

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
PUBLIC SAFETY & TRANSPORTATION
COMMITTEE
TUESDAY, APRIL 1, 2014
6:00 PM**

ATTENDANCE: Co-chair Lyons, Co-chair Feliciano, Council members: Banta, Martinez-Walker, Paoletto, Salter

CITY STAFF: R. Gupta, Central Grants Office; E. McDonough, CAO Office

OTHERS: Fire Chief Rooney

Co-chair Lyons called the meeting to order at 6:07 pm.

She introduced the committee members and requested that others in attendance introduce themselves for the record.

Approval of Committee Minutes: October 21, 2013 (Special Meeting)

**** CO-CHAIR FELICIANO MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ-WALKER SECONDED**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

28-13 Grant Submission: 2013 Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) for Fire Station Alerting System (#14436)

Ms. Gupta, Central Grants *submitted copies of the resolution*. She stated that they applied for two grants, noting that the first is a Federal funding grant for \$253,564; the Federal share amount is \$228,207 and there is a \$25,357 city match. The grant will be used for a Fire Station Alerting System that is hardwired and currently has major problems operating. The new system will result in improved dispatch, response time will improve and it will meet the national fire standards.

Council member Banta asked where the system will be located. Ms. Gupta said it will be located at the Emergency Operation Center on Washington Avenue.

Fire Chief Rooney explained that the system is in disrepair and they aren't able to repair it. The new system will improve alert time for fire, accidents and emergencies. He added that the system is wireless and badly needed.

Co-chair Feliciano asked where the city match will come from. Fire Chief Rooney said the match will come out of the fire department budget. He further explained that other fire gear may be sacrificed, such as turnout gear. Council member Martinez-Walker questioned if this would be taking from other equipment that needed to be stocked and what the damage might be. Fire Chief Rooney responded that it will only result in them not buying extra turnout gear, but it won't take from any crucial equipment that is necessary.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO MOVED TO APPROVE**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ-WALKER SECONDED**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

***Consent calendar**

29-13 Grant Submission: 2013 Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) for SCBA Cylinders and Assemblies (#14345)

Ms. Gupta *submitted copies of the resolution*. She stated that this request was for a self-contained breathing apparatus that generally becomes outdated after fifteen years. They will purchase ten (10) assemblies and fifty-six cylinders. The grant is for \$99,360 and there is a city match of \$11,040.

Fire Chief Rooney recalled that they received the grant in the past for the cylinders, noting that they are now trying to replenish the stock.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BANTA MOVED TO APPROVE**

**** CO-CHAIR FELICIANO SECONDED**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

***Consent calendar**

46-13 Appointment of Rocco Guarnieri (D) to the Fire Commission

Co-chair Lyons stated that she had the paperwork for this appointee – *the background information was distributed and reviewed by the committee members*.

Council member Banta thanked the appointee for his interest wanting to serve on the commission. He asked Mr. Guarnieri why he considered serving on the Fire Commission.

Rocco Guarnieri stated that he lived in Bridgeport. He mentioned that he has an association with tenants and landlords through the Homeowners Tenant Association. He relayed that he learned about safety features in multi-family buildings through his affiliation with the association. He stated that he currently doesn't own any buildings.

Council member Banta asked Mr. Guarnieri about the disorderly conduct arrests that were outlined in the background information. Co-chair Lyons pointed out that the incidents on March 8, 2005 and July 9, 2010 were both dismissed.

Mr. Guarnieri explained that the incident on March 8, 2005 had to do with a jealous girlfriend. And the incident on July 9, 2010 occurred due to a disturbance by a young man in the community he resides in Lake Forest. He explained that the Lake Forest Association was having a music and dinner night and apparently, the music was too loud and bothered the neighbor. He was asked to turn down the music by the neighbor and he was subsequently arrested for disorderly conduct. He stated that the last apartment building that he owned had eighty-eight tenants and he never had any issues either way.

Council member Banta asked if he knew any firefighters. Mr. Guarnieri acknowledged that he knew Fire Chief Rooney who was present.

Council member Paoletto expressed that he has known Mr. Guarnieri for twenty-one years. He mentioned that all appointees are subject to the same questioning. He relayed that he has worked with Mr. Guarnieri on various projects and he's aware of his involvement with the Homeowners Tenant Association. He said he was also aware of his love and interest for the city. He further expressed that he knows him to be a dedicated person in whatever he does. He thanked Mr. Guarnieri for being active in the city and he recommended approval of the appointment.

Council member Martinez-Walker asked about the domestic violence aspect of Mr. Guarnieri's July 9, 2010 arrest. Mr. Guarnieri stated that the incident didn't involve anything else other than the matter related to the music. Council member Martinez-Walker expressed that she was glad that he was willing to take on the appointment.

Council member Salter asked Mr. Guarnieri if he felt that the prior arrests would interfere at all with him serving on the commission. Mr. Guarnieri replied that it wouldn't.

Co-chair Lyons stated that she knows Mr. Guarnieri. She relayed that he does have a lot of gatherings at his home and as far as what she observed, she never saw any

incidents occur. She repeated that the charges were dismissed in court and his taxes are up to date.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO MOVED TO APPROVE**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ-WALKER SECONDED**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

***Consent calendar**

51-13 Proposed request to donate a Surplus Fire Truck to the Dominican Republic

Co-chair Lyons stated that Reverend Castillo and Fire Chief Rooney were present to address this item.

Fire Chief Rooney explained that over the years, the fire department has donated trucks to the Dominican Republic and Haiti. He stated that right now they have a truck that is twenty years old and the department doesn't use it; so rather than scrap it, he thought it was better to donate it to a third world country for their use. He added that the fire department also needs the storage space for new trucks, noting that when they leave fire apparatus outside, it quickly deteriorates.

He expressed that Reverend Castillo has visited the Dominican Republic where he has recruited doctors and lawyers to donate their services and time. He further expressed that Reverend Castillo is humble and he is actually the person that has provided a lot of help to the Dominican Republic.

Reverend Castillo expressed that he has worked for the city a long time under various Mayors in the past and currently Mayor Finch. He relayed that it has been a privilege to service the entire community. He mentioned that he travels to Latin American often, because they need help. He clarified that no one will make a profit through the use of the fire truck donation and there won't be any liability to the City of Bridgeport. He added that any other costs involved related to the fire truck will be paid for by the organization that is receiving the donation. The truck will serve thirty-seven (37) towns and communities. He expressed that it's a good thing to help serve people that really need it. He relayed a message from a representative of the Dominican Republic that indicated how the truck will truly help save lives and the property of poor people. He thanked the committee on behalf of the Dominican Republic community. He mentioned that he maintains an orphanage in the Dominican Republic that has many handicap children. He further mentioned that if anyone on the committee knew of an ambulance that is available for donating to please let him know.

Council member Paoletto acknowledged the work that Reverend Castillo has done through the years. He expressed that the donations the city has helped with to benefit other cities, whether it was here or another country was an overall great thing.

Council member Salter stated that as long as everything was in operating order and it was all for a good cause, he was in support of the donation.

Co-chair Lyons expressed that she has known Reverend Castillo for a long time and she is aware of the good work he does. She mentioned that she has also been an advocate of getting a fire truck to Haiti and she stated that she made a call to work out the promise of the next truck that was supposed to go to Haiti. However, she found out that the first truck went to Haiti and the second truck will be delivered differently. She expressed that she was well aware of the good work done and the need in the Dominican Republic.

Council member Banta asked when there will be another available for donation. Fire Chief Rooney said it would probably be within the next two years. He noted that he will check on any other fire apparatus that can be donated.

Co-chair Feliciano asked if any other surrounding towns in Connecticut do the same as Bridgeport in terms of donations. Fire Chief Rooney said he wasn't sure, noting that other towns don't have as much equipment and what they do have isn't in good shape for donating.

Co-chair Lyons offered some background about the resolution that she said was submitted a couple of years ago to donate to all cities and states.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ-WALKER MOVED TO APPROVE**

**** CO-CHAIR FELICIANO SECONDED**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

***Consent calendar**

57-13 Proposed request to donate a Fire Boat to the Town of Fairfield

Fire Chief Rooney stated that they obtained the fire boat seven years ago from Homeland Security and a grant came up to provide the funds to purchase another one. The fire boat will be state-of-the-art, but they now have two boats that they don't need. He explained that since it came from Homeland Security it can't be sold, so the Town of Fairfield has a need for it and the location to store it. He noted that the boat is basically brand new, but again; Bridgeport can't keep two fire boats.

Council member Salter asked how large the boats are. Fire Chief Rooney said one boat is a 28-footer and the other boat is a 32-footer. He noted that both are equipped with the newest technology.

Council member Banta asked if the Town of Fairfield currently has a fire boat. Fire Chief Rooney said no, they only have a very small police boat.

Co-chair Feliciano mentioned the Steel Point waterway access to question if the extra fire boat will be needed when Steel Point becomes active. Fire Chief Rooney said that was a good point, but he repeated that to put another boat in operation really couldn't be done. He further relayed that Bridgeport has a mutual aid agreement with surrounding towns to call upon for emergency assistance if needed.

- ** COUNCIL MEMBER BANTA MOVED TO APPROVE**
- ** CO-CHAIR FELICIANO SECONDED**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**
- * Consent calendar**

ADJOURNMENT

- ** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ-WALKER MOVED TO ADJOURN**
- ** COUNCIL MEMBER FELICIANO SECONDED**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

The meeting adjourned at 7:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Graham
Telesco Secretarial Services