

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
JULY 13, 2016**

ATTENDANCE: Temporary Chair Kathryn Bukovsky; Nessah Smith, Scott Burns, Aidee Nieves

STAFF: Angel dePara, Chief Administrative Office

OTHERS: Anne Gribbon, Coordinator of Volunteer Services, City of Bridgeport
Lee Helmerich, School Readiness Coordinator, City of Bridgeport
Amy Marshall, School Readiness Co-Chair,
Executive Director of Elementary Education
City of Bridgeport
Agnes Dubow, School Readiness Co-Chair
Coordinator Batalla Family Resource Center
City of Bridgeport

CALL TO ORDER

Temporary Chair Bukovsky called the meeting to order at 6:38 PM. A quorum was present.

She reviewed the procedures of the meeting to all present.

APPROVAL OF COMMITTEE MINUTES OF JUNE 8, 2016

Council Member Nessah Smith noted that she had a question about the minutes.

- ** COUNCIL MEMBER NIEVES MOVED TO TABLE APPROVAL OF COMMITTEE MINUTES OF JUNE 8, 2016.
- ** COUNCIL MEMBER BURNS SECONDED.
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

GENERAL DISCUSSION WITH COMMITTEE MEMBERS REGARDING WAYS TO INCREASE MORE SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS, EG. "VOLUNTEER FAIRS" IN VARIOUS SCHOOL LOCATIONS

Mrs. Gribbon started by saying that Co-Chair Olson had spoken with her about promoting "Volunteer Fairs". She said that, in her experience, these fairs have not been successful and provided several examples of such. What is successful, she said, is Read-Aloud Day, where volunteers sign up once, they have a great time, and then they come back. Temporary Chair Bukovsky asked when the Read-Aloud Day is this year, to which Mrs. Gribbon answered October 20, 9-10 AM. She said fliers will be going out at the end of August in a mass mailing and will include fliers to Committee and Town Council Members who will hopefully get department heads and their employees involved. Temporary Chair Bukovsky wanted to know who they mass-mail, to which Mrs. Gribbon said there are about 3,000 people. Mrs. Gribbon

talked about the Business-School-Community Partnership Program which is also involved. Temporary Chair Bukovsky wanted to know if there is a partnership with Bridgeport Hospital to which Mrs. Gribbon answered that Hall School is partnered with Bridgeport Hospital. Temporary Chair Bukovsky said she would encourage all Town Council Members as well as her constituents to participate.

AGENDA ITEM 149-15

**GRANT SUBMISSION: RE STATE OF CONNECTICUT EARLY CHILDHOOD
DEPARTMENT FOR THE SCHOOL READINESS GRANT PROGRAM TO PROVIDE
PRESCHOOL SPACES FOR THREE AND FOUR YEAR OLDS WHO RESIDE IN THE
CITY FOR THE PERIOD OF JULY 1, 2016 THRU JUNE 30, 2017**

Mrs. Marshall came forward to speak about the School Readiness Council which is made of up of specific members of the community as well as Board of Education personnel have already approved this grant application as of May 25, 2016. She said that she and her colleagues were present at the meeting to ask that the Committee push this forward to the Mayor's Office for his signature.

Mrs. Marshall provided some information about School Readiness saying it is the 20-year anniversary of the program which offers pre-school for three and four-year olds at a reduced fee, and which also creates employment for Bridgeport residents.

Mrs. Helmerich added there are 1,700 children currently enrolled, and that the program runs 10 hours per day and 50 weeks per year. She said the daily 7:30AM to 5:30PM schedule allows parents to work or go to school during the day.

Mrs. Dubow added that there are centers which have opened in Bridgeport and these centers are both community and public school-based. Temporary Chair Bukovsky wanted to know if the grant subsidizes both community- and public school-based center. Mrs. Dubow answered in the affirmative and that the funding is allotted per body. Temporary Chair Bukovsky asked about Housatonic to which Mrs. Helmerich answered that Housatonic has been involved since the inception of School Readiness, but that a political maneuver has made it necessary to obtain a special signature which Mrs. Helmerich thought Temporary Chair Bukovsky was asking about. Council Member Burns wanted to know how many children would be enrolled next year to which Mrs. Helmerich answered that the number would be the same at last year. Council Member Burns asked what percent of Bridgeport children attend School Readiness to which Mrs. Marshall answered that all providers work together in the community, but that not every pre-school belongs to School Readiness. Council Member Burns asked if it is fair to say that about 45% of each age level attends School Readiness to which Mrs. Helmerich answered that the figure is about right. Council Member Burns asked what the long-term goal of School Readiness is to which Mrs. Marshall answered that, by 2020, every child will have access to early childhood education while honoring the parents' right to choose whether to enroll their children. Temporary Chair Bukovsky wanted confirmation that the City will not have to fund any aspects of the program to which Mrs. Helmerich answered that the City would not. Mrs. Marshall added lastly that School Readiness always requires parent participation while helping parents with housing, literacy, health, adult education, GED, and citizenship.

- ** COUNCIL MEMBER BURNS MOVED TO APPROVE ITEM 149-15, GRANT SUBMISSION: RE STATE OF CONNECTICUT EARLY CHILDHOOD DEPARTMENT FOR THE SCHOOL READINESS GRANT PROGRAM TO PROVIDE PRESCHOOL SPACES FOR THREE AND FOUR YEAR OLDS WHO RESIDE IN THE CITY FOR THE PERIOD OF JULY 1, 2016 THRU JUNE 30, 2017.**
- ** COUNCIL MEMBER SMITH SECONDED.**
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

ADJOURNMENT

- ** COUNCIL MEMBER SMITH MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING.**
- ** COUNCIL MEMBER NIEVES SECONDED.**
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Temporary Chair Bukovsky adjourned the meeting at 7:10PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Nerina Kagan
Telesco Secretarial Services