

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
SPECIAL JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING ON
PUBLIC SAFETY AND TRANSPORTATION &
ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
AND ENVIRONMENT
MARCH 30, 2021**

ATTENDANCE: Economic & Community Development & Environment:

M. Evette Brantley, Co-chair
Mary McBride-Lee
Rosalina Roman-Christy
Scott Burns
Alfredo Castillo

Public Safety and Transportation:

Maria Valle, Co-chair
Maria Pereira
Jeanette Herron
AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia

OTHERS:

Council President A. Nieves, Council Member(s): E. Newton &
E. Martinez, T. Gaudett, Mayoral Aide; Michelle Muoio, Airport Manager

CALL TO ORDER

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

26-20 Proposed Resolution regarding Sikorsky Memorial Airport Economic Study.

Ms. Muoio said that the City had been approached by UConn Center for Economics and they were interested in doing an economic study of the Airport. They will look at the infrastructure and improvement to determine what kind of economic impact it would have. This would include an analysis of Tweed Airport and Sikorsky Airport.

Ms. Muoio said that two of the current tenants at the Airport were so excited about this proposal that they are willing to contribute \$20,000 each towards the cost of the study. This would only leave \$7,000 that needed to be raised, which Ms. Muoio felt she could identify in either in the Airport budget or the Public Facilities budget.

Council Member Brantley asked who were the other tenants that were interested. Ms. Muoio said that the tenants were Three Wing Aviation and Atlantic Aviation.

Council Member Burns asked about the timeframe and also wished to know what kind of improvements to the infrastructure.

Ms. Muoio said that the group would hold some public meetings.

Regarding the upgrades, Ms. Muoio said that they would be focused on commercial service and she would be working with them. This will also compliment the Airport Master Plan, which is based on the FAA format. She said that this study would be focused on the Return of Investment.

Council Member Newton asked Ms. Muoio when there was a study of this magnitude done at the Airport. Ms. Muoio said that the last major study was done in the 1990's. Connecticut is losing out to Westchester Airport in terms of accommodations.

Council Member Newton said that in the past there had been flights that were going to Chicago and other locations. Ms. Muoio said now that they have charter service, but do not have commercial air service. They could bring it back once the runway upgrades are done.

Council Member Pereira said that the earlier study was done in 1991 and projected forward to 2022. She named the organization and asked Ms. Muoio if she had read the study. Ms. Muoio said that she had.

Council Member Pereira said that when she reads studies, she researches who paid for the study because there are often paid for by those with vested interested. She said that she was concerned when an aviation group was paying for it because they could cherry pick the data to make the outcome reflect their goals.

Ms. Muoio said that the biggest reason they were looking for this was because they were looking for their stakeholders to benefit. They are usually looking for grants to do this study.

Council Member Brantley pointed out that two groups were not conducting the study. She said that she would trust UConn to do a proper job and do it equitably.

Council Member Burns said that there were plans to expand the airport runways. He asked about the future plans.

Ms. Muoio said that they were not planning on expanding the runways due to the agreement with the Town of Stratford and also the environmental limitations.

Council Member Burns asked about expanding one of the runways. Ms. Muoio said that they were looking at maintaining the width of one of the runways. They will be maintaining the 150 foot width on one runway and restoring the 150 foot width on the other runway.

Council Member Newton asked Ms. Muoio if they would ever return to the commercial services. Ms. Muoio said that they need to make some improvements as outlined in the Master Plan to do that. In her mind, she would like to see a new and improved Sikorsky Airport. There is a demand for private charter service with reasonable costs.

Council Member Pereira asked if Ms. Muoio had approached Stratford for splitting the cost of the study. That would remove the partisan aspect out of the picture. Ms. Muoio said that they were a tax exempt entity, but the tenants do pay taxes to Stratford. She said that if their share was higher, she would consider approaching the Town.

Council Member Roman-Christy said that she thought that one of the entities that would be interested in contributing would be Bridgeport Landing. Ms. Muoio agreed.

Council Member Roman-Christy asked for clarification on the cost of the study. Ms. Muoio said that in total, the study would cost \$47,000 and two of the tenants have indicated that they would be interested in contributing \$20,000 each.

Council Member Pereira said that she thought the City should contribute \$24,000 and Stratford should contribute \$24,000.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA MOVED TO APPROVE 26-20 PROPOSED RESOLUTION REGARDING SIKORSKY MEMORIAL AIRPORT ECONOMIC STUDY.**

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

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL MEMBER VALLE MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MCBRIDE-LEE SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 6:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Telesco Secretarial Services