

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT  
ORDINANCE COMMITTEE  
PUBLIC HEARING  
MARCH 22, 2022**

**ATTENDANCE:** Marcus Brown, Co-Chair; Rosalina Roman-Christy, Co-chair;  
Akeem Boyd, Jorge Cruz, Ernest Newton, Michelle Lyons (5:11 p.m.)

**OTHERS:** Council Member M Pereira, Council Member M Small, Council Member  
R Smith, T. Gaudett, Mayoral Aide, Constance Vickers, Legislative Aide,

**CALL TO ORDER**

Council Member Brown called the Public Hearing to order at 5:05 p.m.

*The following is a summary of the comments made by the public at the meeting.*

**33-21 Resolution presented by Council Member(s) Pereira & Small and Co-sponsor Cruz re: Proposed Amendments to the Municipal Code of Ordinances, amend Chapter 10.32 – The Operation or Use of Dirt Bikes, All-Terrain Vehicles, Snowmobiles, Motor-Driven Cycles, or Mini Cycles, referred to Ordinance Committee.**

- Mr. Dorin Wright of 64 Waldorf Avenue, said that he sees the dirt bikes on Fairfield Avenue. He said that he also sees them at the P.T. Barnum. He is an advocate for his black and brown neighbors. He said that it wasn't right to punish gas stations owners for selling gas in cans. He said that he did not think this would work.

- Mr. Joe Thompson came forward to speak in favor of ATV riders. He said that the riders were afraid to come because of the police presence. This is part of Bridgeport's youth culture. He said that he used to ride dirt bikes and ATVs when he was younger. He's aware of the dangers and the only fatalities he knew of happened when the riders were being chased.

*Council Member Michelle Lyons joined the meeting at 5:11 p.m.*

Riding the bikes are an escape. Mr. Thompson said that he had no problem with the police pulling bike riders over that are breaking the law. However, having a designated place would bring problems with the neighbors. He added that when people are riding on the street, they pass by and the sound fades. There are cars in the South End that have bad mufflers that sound just as loud.

He said that there were some riders that came tonight but when they saw the police, they thought it was a set up and left. If the gas stations won't let them buy gas in cans, people will go to the surrounding towns and could possibly be profiled. He asked the Committee to vote against this.

- Mr. Tony Barr came forward and said the kids were going through a lot of negative issues. He asked why the Council wasn't choosing a place for them to ride rather than telling them what they couldn't do. When will the Council stop making it harder for the kids. There's no excuse for the riders to be afraid to come to the Council. They should put their focus on fixing the problem. Find a place for the kids to ride their bikes.

He said that the Superintendent of Schools should live in Bridgeport. The Superintendent doesn't live in Bridgeport and doesn't care about the kids. Be part of the solution and not part of the problem.

- Council Member Pereira came forward said that there was a code of conduct in the public schools. All 1,900 students are expected to abide by them. There is a member of the Board of Education who has been stirring up the ATV/dirt bike riders to cause problems. There are already ordinances on the books about ATVs and dirt bikes.

She said that the number 1 reason she gets calls about the ATV riders is because they are being lawless. They have put children on bikes and those who are driving in danger and disturbed people who just want to enjoy their homes quietly. She said that the gas station owners have to be careful when they sell the cigarettes and lottery tickets.

Fairfield just had a major newspaper articles about this issue. She said that she and Ms. Small represent the 138th District.

- Ms. Bobbie Brown came forward and said that she wanted to be sure that the riders who wanted to ride could ride. She said that the young people wanted to have the opportunity to ride. She said that she wanted to speak to the Council Members about this.

- Ms. Shaena Taylor said that she is a Board of Education member and they represent all the City. There is a lot of information they make sure that people know what is happening. They respect everyone and don't throw stones. The people deserve to know what is happening. The Council needs to listen to the community.

She said that the issue should be gun violence. She has attended many events for families that have lost loved ones. The ATV riders haven't caused this violence. She said that she did not want a bunch of laws on the books that will stop the bike riders. The Council claims that they are here to help the residents and the youth. They deserve a place to ride. Before they pass a law, they should think about who it will be affecting. Is there a middle ground? The constituents deserve to know what is going on. It is time to work together to make Bridgeport better.

- Jennifer Cuevas, a business owner, came forward. She said that she does a lot of events, and sees these riders who are participating in community toy drives, food drive and clothing drives. She said that they are not starting trouble, they are just riding bikes.

- Mr. Benjamin Jordan came forward and said that he was a dirt bike rider. There is so much negativity, but they are not part of gangs or causing problems.

Council Member Brown asked if there was anyone else who would like to speak. No one else came forward. He repeated the question two more times. Hearing no response. Council Member Brown closed the public hearing at 5:37 p.m.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Council Member Brown adjourned the public hearing at 5:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Telesco Secretarial Services