

**CITY COUNCIL MEETING**

**PUBLIC SPEAKING FORUM**

**MONDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2020**

**6:30 P.M.**

This meeting was conducted by Zoom/Teleconference.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Council President Nieves called the Public Speaking Session of the City Council to order at 6:33 p.m.

The Assistant City Clerk Frances Ortiz called the roll.

- 130<sup>th</sup> District: Scott Burns, Matthew McCarthy
- 131<sup>st</sup> District: Jorge Cruz, Denese Taylor-Moye
- 132<sup>nd</sup> District: Marcus Brown, M. Evette Brantley
- 133<sup>rd</sup> District: Michael DeFilippo, Jeanette Herron
- 134<sup>th</sup> District: Michelle Lyons, AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia (6:37 p.m.)
- 135<sup>th</sup> District: Rosalina Roman-Christy, Mary McBride-Lee
- 136<sup>th</sup> District: *Avelino Silva, Alfredo Castillo*
- 137<sup>th</sup> District: Aidee Nieves, *Maria Valle*
- 138<sup>th</sup> District: *Maria Pereira, Samia Suliman*
- 139<sup>th</sup> District: Eneida Martinez, Ernest Newton

During the roll call, there appeared to be no response from the individuals whose names are listed in italics.

**THE FOLLOWING NAMED PERSON HAS REQUESTED PERMISSION TO ADDRESS THE CITY COUNCIL ON MONDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2020 AT 6:30 P.M.**

**NAME**

**SUBJECT**

**John Marshall Lee**  
277 Fairfield Avenue, 4th Fl.  
Bridgeport, CT 06604

Oversight Responsibility.

Mr. Lee said that he was going to speak about a question of turkeys. He said that in oversight, he noticed that there was a full page listing people who were thankful. He said that he was surprised to not see that any people from Bridgeport included. Mr. Lee stated he was a volunteer for Food Equity Justice during the year.

The CT Post readers subscribers have decreased and the news content regarding Bridgeport has also decreased. He mentioned alternate information sources and reminded everyone that some people may not be able to afford the paper. People have pointed to the East End as a news desert in recent years unless the FBI or local gun shots were featured.

Mr. Lee wished to know how a Bridgeport resident would learn about activities of the City Council Members. There is no formal oversight, so Mr. Lee pursues it informally. He asked when the Council would authorize the distribution of 300 turkeys for Thanksgiving. He asked how they determined the \$647.00 of public money for the Legislative Public Special Services account and list it without explanation as a Supportive Contribution. The taxpayers have not agreed to this use of taxpayer money. He added it was described as Non-biddable miscellaneous items. This was a bulk order.

Mr. Lee said that if each Council Member had 15 turkeys to distribute, he would not question it, but stated the purchase was an easy item to send out for bidding. Mr. Lee asked why such an order was filled by a business with a Trumbull address. He also asked where the gratefulness was to the Bridgeport taxpayers for this. Time will tell.

**Maria Pereira**  
206 Bradley Street  
Bridgeport, CT 06610

Valle & Brown conduct as  
Co-chairs, City Council  
Attendance from Dec. 2019 –  
Nov. 2020 and Secret City Council  
Ad hoc Committee

Council Member Pereira stated that there were members of the public present who would like to speak and that there were still slots available for them.

Council Member Pereira stated that the Freedom of Information Act is a Connecticut State law that protects the peoples' right to know and ensures that all publications [inaudible]. Unfortunately, this is Bridgeport where the law is disregarded. A few years ago, the Council received a judgment against them from the FOIA. FOIA ordered the City Council and the City Council President to undergo training. [Inaudible] members of the City Attorney's Office attend to continue as educators. We now know that members of the City Council and the City Attorneys are very poor students because of the number of violations.

Recently, the City Council established ad hoc committees to study and make [inaudible] law enforcement in the City of Bridgeport. This committee is [inaudible] public agency within the rule of the Freedom of Information Act. However, presumably aided and abetted by the City Attorneys, the City Council President and Council Member Scott Burns have announced that the meetings will not be open to the public even though City resources are being used. Police reform in secret is unacceptable. This situation is directly [inaudible] by former Mayor Finch in 2009 when he established a Task Force to deal with the Fire Department. It was a shadow task force made up of citizens who objected to [inaudible] in the media.

Council Member Pereira called upon the current Council President to follow the precedent. The meetings of the ad hoc Committee must be open to the public. Democracy withers in darkness and flourishes in light.

City of Bridgeport  
City Council Meeting  
Regular Meeting  
December 7, 2020

As far as the City Council attendance, Council Member Pereira said that she would be the first to admit that their attendance at these meeting does not necessarily translate to [inaudible] a member. She asked how a Council Member could be successful if they do not make the most basic effort, which is attendance. She challenged the seven Council Members who are in leadership roles to [inaudible] only attended 65% or less of their assigned committee meetings while the City Council President has only attended 50% of all the meetings. There were five additional Council Members who only attended between 52 and 78% of their assigned Committee meetings.

Council Member Pereira acknowledged Council Member Newton, Council Member DeFilippo and herself as having attended 90% or more of the assigned meetings. City Council President Nieves acknowledged [inaudible] significant number of meetings that were cancelled [inaudible] agendas.

Council President Nieves informed Council Member Pereira that her time was up and adjourned the Public Speaking Session at 6:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Telesco Secretarial Services

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT**  
**CITY COUNCIL MEETING**  
**MONDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2020**

**7:00 P.M.**

This meeting was conducted by teleconference.  
The public was able to listen to this meeting by calling a conference line.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Council President Nieves called the Regular Meeting of the City Council to order at 7:03 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

The Assistant City Clerk Ms. Ortiz called the roll.

130<sup>th</sup> District: Scott Burns, Matthew McCarthy  
131<sup>st</sup> District: Denese Taylor-Moye, Jorge Cruz  
132<sup>nd</sup> District: Marcus Brown, M. Evette Brantley  
133<sup>rd</sup> District: Michael DeFilippo, Jeanette Herron  
134<sup>th</sup> District: Michelle Lyons, AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia  
135<sup>th</sup> District: Rosalina Roman-Christy, Mary McBride-Lee  
136<sup>th</sup> District: Alfredo Castillo, Avelino Silva  
137<sup>th</sup> District: Maria Valle, Aidee Nieves  
138<sup>th</sup> District: Maria Pereira, Samia Suliman  
139<sup>th</sup> District: Eneida Martinez, Ernest Newton

**PRAYER**

Council President Nieves asked Council Member McBride-Lee to lead the Council in prayer.

Council Member McBride-Lee said that her niece and her cousin had passed away this past week. Council Member Newton asked that everyone remember former Mayor Len Paoletta who was in the hospital with COVID-19.

Council Member McBride-Lee then prayed for those who were stricken with illness and those who had lost family members.

Council Member Lyons asked for a moment of silence for City Sheriff Dennis Scinto and another former Bridgeport Police Officer who recently passed away.

## PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Council President Nieves asked Council Member Newton to lead those present in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

## ADOPTION OF CITY COUNCIL RULES

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED TO ADOPT THE CITY COUNCIL RULES.**

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

Council Member Pereira said that she was the only person who voted against the rules because they were against the State Statutes. She said that the Council continues to violate the Council Rules as they just did earlier.

*Mayor Ganim joined the meeting at 7:10 p.m. and assumed the chairmanship.*

Council President Nieves announced that there would be a revision of the rules and she would be appointing a Committee after the Rules are adopted. She then said that the rules clearly state that the speakers have to sign up in advance.

Council Member Newton said that on page 25 of the Council Rules states that if they were in the Chambers, Council Member Pereira would be correct. However, because this meeting is on Zoom, the rules are a bit different because they don't have a way of knowing who is present.

Council Member Lyons noted that these were the Council Rules and she had been told that they would be changing some of the rules in the near future. She encouraged everyone to consider potential changes and submit them.

Council Member Lyons said that she had a question about the minutes.

Council Member McBride-Lee said she wished to ask Council Member Pereira why she felt she needed to take the attendance for the Council. She pointed out people could be ill or absent for other reasons. Council Member Pereira tried to interrupt.

Council Member McBride-Lee pointed out that Council Member Pereira was always speaking about the rules but interrupts others who have the floor. Council Member Pereira needs to follow the Council Rules herself. Council Member McBride-Lee said that she was sick and tired of being judged.

Council Member Brantley said that she was going to ask for a point of personal privilege. She said that since they were talking about being civil to one another, she welcomes the opportunities to update the rules. Council Member Brantley mentioned that when she had been speaking at a meeting recently, someone who was not muted told her to shut up. The Council Members have to advocate for all the constituents. However, people seem to be out to get one another. It is time to work on having some civility with one another.

Council Member McCarthy asked why they would be voting on the rules tonight if the rules were going to be updated. Council President Nieves said that in order to change the Council Rules, they have to create a special committee to do that.

Council Member Pereira said that Council Member Newton had referred to page 25, which addresses Committee Reports, but on page 32 and 34, the rules state that signing up on the day of the meeting on a first come/first serve basis can be done.

When Council Member Pereira raised the point of order it was legitimate because Council Member McBride-Lee spoke about Council Member Pereira's comment regarding a slave mentality. Attacking a colleague is not allowed by the rules.

Council Member DeFilippo said that Council Member Pereira was taking attendance but no one asked her to take attendance. The numbers are wrong.

Council Member Newton called the question.

**\*\* THE MOTION TO ADOPT THE CITY COUNCIL RULES PASSED WITH SEVENTEEN (17) IN FAVOR (BURNS, CRUZ, TAYLOR-MOYE, BROWN, BRANTLEY, HERRON, LYONS, VIZZO-PANICCIA, MCBRIDE-LEE, ROMAN-CHRISTY, SILVA, CASTILLO, VALLE, NIEVES, SULIMAN, MARTINEZ AND NEWTON) AND THREE (3) OPPOSED (PEREIRA, MCCARTHY AND DEFILIPPO).**

Council Member Newton said that Council Member Pereira had stated that he was wrong. The new rules are in a yellow book and page 25 address Public Speaking. The new edition has it on page 25 and does not mention anything other than signing up at a Council Meeting, but nothing about virtual meetings.

### **APPOINTMENT OF CITY COUNCIL STANDING COMMITTEES**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING COMMITTEES:**

#### **COMMITTEE ON BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS**

**COUNCIL MEMBERS: BURNS, NEWTON, TAYLOR-MOYE, HERRON, MCCARTHY, CRUZ AND VIZZO-PANICCIA.**

#### **COMMITTEE ON ORDINANCES**

**COUNCIL MEMBERS: BROWN, ROMAN-CHRISTY, NEWTON, LYONS, SILVA, VALLE AND BRANTLEY.**

#### **COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY AND TRANSPORTATION**

**COUNCIL MEMBERS: VALLE, MCBRIDE-LEE, HERRON, LYONS, SILVA, PEREIRA AND VIZZO-PANICCIA.**

#### **COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT**

**COUNCIL MEMBERS: BRANTLEY, VALLE, ROMAN-CHRISTY, MCBRIDE-LEE, HERRON, CASTILLO AND BURNS.**

**COMMITTEE ON MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS**

**COUNCIL MEMBERS: VIZZO-PANICCIA, BURNS, TAYLOR-MOYE, CASTILLO, BRANTLEY, MCCARTHY AND SULIMAN.**

**COMMITTEE ON CONTRACTS**

**COUNCIL MEMBERS: MCCARTHY, HERRON, CRUZ, DEFILIPPO, CASTILLO, SULIMAN, AND NEWTON.**

**COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES**

**COUNCIL MEMBERS: CRUZ, SILVA, DEFILIPPO, SULIMAN, PEREIRA, BROWN, AND LYONS.**

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

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED WITH NINETEEN (19) IN FAVOR (BURNS, MCCARTHY, CRUZ, TAYLOR-MOYE, BROWN, BRANTLEY, HERRON, DEFILIPPO, LYONS, VIZZO-PANICCIA, MCBRIDE-LEE, ROMAN-CHRISTY, SILVA, CASTILLO, VALLE, NIEVES, SULIMAN, MARTINEZ, AND NEWTON) AND ONE (1) OPPOSED (PEREIRA).**

**MINUTES FOR APPROVAL:**

**Approval of City Council Minutes: November 2, 2020**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED THE NOVEMBER 2, 2020 CITY COUNCIL MINUTES.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER DEFILIPPO SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE NOVEMBER 2, 2020 CITY COUNCIL MINUTES AS SUBMITTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**COMMUNICATIONS TO BE REFERRED TO COMMITTEES:**

**01-20 Communication from Labor Relations re: Proposed Tentative Agreement with New York Typographical Union, CWA Local 14156 (Printers) regarding their Bargaining Unit Contract, referred to Contracts Committee.**

**02-20 Communication from OPM re: Proposed Budget Transfer to Fiscal Year 2020-2021 General Fund Budget From: Citywide Contingency Account #01610000-57005 (\$560,000) To: Airport Department Public Safety Equipment Account #01375000-551759 (\$560,000) for the purpose of replacing damaged components of the Engineered Materials Arresting System (EMAS) associated with Runway 6 located at Sikorsky Memorial Airport, referred to Budget and Appropriations Committee.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED TO CONSOLIDATE THE FOLLOWING AGENDA ITEMS:**

**01-20 COMMUNICATION FROM LABOR RELATIONS RE: PROPOSED TENTATIVE AGREEMENT WITH NEW YORK TYPOGRAPHICAL UNION, CWA LOCAL 14156 (PRINTERS) REGARDING THEIR BARGAINING UNIT CONTRACT, REFERRED TO CONTRACTS COMMITTEE.**

**02-20 COMMUNICATION FROM OPM RE: PROPOSED BUDGET TRANSFER TO FISCAL YEAR 2020-2021 GENERAL FUND BUDGET FROM: CITYWIDE CONTINGENCY ACCOUNT #01610000-57005 (\$560,000) TO: AIRPORT DEPARTMENT PUBLIC SAFETY EQUIPMENT ACCOUNT #01375000-551759 (\$560,000) FOR THE PURPOSE OF REPLACING DAMAGED COMPONENTS OF THE ENGINEERED MATERIALS ARRESTING SYSTEM (EMAS) ASSOCIATED WITH RUNWAY 6 LOCATED AT SIKORSKY MEMORIAL AIRPORT, REFERRED TO BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE.**

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

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

**MATTERS TO BE ACTED UPON (CONSENT CALENDAR):**

Mayor Ganim asked if any Council Member wished to have an item removed from the Consent Calendar.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia requested that Agenda Items 192-19, 158-19 and 159-19 be removed from the Consent Calendar.

Council Member Newton requested that Agenda Items 202-19, 203-19 be removed from the Consent Calendar.

Council Member Pereira requested the remaining items to be removed from the Consent Calendar.

Mayor Ganim announced that they would handle each agenda item individually

**188-19 Ordinance Committee Report re: Amendment to the Municipal Code of Ordinances, amend Chapter 2.98 – Historic District Commission.**

**189-19 Ordinance Committee Report re: Amendment to the Municipal Code of Ordinances, amend Chapter 12.32 – Historic Districts.**

**192-19 Ordinance Committee Report re: Resolution Authorizing an Extension for the Administration of a Pilot Program for Shared Mobility Devices.**



**\*\*COUNCIL MEMBER BROWN MOVED TO COMBINE THE FOLLOWING THREE ITEMS:**

**188-19 ORDINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT RE: AMENDMENT TO THE MUNICIPAL CODE OF ORDINANCES, AMEND CHAPTER 2.98 – HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION.**

**189-19 ORDINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT RE: AMENDMENT TO THE MUNICIPAL CODE OF ORDINANCES, AMEND CHAPTER 12.32 – HISTORIC DISTRICTS.**

**192-19 ORDINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT RE: RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AN EXTENSION FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF A PILOT PROGRAM FOR SHARED MOBILITY DEVICES.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON SECONDED.**

Council Member Pereira said that the items had been amended and the electronic documents had not been updated on the website. There was no legal opinion. These items were not what was voted on in Committee.

Council Member Brown said that he had received updated documents and the amendments had been included.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that she would be in favor of Agenda Items 188-19 and 189-19 but not in favor of 192-19.

Council Member Pereira said that the motion should be divided out.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BROWN MOVED TO COMBINE THE FOLLOWING AGENDA ITEMS:**

**188-19 ORDINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT RE: AMENDMENT TO THE MUNICIPAL CODE OF ORDINANCES, AMEND CHAPTER 2.98 – HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION.**

**189-19 ORDINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT RE: AMENDMENT TO THE MUNICIPAL CODE OF ORDINANCES, AMEND CHAPTER 12.32 – HISTORIC DISTRICTS.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEMS 188-19 AND 189-19 PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 192-19 ORDINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT RE: RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AN**

**EXTENSION FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF A PILOT PROGRAM FOR SHARED MOBILITY DEVICES.**

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

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED WITH SEVENTEEN (17) IN FAVOR (BURNS, MCCARTHY, CRUZ, TAYLOR-MOYE, BROWN, BRANTLEY, HERRON, DEFILIPPO, MCBRIDE-LEE, ROMAN-CHRISTY, SILVA, CASTILLO, VALLE, NIEVES, SULIMAN, MARTINEZ, AND NEWTON) AND THREE (3) OPPOSED: (VIZZO-PANICCIA, LYONS AND PEREIRA).**

**169-19 Public Safety and Transportation Committee Report re: Resolution regarding Police Chief Search Committee Transparency Bill.**

**\*\*COUNCIL MEMBER DEFILIPPO MOVED AGENDA ITEM 169-19 PUBLIC SAFETY AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE REPORT RE: RESOLUTION REGARDING POLICE CHIEF SEARCH COMMITTEE TRANSPARENCY BILL.**

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

Council Member Pereira stated the Charter does not say that the Mayor has to submit a request for a Police Chief. She said that the City Council can request this to start the 150 day time-line.

Council Member Herron said that she felt that it was necessary for the Council to have input on this. Having the Council know who is on the search committee and who the final candidates are is critical.

Council Member Herron called the question.

Council Member Newton said that the Council had made some major changes in how they handle things. Now the Contracts Committee is part of the contract negotiations. This piece of legislation is long overdue.

**\*\* THE MOTION TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 169-19 PUBLIC SAFETY AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE REPORT RE: RESOLUTION REGARDING POLICE CHIEF SEARCH COMMITTEE TRANSPARENCY BILL PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**199-19 Economic and Community Development and Environment Committee Report re: Grant Submission: State of Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection – Elton Rogers Park Dam – Ox Brook Rehabilitation (#0C482).**

**\*\*COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED AGENDA ITEM 199-19 ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE REPORT RE: GRANT SUBMISSION: STATE OF CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION – ELTON ROGERS PARK DAM – OX BROOK REHABILITATION (#0C482).**

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

**\*\* THE MOTION TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 199-19 ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE REPORT RE:**

**GRANT SUBMISSION: STATE OF CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION – ELTON ROGERS PARK DAM – OX BROOK REHABILITATION (#0C482) PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**202-19 Miscellaneous Matters Committee Report re: Workers' Compensation Stipulation in the Matter of James Quinn.**

Council Member Burns suggested handling each Miscellaneous Matter item separately. He said that Agenda Item 202-19 item was approved by the Committee.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BURNS MOVED AGENDA ITEM 202-19 MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS COMMITTEE REPORT RE: WORKERS' COMPENSATION STIPULATION IN THE MATTER OF JAMES QUINN.**

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

Council Member Newton said that because of the new rules, only the Committee members can attend the Misc. Matters meeting. He said that it was not the Council Members' job to seek out the City Attorney for more information.

Council Member Pereira said that the Miscellaneous Matters Committee did not have to go into Executive Session. She said that this was a \$240,000 settlement when taxpayers were severely overburdened. She would be voting no.

Council Member McBride-Lee said that she was uncomfortable voting for a matter where she did not know all the information.

**\*\* THE MOTION TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 202-19 MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS COMMITTEE REPORT RE: WORKERS' COMPENSATION STIPULATION IN THE MATTER OF JAMES QUINN PASSED WITH ELEVEN (11) IN FAVOR (BURNS, MCCARTHY, CRUZ, TAYLOR-MOYE, BROWN, HERRON, VIZZO-PANICCIA, VALLE, NIEVES, CASTILLO AND MAYOR GANIM) AND TEN (10) OPPOSED –NEWTON, BRANTLEY, PEREIRA, ROMAN-CHRISTY, DEFILIPPO, SILVA, MCBRIDE-LEE, LYONS, MARTINEZ, AND SULIMAN)**

**203-19 Miscellaneous Matters Committee Report re: Workers' Compensation Stipulation in the Matter of David Defeo.**

Council Member Burns said that the Committee members heard this in Executive Session. They agreed to approve it in order to protect the taxpayers.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BURNS MOVED THE ITEM.**

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

**\*\* THE MOTION TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 203-19 MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS COMMITTEE REPORT RE: WORKERS' COMPENSATION STIPULATION IN THE MATTER OF DAVID DEFEQ PASSED WITH ELEVEN (11) IN FAVOR (BURNS, MCCARTHY, CRUZ, TAYLOR-MOYE, BRANTLEY, HERRON, VIZZO-PANICCIA, MCBRIDE-LEE, SILVA, NIEVES, AND VALLE) AND EIGHT (8)**

**OPPOSED (BROWN, DEFILIPPO, LYONS, ROMAN-CHRISTY, PEREIRA, SULIMAN, MARTINEZ AND NEWTON).**

**158-19 Education and Social Services Committee Report re: Resolution for an Informational Meeting on University of Bridgeport Merger with Sacred Heart University, Goodwin University and Paier College.**

Council Member Cruz said that he had tried to get some information from Goodwin University and Paier College. The colleges were unwilling to discuss the contract because of non-disclosure agreements. Council Member Cruz said that he felt disrespected. Both Council Member Cruz and Council Member Taylor-Moye were kept out of the loop and he was disgusted. He added that he hoped that they failed in this effort because the Board of Trustees lacked diversity.

Council Member Cruz asked the Council to take this item off of the agenda until they agree to work with the Council. They should be ashamed of themselves because they are taking advantage of a minority community. He asked to remove this item from the agenda.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED TO WITHDRAW AGENDA ITEM 158-19 EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE REPORT RE: RESOLUTION FOR AN INFORMATIONAL MEETING ON UNIVERSITY OF BRIDGEPORT MERGER WITH SACRED HEART UNIVERSITY, GOODWIN UNIVERSITY AND PAIER COLLEGE.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER DEFILIPPO SECONDED.**

Council Member DeFilippo said that the Council should have all the facts and make sure that they have a place at the table.

**\*\* THE MOTION TO WITHDRAW AGENDA ITEM 158-19 PASSED WITH NINETEEN (19) IN FAVOR (BURNS, MCCARTHY, CRUZ, TAYLOR-MOYE, BROWN, BRANTLEY, HERRON, DEFILIPPO, LYONS, VIZZO-PANICCIA, MCBRIDE-LEE, ROMAN-CHRISTY, SILVA, CASTILLO, VALLE, NIEVES, SULIMAN, MARTINEZ, AND NEWTON) AND ONE (1) OPPOSED (PEREIRA).**

**159-19 Education and Social Services Committee Report re: Resolution Supporting Railroad Track Safety Curriculum.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER CRUZ MOVED THE ITEM.**

Council Member Cruz Said that the resolution came through Education and Social Services Committee, but he could not understand why it came to the committee.

**\*\*COUNCIL MEMBER VALLE SECONDED.**

Council Member Valle said that this item was introduced by the East End and East Side Council Members to address safety on the railroad tracks. Council Member Valle spoke with the one of school principals, who confirmed that curriculum had been sent to them about railroad safety. MetroNorth has a robot that they use to teach railroad safety to the students.

Council Member Pereira said that the students were regressing because of COVID-19. There was no class that this would fit in other than Health. Council Member Pereira said that they were not having PE and with all the challenges.

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED WITH NINETEEN (19) IN FAVOR (BURNS, MCCARTHY, CRUZ, TAYLOR-MOYE, BROWN, BRANTLEY, HERRON, DEFILIPPO, LYONS, MCBRIDE-LEE, ROMAN-CHRISTY, SILVA, CASTILLO, VALLE, NIEVES, PEREIRA, SULIMAN, MARTINEZ, AND NEWTON) AND ONE (1) OPPOSED (VIZZO-PANICCIA).**

**MATTERS TO BE ACTED UPON:**

**193-19 Ordinance Committee Report re: Amendment to the Municipal Code of Ordinances, Chapter 10.32 – The Operation or Use of Dirt Bikes, All-Terrain Vehicles, Snowmobiles, Motor-Driven Cycles or Mini-Cycles, amend Section 10.32.010 – Definitions.**

**194-19 Ordinance Committee Report re: Amendment to the Municipal Code of Ordinances, Chapter 12.16 – Street and Sidewalk Use Regulations, amend Section(s) 12.16.245 – Permit to Use City Streets and Sidewalks for the Shared Mobility Pilot Program and 12.16.250 – Miscellaneous Acts Prohibited.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BROWN COMBINE AND APPROVE THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:**

**193-19 ORDINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT RE: AMENDMENT TO THE MUNICIPAL CODE OF ORDINANCES, CHAPTER 10.32 – THE OPERATION OR USE OF DIRT BIKES, ALL-TERRAIN VEHICLES, SNOWMOBILES, MOTOR-DRIVEN CYCLES OR MINI-CYCLES, AMEND SECTION 10.32.010 – DEFINITIONS.**

**194-19 ORDINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT RE: AMENDMENT TO THE MUNICIPAL CODE OF ORDINANCES, CHAPTER 12.16 – STREET AND SIDEWALK USE REGULATIONS, AMEND SECTION(S) 12.16.245 – PERMIT TO USE CITY STREETS AND SIDEWALKS FOR THE SHARED MOBILITY PILOT PROGRAM AND 12.16.250 – MISCELLANEOUS ACTS PROHIBITED.**

**\*\*COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY SECONDED.**

Council Member Pereira said these were amended in committee and were not available to the public amended online.

Council Member Pereira then reiterated that the City only had received \$1,500 but the company made \$1.00 per unlock and .35¢ per minute for each ride. She said that the company made at least \$300,000. The staff member was supposed to get the information to the Council Members but did not.

Council Member Brantley said that they asked for information but had not received it.

Council Member Brown said that he received an email from Mr. Robison that provided the information they had requested.

Council Member Newton said that the reason that Council Member Pereira probably did not receive the legal opinions or the information was because she had a private email.

**\*\* THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING AGENDA ITEMS:**

**193-19 ORDINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT RE: AMENDMENT TO THE MUNICIPAL CODE OF ORDINANCES, CHAPTER 10.32 – THE OPERATION OR USE OF DIRT BIKES, ALL-TERRAIN VEHICLES, SNOWMOBILES, MOTOR-DRIVEN CYCLES OR MINI-CYCLES, AMEND SECTION 10.32.010 – DEFINITIONS.**

**194-19 ORDINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT RE: AMENDMENT TO THE MUNICIPAL CODE OF ORDINANCES, CHAPTER 12.16 – STREET AND SIDEWALK USE REGULATIONS, AMEND SECTION(S) 12.16.245 – PERMIT TO USE CITY STREETS AND SIDEWALKS FOR THE SHARED MOBILITY PILOT PROGRAM AND 12.16.250 – MISCELLANEOUS ACTS PROHIBITED.**

**PASSED WITH SEVENTEEN (17) IN FAVOR (BURNS, MCCARTHY, CRUZ, TAYLOR-MOYE, BROWN, BRANTLEY, HERRON, DEFILIPPO, MCBRIDE-LEE, ROMAN-CHRISTY, SILVA, CASTILLO, VALLE, NIEVES, SULIMAN, MARTINEZ, AND NEWTON) AND THREE (3) OPPOSED: (VIZZO-PANICCIA, LYONS AND PEREIRA).**

**200-19 Economic and Community Development and Environment Committee Report re: Grant Submission: State of Connecticut Department of Transportation – Seaview Avenue Corridor Project – Construction (#16311).**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED THE ITEM.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER CRUZ SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 200-19 ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE REPORT RE: GRANT SUBMISSION: STATE OF CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION – SEAVIEW AVENUE CORRIDOR PROJECT – CONSTRUCTION (#16311) PASSED WITH EIGHTEEN (18) IN FAVOR (BURNS, MCCARTHY, CRUZ, TAYLOR-MOYE, BROWN, BRANTLEY, HERRON, DEFILIPPO, LYONS, MCBRIDE-LEE, ROMAN-CHRISTY, SILVA, CASTILLO, VALLE, NIEVES, SULIMAN, MARTINEZ, AND NEWTON) AND TWO (2) OPPOSED: (VIZZO-PANICCIA AND PEREIRA).**

**197-19 Miscellaneous Matters Committee Report re: Settlement of Pending Litigation with Peter Diaz.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BURNS MOVED THE ITEM.**

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

Council Member Pereira said that this was a \$125,000 settlement from the Colorado Avenue incident. The officer assaulted someone in a wheelchair. The officer involved was only given 30 days of discipline.

**\*\* THE MOTION TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 197-19 MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS COMMITTEE REPORT RE: SETTLEMENT OF PENDING LITIGATION WITH PETER DIAZ FAILED TO PASS WITH NINE (9) IN FAVOR (BURNS, MCCARTHY, CRUZ, TAYLOR-MOYE, VIZZO-PANICCIA, SILVA, CASTILLO, NIEVES, AND VALLE); TEN OPPOSED (BROWN, BRANTLEY, MCBRIDE-LEE, ROMAN-CHRISTY, PEREIRA, SULIMAN, MARTINEZ, NEWTON, HERRON, AND DEFILIPPO) AND ONE (1) ABSTENTION (LYONS).**

**204-19 Miscellaneous Matters Committee Report re: Workers' Compensation Stipulation in the Matter of Robert Sapiro, DENIED.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BURNS MOVED THE ITEM.  
\*\* THERE WAS NO SECOND.  
\*\* THE MOTION FAILED DUE TO A LACK OF SECOND.**

Mayor Ganim turned the chairmanship of the meeting over to Council President Nieves.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON MOVED TO SUSPEND THE RULES TO CREATE A GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE.  
\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY SECONDED.  
\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED TO APPROVE A GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE COMPOSED OF THE FOLLOWING COUNCIL MEMBERS:**

**COUNCIL MEMBER LYONS, COUNCIL PRESIDENT NIEVES, COUNCIL MEMBER BROWN, COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON, COUNCIL MEMBER ROMAN-CHRISTY AND COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER LYONS SECONDED.  
\*\* THE MOTION PASSED WITH NINETEEN (19) IN FAVOR (BURNS, , CRUZ, TAYLOR-MOYE, BROWN, BRANTLEY, HERRON, DEFILIPPO, VIZZO-PANICCIA, LYONS, MCBRIDE-LEE, ROMAN-CHRISTY, SILVA, CASTILLO, VALLE, NIEVES, PEREIRA, SULIMAN, MARTINEZ, AND NEWTON) AND ONE (1) OPPOSED (MCCARTHY).**

Council Member McBride-Lee asked for clarification on the Governance Committee. Council President Nieves said that it was the Council Members who were in leadership. It was just for City Council Governance and changing the rules.

Council Member McBride-Lee said that the Council Members meet with the administration about the COVID-19, someone needs to bring the information back to all the Council Members.

Council President Nieves said that there was no regular standing meeting with the administration. After the COVID meetings, Council Member Brown was sending out the minutes. There was a lull when the case numbers dropped, but since there were two meetings recently. When Chief Perez resigned, an ad hoc meeting happened due to people being on site for other reasons.

The Governance Committee will not be meeting on a regular schedule.

Council President Nieves stated that there were a number of Council Members who wished to regarding Points of Personal Privilege.

Council Member Lyons said she was concerned about the minutes. She wanted to note that Zoom has caused issues for many of the members. She said that there were times when she was in another meeting and joined the meeting late. It is the Council Members' obligation to announce they have joined the meeting. On November 23rd, she had to call the City Clerk's Office about her attendance. She was not in agreement with the attendance being taken. There are other Council Member who are not in agreement about how the minutes are being handled.

Council Member Taylor-Moye said that she goes to her meetings. No one should be scoring her. She is not playing games. The secretary is taking attendance. She does not attend meetings she is not assigned to unless she is interested in an issue. She does not need Council Member Pereira tracking her attendance.

Council Member Burns pointed out that everyone should realize that they had put the City at some financial risk regarding the Misc. Matters votes.

Council Member Burns said that they were setting up a Task Force and had emailed all the Council Members regarding meeting with the constituents across the City to find solutions regarding problems. They had only received one response from a Council member stating they did not want to be involved. There were meetings on the Columbus statute, the UB issue and other ones to create reports based on facts. They will continue to meet and anyone that wishes to contact him, that's fine. They are there to do the work for the City and not get caught up inside issues. He would appreciate feedback.

Council Member Herron said that the professionalism on the Council is atrocious. There are people shouting over one another, others dictating what they can and cannot say, and other continually citing rules. The City hires a secretary and she does her job. Zoom is a different world and everyone needs to be patient. The numbers are wrong, but it doesn't need to be made into an issue. There is no need to embarrass people.

Council Member Newton said that he had served on the State level and the local level. Attendance and voting records were kept by staff or outside individual, but not by fellow colleagues. While he attends his assigned committees, he also attends meetings that he finds items that he is interested in. There is no rule saying Council Members have to attend all the meetings. There is some decorum that they should follow. However, it does not give anyone the right to commit character assassination. It has to stop because it divides us and the country is already divided enough.



Council Member Newton said that he did not know what the purpose was. Some of the Council members have jobs, while others don't and can spend time doing research. He had never seen anything like this in his life, and it's wrong. While the secretary is taking attendance, it's not right for other people to take attendance. He reiterated that he was not obligated to attend every Council Committee meeting. The rules do not say this. They were elected to move the City forward but they are becoming the laughingstock of the country.

Council Member McCarthy said that there was a vote taken and he felt that the Council had screwed the taxpayers over with that vote. He said that he had a mishap two weeks ago, apologized and moved on. However, the disrespect is just horrible. This is frustrating and he was sometimes embarrassed to say he was on the Council. Council Member McCarthy said that he did not know how much more of this he could take.

Council Member Cruz said when he ran for City Council, it was to represent his fellow constituents to the best of his ability. He knew that he would be making some mistakes or voting in a way that was not popular. While he can be bombastic and sarcastic, he respects people. He has a job. When he got his rule book, it did not tell him he had to attend every Committee meeting. He said there was a lot of drama but does get caught up in it sometimes. He doesn't call the newspapers to talk about his colleagues because it is unprofessional. There are more pressing issues, like those dying of COVID or heroin overdoses. There are homeless people who can't get an ID because they can't get a birth certificate. That blocks them from getting an apartment.

Council Member Cruz spoke about his conversation with Council President Nieves about how he was going back to school and would be missing some of the meetings where he was not on the Committee. He does not need someone to be watching him to report on his attendance. He will live his life and represent his colleagues. He is not present to make his colleagues on the Council look bad. He respects them and listens to them.

Council Member Brantley said that Council Member Cruz summed up her concerns. She does not feel that she needs to report to anyone. It's about what she does to help her constituents, which goes beyond the Committee meetings and Council Meetings. When there are fires in the middle of the night, they are there. She cautioned everyone not to get caught up in the pettiness. They are not there to make each other look bad. They need to respect one another. They are dealing to the daily challenges of COVID and their families. Tearing each other down and beating each other up is not worth it. Ask for peace, kindness and good fortune for the New Year. Both she and Council Member Cruz are on emergency calls. If she is out on an emergency call, there are usually other committee members there. She reads the minutes and follows up. Their focus should be on helping the City.

Council Member Suliman said that she was a new Council Member and said that when she spoke up to say that she was present, she was cut off. She never gets to speak. She does not have a computer. She had never seen the City Council act like this. She said that she felt like someone was going after her for no reason.

Council Member Pereira asked if Council Member Suliman could be given a tablet. They said that they would work with Council Member Suliman on the technology.

Council Member McCarthy said that he felt someone needs to speak to the Mayor about chairing the meeting.

Council Member Silva said that he was disappointed. He noted that he was originally excited to be a Council Member but he does not know many of the Council Members due to COVID. The way they address one another and talk to one another makes it seem like they are too busy fighting one another rather than working with one another. He is ready to call it quits because he has a 22 month old son and family means a great deal to him. He's been attacked on social media and sent a message about replacing him if he doesn't vote in a particular way. He expected the experienced Council Members would help him with some pointers, but instead they attack one another. It is important to build people up, not tear them down. They need to be better. If things don't change, he will quit. Everyone has the right to speak, but they can do it in a courteous manner.

Council Member Brown said that earlier in the day he thought about things. The reason he voted against some of the Misc. Matters, he did not have information. He said that the victims have to relieve the trauma when they go to court and are being cross examined. The attorneys for both sides met and agreed on an amount.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BROWN MOVED TO RECONSIDER AGENDA ITEM 197-19 MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS COMMITTEE REPORT RE: SETTLEMENT OF PENDING LITIGATION WITH PETER DIAZ.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER CRUZ SECONDED.**

Council Member Herron said that she was concerned. There was a committee created for a reason and the committee members do the hard work. Unfortunately, the Council Members can not all attend the Executive Sessions. They should trust their fellow Council Members to make good decisions.

Council Member Valle said that Miscellaneous Matters Committee members discuss sensitive information at times. She said when she votes on a matter, she is trusting the Co-chairs that they have done their jobs, particularly when she is not a member of that Committee. She cannot attend every meeting, but reads the information that she has. She trusts her fellow Council Members.

Council Member Pereira said her issue was that this was the same situation where an officer was assaulting a resident in a wheelchair. The officer lost 30 days of holiday pay, but taxpayers have to pay for the \$125,000 for the settlement. The officers caused settlements about \$550,000 in costs to the taxpayers. These settlements should have been paid out of the Police Overtime budget. But the Police are over their Overtime Budget by \$2 million already. The police morale is horrific. Because they hired a Police Chief who didn't know what he was doing, because of a noise complaint, they were being made to pay.

She reiterated that they did not have to go into Executive Session to discuss this.

Council Member Brantley said that she had voted no before and she would vote no again.

Council Member Newton said that he was on the Council before many of the current Council Members were elected. There was a time when the Committee members were able to attend the Miscellaneous Matters Executive Sessions to hear the situations. The Freedom of Information Commission ruled that when they go into Executive Session, it can only be Committee members.

The Council Members should be able to go into Executive session whenever they want to. Council Member Newton didn't agree with the Freedom of Information Commission when they said that they could not attend the Executive Session unless they were members of the committee. However, the State has now announced that the Police Officers crossed the line, they will be personally liable. Council Member Newton can't vote on issues that he knows nothing about.

Council Member Burns thanked Council Member Brown for reconsidering his vote. There is a broader issue about police violence. If this case is voted down, it will proceed to court and will cost the City more than it does right now. This is the last Colorado Avenue case. He reminded everyone that two of the police officers involved in this case committed suicide.

Council Member Cruz thanked Council Member Brown for bringing this back to the table. He said that he was thinking about the victims. He said that while he was disappointed that an officer only lost 30 days of holiday pay but noted there were 15 or 16 officers involved. If it goes to the courts, it may be much more expensive and the victim has already suffered. Council Member Cruz said that he would not re-victimize the plaintiff. Council Member Cruz said that he was online for the meeting and he waited through the Executive Sessions. He has decided to vote yes.

Council Member McCarthy said that he agreed with much that Council Member Pereira said, but at the end of the day, they are elected to have their constituent's best interest in mind. It could cost the taxpayers much more. Voting yes will actually reduce the burden on the taxpayers.

Council Member Brown said that this incident occurred in his district. The thing that he heard most of was about the taxpayers. The family would win big time in court and they are lucky they are willing to settle for \$125,000. He said that the Council could have gone into Executive Session to hear the details.

Council Member Roman-Christy said that she would continue to vote no on this item. She was sure that the victim was also a taxpayer as well. She said that she had family members who were harassed and beaten by police officers. The City paid Nardoizzi over \$200,000 in lawsuits against the City. She said that she believes the victim deserves more than \$125,000.

Council Member Lyons said that she would be abstaining again. She said that there were a number of Miscellaneous Matters Committee items coming up. She asked if they could request a list of bullet points sent to the Council Members so they know why the decision was made. She does not understand why receiving a written executive summary was any different than having a verbal discussion.

Council President Nieves reminded everyone that the Freedom of Information Commission had ruled that only the Committee members could attend the Executive Session.

Council Member Pereira said that she had attended a caucus meeting. She did not know why it was so secretive and there was a commitment made. She has been reiterating this issue since she joined the Council. She said that no one knows what happened in the lives of the officers that committed suicide. They were not the victims. The officers should not assault people with flashlight or drag disabled individuals out of their wheelchairs. Expecting anyone to make a decision without information is wrong. They should table this.

Council Member McCarthy asked if they could table this. Atty. Anastasi said that the idea of the FOI Commission. It forces the Council to want to go into a full Executive Session. It is more difficult to do this via Zoom than when the meeting is in person. He said that once the Committee approves a settlement, Atty. Anastasi said that he was more comfortable talking about this with the Council. He then listed a number of reasons why the Council should consider this. One was that the victim was being fairly compensated. He added that there would be more expense if it goes to court, in terms of the settlement, backfilling the officers tours while they are in court, and the outside legal costs.

Atty. Anastasi suggested that the Council members might want to watch a training session to see what the officers are learning.

Atty. Anastasi said that tabling the issue would not produce any additional information and could possibly harm the City in terms of other parties changing their minds about the agreed upon settlements.

**\*\* THE MOTION TO RECONSIDER AGENDA ITEM 197-19 MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS COMMITTEE REPORT RE: SETTLEMENT OF PENDING LITIGATION WITH PETER DIAZ PASSED WITH FOURTEEN (14) IN FAVOR (BURNS, MCCARTHY, CRUZ, TAYLOR-MOYE, BROWN, HERRON, VIZZO-PANICCIA, MCBRIDE-LEE, SILVA, CASTILLO, NIEVES, VALLE, MARTINEZ, AND NEWTON); FIVE (5) OPPOSED (BRANTLEY, ROMAN-CHRISTY, PEREIRA, SULIMAN AND DEFILIPPO),AND ONE (1) ABSTENTION (LYONS).**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BROWN MOVED AGENDA ITEM 197-19 MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS COMMITTEE REPORT RE: SETTLEMENT OF PENDING LITIGATION WITH PETER DIAZ.**

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

**\*\* THE MOTION TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 197-19 MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS COMMITTEE REPORT RE: SETTLEMENT OF PENDING LITIGATION WITH PETER DIAZ PASSED WITH FOURTEEN (14) IN FAVOR (BURNS, MCCARTHY, CRUZ, TAYLOR-MOYE, BROWN, HERRON, DEFILIPPO, VIZZO-PANICCIA, MCBRIDE-LEE, SILVA, CASTILLO, NIEVES, VALLE, MARTINEZ, AND NEWTON); THREE (3) OPPOSED (BRANTLEY, ROMAN-CHRISTY AND PEREIRA), AND TWO (2) ABSTENTIONS (LYONS AND SULIMAN).**

**ADJOURNMENT**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

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

**\*\* THE MOTION TO ADJOURN PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 10:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Telesco Secretarial Services