

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT  
PUBLIC SAFETY AND TRANSPORTATION  
COMMITTEE  
REGULAR MEETING  
MARCH 2, 2021**

**ATTENDANCE:** Maria Valle, Co-chair; Michelle Lyons, Maria Pereira, AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia, Avelino Silva (6:16 p.m.), Jeanette Herron (6:19 p.m.)

**OTHERS:** Council Member(s): M. E. Brantley, S. Burns, J. Cruz, E. Martinez, M. McCarthy, E. Newton, R. Roman-Christy & D. Taylor-Moye; Thomas Gaudett, Mayoral Aide; Constance Vickers, Director of Legislative Affairs; Isolina DeJesus, Central Grants Director; Lt. Paul Grech; Android, Barbara, Maria Ines, Joe Larcheveque, Stu's iPad, Carolyn Vermont, iPhone, 1-203-673-7218

**CALL TO ORDER**

Co-chair Valle called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m. A quorum was present.

**APPROVAL OF COMMITTEE MINUTES:**

**February 2, 2021 (Regular Meeting)**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER PEREIRA MOVED THE MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 2, 2021 REGULAR MEETING.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER LYONS SECONDED.**

Council Member Pereira stated that she had some corrections. Page 4 - Second sentence in the second to last paragraph - The sentence should read, "She said that she was concerned that the money allocated for these unfilled positions could be used as a slush fund."

Council Member Pereira then said that in addition at the top of page 7, it stated that she had made a motion to table Agenda Item 138-19, which was the item regarding the Police Accountability. She stated "...and I absolutely did not make that motion. I definitely didn't. As a matter of fact, I'm the only person who voted against tabling it. So I definitely did not make the motion to table that at the top of page 7. I don't remember who did, but it was absolutely not me."

A partial transcript of the audio from that meeting follows:

Council President Nieves: ...and after that, I just ask that I'm reporting out on this, uhm, I just ask that the Committee table this item and then hopefully next month we can come back with a report from the, ah, a small variation of the report to present to the working group for next month. Thank you.

Council Member Valle: Do I hear a motion to table the item?

Council Member Pereira: Madam Chair – [inaudible] – move – Madam Chair I'd like to motion that Chief Rebeca Garcia come back when this item on the agenda, ah because we need to hear from her on this resolution and I'd also like to know how these changes in the top level –

Council Member Valle: Council Woman Pereira –

Council Member Pereira: I made the motion.

Council Member Valle: I'm trying to – go ahead, go ahead.

Council Member Pereira: I'm making a motion that when this comes back before the Council that Acting Chief Rebeca Garcia come before us to address this resolution and what it means and that we hear from her about these changes among high level captains and above which had created a significant amount of turmoil. I've heard from a number of police officers, ah, and we just read that we lost ten police officers already. So I think it's important that we hear from her and how these changes go directly to improving the operations of the Bridgeport Police. Thank you, Madam Chair. That's my motion."

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER PEREIRA MOVED TO AMEND THE MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 2, 2021 REGULAR MEETING AS FOLLOWS:**

Page 5, paragraph 3 following the vote: please change:

"She said that she was concerned that the money for fringe benefits was becoming a slush fund."

To: "She said that she was concerned that the money allocated for these unfilled positions could be used as a slush fund."

Page 7- First sentence at the top of the page- I DID make this motion to table with conditions which was not seconded and failed, therefore this is accurate and should remain as is.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER PEREIRA MOVED TO AMEND THE MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 2, 2021 REGULAR MEETING.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER LYONS SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION TO AMEND THE MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 2, 2021 REGULAR MEETING PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER PEREIRA MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 2, 2021 REGULAR MEETING AS AMENDED.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER LYONS SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 2, 2021 REGULAR MEETING AS AMENDED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

*Council Member Silva joined the meeting at 6:16 p.m.*

**138-19 Resolution regarding Commitments by the City Council to Reform Policing in the City of Bridgeport.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA MOVED TO TABLE AGENDA ITEM 138-19 RESOLUTION REGARDING COMMITMENTS BY THE CITY COUNCIL TO REFORM POLICING IN THE CITY OF BRIDGEPORT.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER SILVA SECONDED.**

*Council Member Herron joined the meeting at 6:19 p.m.*

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED WITH THREE (3) IN FAVOR (VIZZO-PANICCIA, SILVA AND HERRON), ONE (1) ABSTENTION (LYONS) AND ONE (1) OPPOSED (PEREIRA).**

**09-20 Grant Submission: re Subrecipient Agreement between the City of Bridgeport Police Department and University of Bridgeport UB Safer Campus Project.**

Ms. DeJesus said that this would be a grant agreement between the Police Department and the University of Bridgeport. She gave a brief overview of the training that would be held and said the grant was for three years. Ms. DeJesus said that Lt. Grech was present on the call to answer questions.

Lt. Grech said that UB received the grant and two detectives were selected to participate in the sexual violence, domestic violence and stalking training.

Council Member Pereira said she was trying to understand whether they would have two Bridgeport detectives stationed on the UB campus. Lt. Grech said that the officers would receive special training on the Special Unit for sexual assault.

Council Member Pereira said that if the officers were flown to a location and her concern was quarantine requirements on their return. Lt. Grech said that right now, the training was being held virtually due to COVID 19. Ms. DeJesus said that next year, they hoped to have the training in person.

Council Member Herron asked if the City would have to pay for the training. Ms. DeJesus said that they would not. Council Member Herron said that she appreciated that the officers were receiving training.

Council Member Cruz asked if the UB officers would be receiving the training. Ms. DeJesus said that most of the funding would go to a UB Project Manager.

Council Member Newton asked if the detectives would be training other detectives. Lt. Grech said that this was basically focused on domestic violence and stalking and would help with SVU.

Council Member Pereira said that she was not opposed to this in any way, shape or fashion but objects to the fact that the Mayor can sign the documentation without Council approval.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 09-20 GRANT SUBMISSION: RE SUBRECIPIENT AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF BRIDGEPORT POLICE DEPARTMENT AND UNIVERSITY OF BRIDGEPORT UB SAFER CAMPUS PROJECT.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED WITH FOUR (4) IN FAVOR (LYONS, VIZZO-PANICCIA, SILVA AND HERRON) AND ONE (1) OPPOSED (PEREIRA).**

### **11-20 Reappointment of Stuart Rosenberg (U) to the Board of Fire Commission.**

Mr. Rosenberg introduced himself and said that he has lived in Bridgeport for over 40 years and has been on the Fire Commission for many years.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that she has known Mr. Rosenberg for many years and he knows how to do his job. He has done an exceptional job on the Fire Commission.

Council Member Pereira said that according to the Bridgeport Fire Department listing, his term expired in 2017. She asked if he had gone through another Ethics Committee meeting and another background check.

Mr. Rosenberg said another background check was done and he had met with the Ethics Commission a week ago. They had the documentation and the results of the background check.

Council Member Pereira asked if he had resubmitted his resume. Mr. Rosenberg said that he had. Council Member Pereira Stated that she could not ask questions because she has not seen his resume. Mr. Rosenberg gave a brief summary of his resume.

Council Member Valle said that she would like Ms. Vickers to address the Committee. When the Committee is meeting in person, they can easily share information. However, putting documents up on the screen during a Zoom meeting is not acceptable.

Ms. Vickers said that the application and background check to the Co-chairs. She said that she does not send the resumes to all the Committee members.

Council Member Pereira said that voter registrations, resumes and other documents are matters of public record. She asked why these were not sent to the Committee members.

Council Member Cruz said that his concern was that there were no Hispanic or black members of the Commission. This cannot be a lifetime appointment. There should be a term limit. The City is not reaching out to the black and Hispanic population to fill expired terms. He said that there were other Hispanic and black residents who were smart enough to fill the positions. It is time to

stop the nonsense and bring new blood onto the Commission. With no disrespect to Mr. Rosenberg, he will not be supporting this.

Mr. Rosenberg said that there were minorities on the Fire Commission. Council Member Cruz demanded to know who was the Hispanic member of the Board. Council Member Valle said that it was important to stick to the topic. She added that they want members of the communities to serve on the Boards and the candidate here was regarding his re-appointment.

Council Member Newton said that he had known Mr. Rosenberg a long time and held Bridgeport's interest at heart all those years. He added that the Council members get the agendas and if they have problems, they need to contact the Committee Co-chairs. He added that it would be important to consider the level of expertise when saying they want new blood. He repeated that if the Council Members had questions, they should contact their Co-chairs. There are minorities on the Boards and Commissions.

Council Member Martinez said that this was someone who had submitted his name to sit on the Fire Commission. If there are no criminal issues, he paid his taxes and is for Bridgeport. She asked what the problem was. He meets the criteria.

Council Member Martinez pointed out that there were opportunities for people to fill the vacancies. [Inaudible]

Council Member McCarthy asked if he had heard that Ms. Vickers had sent the material to the Co-chairs. Council Member Valle said that the information was sent at 4 o'clock and she didn't get it until 5 o'clock.

Council Member Lyons said that she did not know Mr. Rosenberg and did not have an issue with him. Her problem was that she did not receive the information so she had called the City Attorney's Office for information. She said that there would be candidates that would be brought before the Committee and the Committee members did not have the information. She told the City Attorney's Office that she had not received the information and Ms. Vickers thought she had sent it out last week. The Committee members need to get the information earlier. Council Member Lyons said that she would be voting against the item.

Council Member Herron said that they had this discussion about Committees and Commissions the previous evening. This is not the candidate's fault and he is very good at what he does. The idea is not to make the candidate feel that they are being berated. This has happened because the administration does not move the process quickly enough. She will be voting for the candidate because it is not right to be debating this now. The candidates know that they will be ripped to shreds in the process.

Council Member Silva said that it is important that they get the information they need. He said that he would support him solely on the fact that he has been serving the community, and is knowledgeable. He said that there were many other times when they don't get the information in a timely manner. That is the issue he has. Based on Mr. Rosenberg's record, he will support him.

Council Member Brantley said on behalf of the Chair and the Committee, she would like to request that they move the item. This discussion regarding the issues around the documentation can be held in private. The candidates have to come before the Ethics Commission which was not in session for a long time. While Council Member Cruz was correct, they need to remember this and also encourage candidates to come forward.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 11-20 REAPPOINTMENT OF STUART ROSENBERG (U) TO THE BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSION.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER SILVA SECONDED.**

Council Member Pereira said that no one was belittling Mr. Rosenberg and it was a constant issue with the administration. At 1 o'clock she had emailed the chairs, Ms. Vickers and others about not receiving the information. Both appointments are currently serving on the Fire Commission and the business will continue as usual. She said that she did not vote for anyone unless she had all the documentation because this will impact 150,000 Bridgeport residents. This is being done by a highly paid staff.

Council Member Cruz said that he would like to share with Mr. Rosenberg that he appreciates his service. His comments do not reflect anything personal. Council Member Cruz thanked Mr. Rosenberg.

Council Member Lyons said that she would vote for each one of the candidates because they had been before her in the past. She is familiar with the candidates and will not hold up the process.

Council Member Pereira said that as a point of clarification, Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia moved to approve the appointment, not move the question. Council Member Valle acknowledged this.

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 11-20 REAPPOINTMENT OF STUART ROSENBERG (U) TO THE BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSION WITH FOUR (4) IN FAVOR (LYONS, VIZZO-PANICCIA, SILVA AND HERRON) AND ONE (1) OPPOSED (PEREIRA).**

Mr. Rosenberg said that he understands that the Council Members have concerns and they have a difficult job to do. He thanked them and said that he respected all their comments.

### **12-20 Reappointment of Joseph Larcheveque (R) to the Board of Fire Commission.**

Council Member Martinez said that she did not understand why Council Members insisted on correcting the Chair when she mispronounces the candidate's name or other issues. She suggested that the Council Members wait until after the meeting to speak with the Co-chair. Mr. Larcheveque said that he was born and raised in the City. He served on the Board of Education for four years. He has a lot of respect for what the Council Members do. He was appointed to the Fire Commission to fill an unexpired term. He said that he had been before the Ethics Committee.

Council Member Pereira asked if he had submitted an application, gone through a background check. Mr. Larcheveque said that he had been before the Ethics Commission.

Council Member Pereira said that she would be voting against this because she did not receive any information on the candidate.

Council Member McCarthy said that he was in favor of Mr. Larcheveque and was a qualified candidate. Council Member McCarthy said that Council Member Burns had texted him to say that he supported the candidate, but might have to log off.

Council Member Cruz thanked Mr. Larcheveque for his service.

**\*\*COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 12-20 REAPPOINTMENT OF JOSEPH LARCHEVEQUE (R) TO THE BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSION.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA SECONDED.**

Council Member Newton said that everyone wants to leave because this is the last item. He thanked Mr. Larcheveque and said that the Fire Commission was not like the BOE. Council Member Newton said that he was saddened with Mr. Larcheveque left the BOE because he was a reasonable person.

Council Member Lyons said that she knew Mr. Larcheveque, otherwise she would be opposed to the appointment. She appreciates his knowledge and knowing that he will do the job. She thanked him for his work.

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 12-20 REAPPOINTMENT OF JOSEPH LARCHEVEQUE (R) TO THE BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSION WITH FOUR (4) IN FAVOR (LYONS, VIZZO-PANICCIA, SILVA AND HERRON) AND ONE (1) OPPOSED (PEREIRA).**

Council Member Pereira asked if they could get the documents before the full City Council meeting.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Telesco Secretarial Services.