western side of the city by making it two-directional to Park Avenue. She said this would greatly enhance getting into and out of downtown between the parking garage at Harrison and Walgreens on Park. Mr. Flatto stated that there are grants awarded for this, so pieces would go toward the City to match it if they need it. Ms. Haig stated that state and federal funds have provided \$11.8 million and just under \$1,000,00 is needed for the City match to do the design and construction for this project.

Ms. Haig also spoke about a smaller project along the eastern side with the Pequonnock River Trail which she pointed out on the map as going along the east side of downtown and then having access into the south end. She said this \$1.8 million project is another example of connections into neighborhoods and added that the project is headed into design also. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia commented on the area around Pequonnock and said she thought there were monies put aside during a previous administration for a bike trail and Mr. Coleman stated that this is the same project and they are looking to move to final design stages.

Council Member Banta commented that no one had mentioned anything about the existing ferry terminal once it is moved onto the other side, and he asked what plans they had for that. Mr. Ricci answered that question, stating that the ferry company has a 99-year lease, even though it is owned by the City of Bridgeport. He said it will probably operate on both sides, but that it is the ferry company's building to use.

Council Member Casco asked if there a city match for Lafayette Fairfield Park Intermodal Water Project to which Ms. Haig answered in the affirmative. Mr. Flatto said it would be part of the \$19,000,00 he is asking for and Mr. Nkwo added that the \$1,000,00 that was approved in the 2016 Capital Plan was earmarked for Lafayette Circle as a match for the \$10,000,000. Co-Chair Burns asked Mr. Nkwo if that was in the original plan to which Mr. Nkwo answered in the affirmative. Mr. Nkwo added that, for the Seaview Corridor, \$1.5 million was approved as a match in 2016 with Mr. Flatto interjecting that this money was already approved, but not bonded, and is now being included in the resolution.

Council Member Brantley made reference to the Seaview Waterfront Improvement Plan and asked if it was the water behind the yacht club and the pile of debris to which Mr. Coleman that Council Member Brantley was referring to Johnson's Creek, adding that Johnson's Creek is an environmental justice issue and that there has a usurpation of the law and property, and they are looking to make acquisitions and moving people off the creek.

Ms. Haig spoke about the Seaview Avenue Corridor Project, saying it goes from Barnum Avenue up to Stuart Street, just past the new Harding High School site, will widen and straighten roadways, will improve intersections, and will completely re-design the intersection at Bond, Seaview and Boston, preserving the residential character of Bond Street.

Council Member Brantley asked Mr. Ricci if he knew whether the ferry was going to move to which Mr. Ricci answered in three or four years from what he knows. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia commented on Bond Street and said that these plans had already been presented to which Ms. Haig answered that those were the conceptual plans, whereas now the actual construction and engineering plans are being created. For clarity, Mr. Nkwo added that what Ms. Haig just described about Seaview Avenue, there is a grant of \$9 to \$10 million, so the \$1,900,000 for the proposed authorization it actually match. Co-Chair Burns asked when the City gets that money and Ms. Haig answered that it is a federal earmark from Chris Shays. Mr. Nkwo added that the \$10,000,000 is already there and that they have to come with their own share of the match which is what the \$1,900,000 is for.

Co-Chair Burns asked what the Lafayette Realignment will do to which Ms. Haig answered that it would improve the traffic flow through there. She said that, currently, the one-way streets in

that area created problems in getting around, and that the new plan will provide easier access to and from the entrance ramps to the highway. She stated there will also be a change in the layout of the properties and will create new land to the west where the circle currently is, and development will be generated. Co-Chair wanted to know what the State role is to which Ms. Haig answered that Fairfield Avenue is a state highway, so they are involved, but that it is all private funding. Mr. Nkwo added that there is a grant for \$9,000,000, so what is seen in the Capital Plan is the City's match of \$1,000,000. Mr. Coleman commented that to Council Member Brantley's point about improving neighborhoods, he hears regularly from business owners that two-way street improve commerce and, in many cases, improve safety, saying that Lafayette Boulevard could become to Bridgeport what Tresser Boulevard is to Stamford.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia wanted to know, in his list of monies to be spent, whether there is money for signage to let people know which way to go out of downtown, and said that she thinks this could be a partnership with the State. She spoke about Main Street going past the Cardinal Sheehan Center and said this would be a good place for street improvement and, since it right off the entrance and exits because those lights are owned by the State, that needs to be looked into also. Mr. Ricci stated that there is a signalization project that is going out to bid and, if they can get assistance from State funds, it will re-signalize Seaside Park all the way to Old Town Road. Mr. Gill agreed with Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia about the signage, saying that he had a discussion earlier that day with the developers of Steelpoint, the sign to get to 95 is behind you, so people come out of there and do not know how to get to the highway.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia returned to the topic of the Congress Street Bridge, commenting that there is only the Stratford Avenue Bridge to provide access to get across and, therefore, more bridge access is needed.

President McCarthy asked if he could go to Exhibit 9.21.16-2, saying that, essentially, this is a \$20,000,000 pile of money and that his question is if they vote on this right now exactly as is, will they be voting on the first two pages, i.e. the "whereas" and the "resolves" and the dollar amounts, or will they be voting on that plus the specific descriptions as part of the Capital Plan. Attorney Andreana stated that the ordinance being voted on is probably just the first two pages which is the "whereas". President McCarthy said that that brings him to his concern, stating that he is not against the idea of what they are talking about and that he is a big fan of the idea that you have to invest. He said he is not afraid of tax incentives and, if done in a project-specific way, they are a good thing, and said he understands trying to make up on the capital side for what we are afraid to do for tax incentives. He stated, however, that his problem is that, when they do a capital plan, they tie projects to specific things and that puts the control on the spending process. He said he does not believe that control is being exercised in this case in terms of what can be done with the money, saying that, if they passed what was submitted at the meeting, the money could, conceivably, be taken and spent anywhere on a downtown project. He stated that, in order to support this resolution, they need to, very carefully, delineate smaller categories or project-specific categories of how this money will be spent. President McCarthy restated his support for all the projects discussed, saying that he wants to do all this, but he said he will not support a \$20,000,000 bucket that the Council does not have the ability to exercise control, as it is their job in the City, over where they think the money should be spent. He remarked that he does not know that problem will be solved at the meeting, but he stated that the problem needs to be solved before he can support the resolution.

Mr. Flatto said he could address that and restated the urgency of the timing as far as taking advantage of the refinance and keeping costs from going up, and getting the resolution to the Council in October. Mr. Flatto said that if the Council wants to take the addendum and make these categories part of your approval, he is fine with that. He stated that, if read carefully, within these categories, everything they talked about fits nicely and he said that is why he scoped this out. He said he had gone to the departments and spent time talking about what they need in different types of work, so all this stuff, e.g. matching funds for the grants, for boulevards or roads, or for anything along those lines is within street-scape improvements, parking improvements and provides flexibility to the departments within the \$5 to \$6 million. He said that all the \$7 or \$8 million for facilities improvements is a fairly reasonable amount. He said the third area is a bit more flexible and relates to what the Mayor wants to do to attract and initiate business incentive programs which would include street-scape related improvements, e.g. storefront, parking, signage, etc. Mr. Flatto stated that if the Council wants to break the \$20,000,000 into three buckets, that would be fine, and he said he is happy to provide a more defined budget, and asked that the \$20,000,000 perimeter be given to him and, if anything needs to be amended, he would have to come back to get the language changed further. President McCarthy stated that he thinks the language needs to be tweaked a bit to make it more specific, and referred to #3 on the Exhibit. Reading from the Exhibit, President McCarthy, he provided an example of the lack of clarity in the language, asking whether the passage he read relates to business just downtown, and saying that if you read the rest of the passage, it sounds like the money could be spent for any business anywhere in the city. President McCarthy also wanted to know how the downtown is being defined to which Mr. Flatto answered that it is the broader definition of downtown which includes the entry ways from surrounding neighborhoods, and that the money must be spent on those areas. President McCarthy asked that the Council get a written definition of what is being called downtown, saying he is fine with the wider definition, but does not want money being spent on someone's pet project somewhere in the city. Mr. Nkwo added that what President McCarthy needs is the parameters or boundaries of what is called downtown. Mr. Flatto said they he would commit to adding an appendix with that definition of downtown.

President McCarthy stated that his other concern is the several references to using pieces of money for match dollars, saying that he does not know what the pieces or matches are, and asked for a list of projects which involve match money. Mr. Flatto answered that there are two matches – one is earmarked for Seaview Waterfront money, and other is Lafayette Circle. President McCarthy wanted to know if anything in the \$18,000,000 being used as a potential match to which Mr. Flatto answered in the negative. President McCarthy referred to the language in #1 of Exhibit 9.21.16-2 which spoke about “... an approximately \$5 to \$6 million investment toward securing significant federal and state matching funds already awarded for Main Street signalization upgrades and a realignment of sections of Lafayette Circle/Lafayette Boulevard.” President McCarthy said that the \$1,000,000 has already been dealt with, so the million dollars for Lafayette is taken off the table, and he wanted to know what is being talked about in terms of federal and state matching funds already been awarded for Main Street signalization upgrades. Mr. Flatto referred to what the Mayor had told him which was that the Mayor wants to seek new grants to help downtown beyond what they already have awards for in regard to Lafayette Circle, so the Mayor's hope is that if there is a plan for something, he can seek state and federal money to assist in the cost. Mr. Flatto stated that the language is intended to convey the Mayor's future plan to seek new grants.

Continuing to speak about the Main Street signalization project, President McCarthy asked if any of this money is going to be used for that to which Mr. Gill answered that there is a 20% match, saying that they could use some of this money for the downtown. President McCarthy remarked that the answer is that there is a match for the Main Street signalization project, stating that this is why he is concerned about specifics. He said that if they want to create a pool of \$5 or \$6 million for matching opportunities, he would be fine with that, but it needs to be stated as such, saying he understands the need for the match money, but he wants it clearly delineated and not thrown into three catch-all piles. Mr. Flatto stated he would be happy to provide clarity and another budget for final approval, but his only caveat is that the more restrictive it is to one thing, e.g. the traffic signals, if they say \$1,000,000 and the construction bid comes in at \$1.5, they do not have the authorization. President McCarthy said that he is not suggesting that they lock themselves into \$1,000,000 for signalization, but is instead asking for an itemized list of what the \$5 or \$6 million will be used for to which Mr. Flatto stated that it was doable.

Co-Chair Burns wanted to speak further about President McCarthy's comments, saying that, in April, they went through the whole Capital Plan and we asked very specific questions about line item items with dollar figures, such as \$1,000,000 for the arena, and said that now things are a lot more fuzzy. He stated in reference to the concerns expressed by President McCarthy that, as a Committee, they would like to see to have some accountability and continuity between what is being bonded and what is being done with that money. Co-Chair Burns also addressed the 10-year old federal grant that has been sitting there which is only now being matched for \$1,000,000. He stated that, if they get future grants, he does not see why they could not come back in nine months and agree to grant the money for the following year. He agreed with President McCarthy that \$5 or \$6 million is not a lot, but it is a lot when it does not have a specific purpose, and he also recommended, in regard to future bonding, that the money be spent within two years. Mr. Flatto, again reminding the Committee about the critical importance of the October 3 date, stated that if the Committee will in good faith agree to another meeting after the requested information is provided, that would be great. President McCarthy said that is supportive of the \$18,000,000 vote if we get the requested information, and stating also that he is supportive of the October 3 meeting and would approve an addendum to the regular Council meeting on the 3rd, so that they could get it onto the agenda. Council Member Brantley commented that she agreed with Tom wholeheartedly, saying, however, that she appreciates the people who came to the meeting to talk about the projects in detail and to explain how the money is spent.

Attorney Andreana wanted to make some points or clarification to the Committee, delineating three new categories of projects, saying that the two easy ones with which everyone is in agreement as far as the descriptions are the Seaview Avenue Corridor for \$400,000 and the Congress Street Bridge for \$400,000. He said that where the Committee is requesting more definition is on this \$18,000,000 for the Downtown Bridgeport Revitalization Project, but he needed clarification on what is being talked about. He wanted to know if they are talking about taking the \$18,000,000 and, as opposed to having one line item, to have three line items. Recognizing that the final meeting is next week, Attorney Andreana stated he wants to present a document at the final meeting which will meet the needs of the Committee. President McCarthy said he would be fine with three categories and they would decide what the number is that makes up the \$18,000,000. Attorney Andreana stated that, in current and previous Councils, there has always been some non-specific allocation of funds because, he said, in a city like this, one never knows what is going to take priority. He stated that there needs to be some flexibility for staff

while at the same time the Committee needs to be comfortable with what it has approved. President McCarthy said that they are not far away from a finished product, saying that this is good, but needs to be made great.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia commented that, in the late 1990s, she worked on a committee and wanted to know whether the current Seaview project is the same project that was discussed back then, i.e. going from Boston down Seaview to Central. Mr. Coleman stated that he does not believe in that project and they are not looking to pursue that plan. Mr. Nkwo wanted to know what he should call the new plan in the event it should be approved, suggesting that it be called the Modified 2017-2021 Capital Plan to which all agreed.

Co-Chair Burns asked, in relation the \$20,000,000, whether this was money they already had to which Attorney Andreana answered in the negative, saying that it is money that prior Councils have approved to go out for bonding, but the City has not gone out to bond the money. He said the money has been authorized, but the City has not yet issued bonds for these projects. President McCarthy asked how long bonding lasts to which Attorney Andreana stated there is no deadline or expiration date, but said that, as bond counsel, he does not like authorizations from long ago, since the projects may have changed. He stated further, that in cases of old authorizations, they would have the Council de-authorize authorized funds which have not been used in a long time, adding that this situation is not good for rating agencies. Attorney Andreana stated that it is much better to clean up the old authorizations and take them off the books as unissued authorizations. President McCarthy agreed that the Council should take a look at all the authorizations and see what can be done to clean up past authorizations.

Co-Chair Burns summarized by saying that they were looking at a \$43,000,000 new bond project as it is laid out in the documents, and then \$20,000,000 previously authorized, and concluding that the total is \$63,000,000. Mr. Flatto answered that the total could be below \$60,000,000 or above \$65,000,000, stating that after final authorization, he works with the underwriter and his adviser to package the best way to sell the bonds, and describing the full process. Mr. Flatto stated the final figure would probably be around \$60,000,000.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED TO TABLE ITEM 186-15,
PROPOSED APPROVAL OF GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS – TO FUND
CERTAIN CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS
** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA SECONDED.
** THE MOTION PASSED.**

**4 IN FAVOR
1 OPPOSED (A. PAOLETTO)**

Council Member Paoletto stated that he felt comfortable with all the presentations made at the meeting.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED TO TABLE ITEM 187-15,
PROPOSED APPROVAL OF AMENDMENT TO ADOPTED FY2017-2021
CAPITAL PLAN.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA SECONDED.
** THE MOTION PASSED.**

**4 IN FAVOR
1 OPPOSED (A. PAOLETTO)**

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED ADJOURN THE MEETING.
** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA SECONDED.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Co-Chair Burns adjourned the meeting at 8:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Nerina Kagan
Telesco Secretarial Services