

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
ORDINANCE COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
APRIL 27, 2021**

ATTENDANCE: Marcus Brown, Co-chair; Eneida Martinez, Co-chair; Michelle Lyons, Rosalina Roman-Christy, Ernest Newton

OTHERS: Council Member(s): M. E. Brantley, J. Cruz, M. McCarthy & M. Pereira; T. Gaudett, Mayor's Office; Constance Vickers, Legislative Affairs; Atty. M. Anastasi, Atty. T. Toms, (6:09 p.m.); Lauren Mappa, WPCA; Barbara, Mappa, 203-993-1153

This meeting was conducted by Zoom/Teleconference.

CALL TO ORDER

Co-chair Brown called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m. A quorum was present.

Approval of Committee Minutes: February 23, 2021 (Regular Meeting)

Approval of Committee Minutes: March 1, 2021 (Public Hearing)

Approval of Committee Minutes: March 3, 2021 (Reconvened Public Hearing)

**** COUNCIL MEMBER LYONS MOVED TO CONSOLIDATE AND APPROVE THE FOLLOWING MINUTES.**

**FEBRUARY 23, 2021 (REGULAR MEETING)
MARCH 1, 2021 (PUBLIC HEARING)
MARCH 3, 2021 (RECONVENED PUBLIC HEARING)**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER ROMAN-CHRISTY SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FOR THE FEBRUARY 23, 2021 REGULAR MEETING; THE MARCH 1, 2021 PUBLIC HEARING AND THE MARCH 3, 2021 RECONVENED PUBLIC HEARING AS SUBMITTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

108-19 Proposed resolution requesting the City Attorney to draft amendments to the Municipal Code of Ordinances to Reduce Auto Theft and Break-Ins.

Council Member Brown said that Council Member Martinez had submitted the item and an Opinion from the City Attorney's Office had been sent out.

Council Member Martinez said that she was going to request the City Clerk's Office to withdraw the item. Council Member Brown suggested that the Committee vote the item down.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 108-19 PROPOSED RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE CITY ATTORNEY TO DRAFT AMENDMENTS TO THE MUNICIPAL CODE OF ORDINANCES TO REDUCE AUTO THEFT AND BREAK-INS
** COUNCIL MEMBER LYONS SECONDED.**

Council Member Brown said that Council Member Martinez had requested that this item be voted down.

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 108-19 PROPOSED RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE CITY ATTORNEY TO DRAFT AMENDMENTS TO THE MUNICIPAL CODE OF ORDINANCES TO REDUCE AUTO THEFT AND BREAK-INS FAILED TO PASSED WITH NO ONE (0) IN FAVOR AND FOUR (4) OPPOSED (MARTINEZ, LYONS, NEWTON AND ROMAN-CHRISTY).**

*Council Member Lyons left the meeting at 6:09 p.m.
Atty. Toms joined the meeting at 6:09 p.m.*

Atty. Anastasi said that he had sent the legal opinion for Agenda Item 108-19 out in January and then re-sent it in February, but it was not received until just before the meeting.

52-20 Proposed Resolution for a Policy to Prevent the Water Pollution Control Authority (WPCA) Foreclosure Crisis as State and Federal COVID-19 Pandemic Foreclosure Moratoriums Expire.

Council Member Martinez said that they wanted to put this in place to protect the residents who ended up unemployed due to COVID-19 and unable to pay the WPCA bills. She said that there was already a hardship ordinance in place.

Atty. Toms said that the ordinance primarily seeks information based on some of the previous changes and to determine how effective the previous changes were. She displayed a copy of her opinion on the proposed resolution. The opinion stated that it appears the previous resolution had proved effective and there had been no requests for hardship due to COVID-19. She then reviewed the figures included in the document with the Committee members.

Atty. Toms said that if they declared a moratorium on foreclosure, the City would lose their rights and the banks will foreclose before the City does. This is now controlled by PURA.

Council Member Newton asked how many people were working on foreclosures. Atty. Toms said that there were three law firms. Council Member Newton said that he had been told there was a new one. Atty. Toms said that they had been using one law firm, but it was no longer part of it. Council Member Newton pointed out that Atty. Judah Epstein had stated that he no longer would be part of the foreclosure process. Atty. Toms said that she thought he may have signed the agreement. Atty. Anastasi explained that he had been told that Atty. Epstein's firm had changed their mind about signing the agreement.

Council Member Brown asked Ms. Mappa about how a resident would notify the WPCA that they were moving. Ms. Mappa said that she believed that if it was the homeowner, the paperwork would be done at the closing. A renter would have to notify the WPCA where they wanted the bill sent.

Council Member Cruz asked why the WPCA had the ability to foreclose. Atty. Anastasi said that it wasn't an issue about shutting off the water into the residence because the bill is based on water consumption, but it is about the sewage outflow. Stopping the sewage outflow would be a public health issue.

Council Member Cruz said he disagreed because it was a very extreme movement. Atty. Anastasi reminded everyone that they were just not talking about single family residents, but multi-family residences and commercial buildings. Council Member Cruz said that the legislation was unacceptable.

Council Member Martinez said that she wanted to thank Atty. Toms for all her work and the legislation. The Council has already worked on this issue in the past.

Council Member Newton said that Attorney's Office made it as clear as possible that no one was affected by COVID. The collection rates were where they were supposed to be even during the pandemic. He said that the Committee needs to reject this because the item does not need to go to the Council floor.

Atty. Anastasi said that the easiest way was for the sponsors to submit a written withdrawal is to the City Clerk.

Council Member Brown said that Council Member Newton could empower him as Co-Chair to make sure the item does not come back onto the agenda until it dies in December. Council Member Newton agreed to do so.

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL MEMBER ROMAN-CHRISTY MOVED TO ADJOURN.**
**** COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON SECONDED.**
**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 6:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Telesco Secretarial Services