

CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
CITY COUNCIL
MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS COMMITTEE
AUGUST 31, 2010
6:00 PM

ATTENDANCE: Council members: Vizzo-Paniccia; co-chair, Taylor-Moye, M. Ayala, Walsh, Council President T. McCarthy (sat in to make a quorum)

NON-COMMITTEE: Council members: Martinez, M. McCarthy

CITY STAFF: A. Kelly-Lenz, Tax Collector; Tyrone McClain, Mayor's Office

Co-chair Vizzo-Paniccia called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm.

Approval of Committee Meeting Minutes of July 26, 2010.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER TAYLOR-MOYE MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA SECONDED**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

88-09 Resolution concerning the Private Sale of City Owned Property Below Market Value.

Co-chair Vizzo-Paniccia updated that this item has been on the agenda for three or four months and tabled. They received the information from the Tax Assessor and the city attorney and it was thought the matter was resolved. She asked the committee if the matter should remain tabled.

Council President McCarthy said he talked to Attorney Laskey to get something in writing from City Attorney Anastasi before the item was approved.

Co-chair Vizzo-Paniccia explained that the matter pertained to a property located in the 130th district, for a resident's property that was assessed a large tax bill. The committee was looking to have the appraisal done before the property goes to auction or is

submitted to the Tax Assessor. She noted that Attorney Anastasi was suppose to submit a legal opinion.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER TAYLOR-MOYE MOVED TO TABLE**
**** COUNCIL MEMBER T. McCARTHY SECONDED**
**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

103-09 Resolution request that the City Department and Staff Directory be made available in document form.

Co-chair Vizzo-Paniccia updated that the item was brought before the committee three or four times, however, the maker of the resolution Council member Baker hasn't been present at the meetings to speak on the matter. She noted that Mr. Heller, the Director of ITS has been at the meetings to speak on the issue and thought the questions were answered.

Council member Taylor-Moye stated that if there is any other information that Council member Baker wanted, he should meet with Mr. Heller himself. She emphasized that Mr. Heller has provided the information requested numerous times.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER TAYLOR-MOYE MOVED TO DENY**
**** COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA SECONDED**
**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

113-09 Refund of Excess Payments.

114-09 Refund of Excess Payments.

Co-chair Vizzo-Paniccia updated that she hasn't received any information from the Tax Collector.

Kelly Lenz the Tax Collector arrived to the meeting at 6:10 pm. She began to give some background information about the payments for Stamford Wrecking and Stamford Demolition, noting that the parcels were put on the books, but they should have never been taxed. She noted that they needed to be reversed off the books. Co-chair Vizzo-Paniccia asked her if she could go get the information for the committee's review. Ms. Lenz left the meeting to get the information – see *below where the items were returned to later in the agenda.*

121-09 Reappointment of Jose Tiago (D) to Planning & Zoning Commission.

Co-chair Vizzo-Paniccia distributed the background information for the appointee. The committee members took a few minutes to review the information.

Co-chair Vizzo-Paniccia recalled that she was unable to attend the last meeting due to a death in the family. She noted that she had the paperwork at home.

Co-chair Vizzo-Paniccia asked Mr. Tiago why he was looking to be reappointed. Mr. Tiago said it has been almost a year that he has served on the commission. He expressed that he has seen some good applications come forward and he wished to continue to be a part of that.

Council member Taylor-Moye observed in the background information that Mr. Tiago has only missed one P&Z Commission meeting. She commended him for his dedication serving on the commission. She asked him if he has seen anything while he has served that would make him not want to serve any longer. Mr. Tiago replied that he hadn't.

Council member Ayala asked how long Mr. Tiago has served on the commission. Mr. Tiago said he has served for one year.

Council member Walsh asked Mr. Tiago if he completed the land use training. Mr. Tiago said he thought a new session was coming up, however, he hasn't attended any sessions yet.

Council President McCarthy mentioned that he hasn't heard of any regular training sessions that have been held. Mr. Tiago said that if there were any training sessions scheduled he would attend.

Council member Walsh asked about a prior legal proceeding that Mr. Tiago was involved in. Mr. Tiago said that matter has been taken care of.

Council member Walsh asked him if he had a better understanding and appreciation of the land use regulations since he has been on the commission. Mr. Tiago said yes.

Council member Walsh asked if Mr. Tiago if he has received any monies towards his business as a result of him serving on the commission. Mr. Tiago stated that he hasn't received any monies.

Council President McCarthy expressed that he has known Mr. Tiago for a while. He said he runs a good business and he is a decent person.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER TAYLOR-MOYE MOVED TO APPROVE**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA SECONDED**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

122-09 Appointment of Bruce Gallo (D) to the Energy Improvement District Board.

There was a request from Council member Walsh to Council President McCarthy to explain the purpose of the Energy improvement District.

Council President McCarthy stated that something passed by the State Legislature to allow municipalities to combine areas that are contiguous to each other, to find innovative ways and savings for environmentally sound improvements. For example, utilizing other power sources during a brown out, wherein an alternative energy source would be used. He noted that this also opens it up to federal and state funding. He went on to say that the administration determined that they will make it a citywide energy improvement district that allow for citywide efficiencies to be put in place. It also provides incentives and discounts for things like solar power.

Tyrone McClain of the Mayor's Office added that the intention was to try to get professionals to serve on the board that have some knowledge of energy efficiencies.

Co-chair Vizzo-Paniccia asked when the board meets. Mr. McClain said they meet once a month and they hold special meetings as needed. He noted the board will be staffed by Ted Graybarz.

Council member Walsh asked if the board would choose the projects that will receive the tax breaks. He said he had a concern about the board members selection process pertaining to projects. Mr. McClain said there will be a representative from OPED, Public Facilities and the CAO serving on the board. He noted they are looking at all the buildings in the city that would be appropriate for solar panels. The board will oversee the project(s), but they won't make the ultimate decision as to which project to do. Council member Walsh asked if the members of the board would be skewed to one section of the city. Mr. McClain said the board won't concentrate on only one area of the city. He further explained that right now, they were looking at what resources and

projects will be done. However, there may be times when certain projects will be done in a specific area.

Council President McCarthy went on to clarify what he thought Council member Walsh's concern was, which is not having all Black Rock residents serving on the board. Council member Walsh agreed with that concern and he added that it was also a matter of the board members discretion and being dominated by people in one neighborhood.

Co-chair Vizzo-Paniccia commented that all the guidelines for the board have been outlined and in order.

Council President McCarthy suggested that Attorney Anastasi and Mr. Grabarz could answer any additional questions the committee had.

Council member Martinez asked the number of board members there would be. Co-chair Vizzo-Paniccia said there would be seven (7) board members.

Council member Taylor-Moye stated that she would like to hear from the city attorney regarding the questions that came up. Mr. McClain said that Mr. Grabarz would also be a good person to talk to.

Council member Taylor-Moye asked if any other districts submitted applications to serve on the committee. Mr. McClain said the matter wasn't advertised. The process was to gather people who were interested to form the committee. He pointed out that some of the board members have background in the field, noting that an accountant, finance person and a legal attorney make up some members of the board.

Council member Martinez asked if there was anyone on the board that is a community resident and not necessarily with any expertise background. Mr. McClain replied no, although he didn't think that was a bad idea. Council member Martinez thought it would be good to have a resident sit on the board because they would have a voice. Co-chair Vizzo-Paniccia commented that would be okay as long as the voice was representative of all four districts.

Mr. Gallo said he was a resident of Black Rock and he has a background in the energy field. He said he retired from the trading floor three years ago. He commented that he thought the future was to see funds available for alternative energies. He felt the city could using whatever fuels it uses more efficiently. He further expressed that you start

with what you have to improve efficiency and go from there to research other energy sources, such as wind _____?

Council President McCarthy stated that he strongly supported Mr. Gallo since he has the credible expertise that he could bring to the table.

Co-chair Vizzo-Paniccia asked if the city had the funds for any inspections to bring technicians into certain buildings or homes. Mr. McClain said they were looking to assure that the board will be able to fund themselves and bring projects back to the city. They were looking at federal and state monies to do that.

Council member Walsh asked if Mr. Gallo had anything to add. Mr. Gallo said he wouldn't necessarily look at the neighborhood, rather he would consider the efficiencies that could be utilized, such as tests that could be done by the utilities company. However, he said his allegiance would be to provide his expertise and contacts.

Council member Walsh asked about the potential of showing favoritism. Mr. Gallo responded that the numbers don't lie and if it makes economic sense, then it will be better for Bridgeport.

Council member Walsh asked about the possibility of the committee receiving annual reports. Mr. McClain said that could be done.

Council member Walsh asked if Mr. Gallo planned to step down from serving on the Redevelopment & Planning Agency commission. He reminded the committee that a person can't serve on two board simultaneously. Mr. Gallo said he wasn't aware of that, but he wouldn't have a problem stepping down. Co-chair Vizzo-Paniccia noted that he should submit his resignation for the Redevelopment & Planning Agency.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER TAYLOR-MOYE MOVED TO APPROVE**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER T. MCCARTHY SECONDED**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

***Consent calendar**

The agenda returned to the following items:

113-09 Refund of Excess Payments.

Kelly Lenz the Tax Collector stated that these two items pertained to Stamford Wrecking and Standard Demolition. She explained that the entities weren't taxable in Bridgeport. They paid taxes on the appeal and then they were taken off the books. The payments need to be reimbursed.

Council President McCarthy asked why this happened. Ms. Lenz said they should have never been on the books per the Tax Assessor. It was found that they aren't businesses that should be registered in Bridgeport.

Council member Walsh asked then if the city had any further rights for an appeal. Ms. Lenz said she doesn't have a say in that.

Co-chair Vizzo-Paniccia recapped that the entities don't have any property in Bridgeport. Ms. Lenz reiterated that they aren't registered to pay taxes in Bridgeport.

Council member Walsh noted if there was a statement from the city attorney's office regarding these types of settlements. He made the point that if that information was available, it might not be necessary for these items to come before the committee. He said he would follow up with City Attorney Anastasi about that. He further noted that a city attorney should be assigned for every meeting, he said he will call and remind him.

- ** COUNCIL MEMBER McCARTHY MOVED TO APPROVE ITEMS 113-09 FOR A REFUND AMOUNT OF \$14,254.50 TO STAMFORD WRECKING AND STANDARD DEMOLITION**
- ** COUNCIL MEMBER TAYLOR-MOYE SECONDED**
- ** MOTION PASSED WITH FOUR VOTES IN FAVOR AND ONE VOTE IN OPPOSITION (COUNCIL MEMBER WALSH)**

114-09 Refund of Excess Payments.

Ms. Lenz updated that this item pertained to an assessment that isn't taxable. She noted that the court approved it to be taken off the books and the tax should be zeroed out. The entity is Mansfield Construction.

Council member Walsh questioned why it was in court in the first place. Ms. Lenz said she wasn't sure, but it was in court a couple years ago and it's just now coming to a head.

Council member Walsh asked if there were others out there of the same. Ms. Lenz said there could be.

- ** COUNCIL PRESIDENT McCARTHY MOVED TO APPROVE THE REFUND OF PAYMENT TO MANSFIELD CONSTRUCTION IN THE AMOUNT OF \$65,119.60**
- ** COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA SECONDED**
- ** MOTION PASSED WITH FOUR VOTES IN FAVOR AND ONE VOTE IN OPPOSITION (COUNCIL MEMBER WALSH)**

127-09 Refund of Excess Payments.

Ms. Lenz updated that this item pertained to taxes assessed during the year 2007; for Standard Demolition and Stamford Wrecking. She noted that the appeals were done during two different years. The payments went to zero on the assessed value and they should have never been taxed in Bridgeport.

- ** COUNCIL PRESIDENT McCARTHY MOVED TO APPROVE THE REFUND OF PAYMENTS FOR STANDARD DEMOLITION IN THE AMOUNT OF \$13,931,25 AND STAMFORD WRECKING IN THE AMOUNT OF \$6,965.64**
- ** COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA SECONDED**
- ** MOTION PASSED WITH THREE VOTES IN FAVOR AND TWO VOTES IN OPPOSITION (COUNCIL MEMBERS TAYLOR-MOYE AND WALSH)**

**Note: Co-chair Vizzo-Paniccia voted to approve*

It was stated that Tax Collector Kelly Lenz will be in attendance at the council meeting on Tuesday to answer any questions related to these items.

123-09 Appointment of Adrienne Farrar Houel (R) to the Energy Improvement District Board.

Co-chair Vizzo-Paniccia asked Ms. Houel why she wanted to serve on the board. Ms. Houel said she was interested in green energy and what it can bring to the city. She

expressed that she has been involved in bringing green jobs to the city within the last two years through different initiatives. She relayed that most of the people that work for her come through training and she wants to see the benefits of this trickle down to the community.

Ms. Houel went on to say that in terms of serving on the Energy Improvement District Board, she has an interest in the newness and creation of it. She feels it is a very exciting time to lay down the principals and techniques that could applied to the needs of the city and it's important to enter that area as soon as possible.

Council member Walsh asked if she saw any potential conflicts considering her current position involved in energy conservation. Ms. Houel said what she's involved in doesn't create new business, it's more from a community based aspect.

Council member Walsh asked what her opinion was on wind turbines and wind farms. Ms. Houel said they have to look at efficiency where it's proposed to be constructed. She commented that they wouldn't be the same type of wind farms that they would have in the Midwest. She explained that you sell generation produced back to the grid, so the return on the investment varies. She further commented that she would keep an open mind when it comes to alternative energy sources.

Council member Walsh asked about the process of burning trash to generate energy. Ms. Houel said she was working on two projects right now, one is composting. She said a study was being done to gather more research and it will take some time to work it out. There is also the matter of mattress recycling, wherein a mattress can be broken down and recycled; this eliminates additional impact to land fills. In general, she said there are a lot of enterprises that could be considered.

Co-chair Vizzo-Paniccia stated there were many seminars for green studies that she thought could benefit the committee and the taxpayers.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER TAYLOR-MOYE MOVED TO APPROVE**

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT McCARTHY SECONDED**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

*** Consent calendar**

124-09 Appointment of Jack E. McGregor (R) to the Energy Improvement District Board.

Co-chair Vizzo-Paniccia noted that the Tax Collector issue concerning Mr. McGregor's vehicle was resolved, per the paperwork submitted.

Mr. McGregor stated that his primary background was in the regulatory field. He stated that he was the president and CEO of Aquarian Company where he dealt with regulatory issues in the state. He also has a background in the electric utility industry. And he was the president of a large oil company in Washington. He expressed that he enjoys public service and he formerly served on the Mayor's Commission, but he resigned to serve on this board. He mentioned that he is a pioneering type that has an interest in energy initiatives.

Council President McCarthy commented that he has known Jack (Mr. McGregor) for a long time and he is a great guy.

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT McCARTHY MOVED TO APPROVE**
**** COUNCIL MEMBER TAYLOR-MOYE SECONDED**
**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

***Consent calendar**

125-09 Appointment of Joseph Giaquinto (D) to the Ethics Commission.

Co-chair Vizzo-Paniccia asked Mr. Giaquinto why he wanted to serve on the board. Mr. Giaquinto stated that he was looking to serve for two reasons. He said that his family history dates back to living in Bridgeport since 1890. He expressed that the country, city and state have been good to him and his family and serving on the board will provide an opportunity to pay back. His background in ethics results from attending law school and he has been involved in evaluating various behaviors of staff members and students throughout his life.

Council member Walsh pointed out that the ordinance reads that he can initiate any inquiry by himself; he doesn't need to wait for a complaint from a member of the public to take action.

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT McCARTHY MOVED TO APPROVE**
**** COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA SECONDED**
**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

***Consent calendar**

126-09 Appointment of Walter Faherty (D) to the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Co-chair Vizzo-Paniccia asked Mr. Faherty why he was looking to serve on the board. Mr. Faherty stated that he has wanted to serve on a board for a while. He expressed that he's been involved in sports as a physical education teacher for twenty-three years and he drew up plans for two baseball diamonds. He also headed a summer day camp and he coached baseball and soccer. He has a masters degree in health and physical education. He mentioned that he also showed interest in serving on the Parks Department Board, but it never came through, so the request to serve on the ZBA came at the right time. He expressed that if something came up serving on the board, such as an appeal, he would want to know the reason for the appeal.

Co-chair Vizzo-Paniccia asked what happened with the Parks Department appointment. Mr. McClain said there weren't any openings right now.

Council President McCarthy expressed that he has known Mr. Faherty as long as he's been in politics and he's a great guy.

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT McCARTHY MOVED TO APPROVE**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA SECONDED**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

***Consent calendar**

130-09 Proposed Workers' Compensation Full and Final Stipulation with Michael Bauco.

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT MCCARTHY MOVED TO TABLE**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER TAYLOR-MOYE SECONDED**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**It was noted that there wasn't representation at the meeting to discuss this item.*

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT McCARTHY MOVED TO ADJOURN**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER TAYLOR-MOYE SECONDED**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

The meeting adjourned at 7:35 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Graham
Telesco Secretarial Services