

**CITY COUNCIL MEETING
PUBLIC SPEAKING
MONDAY, MAY 21, 2018
6:30 PM
City Council Chambers, City Hall
45 Lyon Terrace
Bridgeport, CT**

Council President Nieves called the Public Speaking session to order at 6:41 p.m.

ROLL CALL

The City Clerk Lydia Martinez called the roll.

130th District: Christina Smith, Pete Spain
131st District: Denese Taylor-Moye, Jack Banta
132nd District: Marcus Brown, Kyle Langan
133rd District: Jeanette Herron
134th District:
135th District: Mary McBride-Lee, Rosalina Roman-Christy
136th District: Alfredo Castillo
137th District: Aidee Nieves, Maria Valle
138th District: Karen Jackson, Nessah Smith
139th District: Ernest Newton, Eneida Martinez

A quorum was present. Council President Nieves announced that Council Member McCarthy was unable to attend due to work obligations; Council Member Lyons was not present due to repairs underway at her home; Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia had family obligations and Council Member Zambrano Viggiano was on maternity leave.

THE FOLLOWING NAMED PERSON HAS REQUESTED PERMISSION TO ADDRESS THE CITY COUNCIL ON MONDAY, MAY 21, 2018 AT 6:30 P.M., IN THE CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL, 45 LYON TERRACE, BRIDGEPORT, CT.

<u>NAME</u>	<u>SUBJECT</u>
John Marshall Lee 30 Beacon Street Bridgeport, CT 06605	Financial.

Mr. Lee came forward and read the following statement into the record:

Ladies and gentlemen of the City Council,

Last week your Budget and Appropriations Committee listened to Ben Barnes from the State share information about the Municipal Accountability Review Board (MARB)

program available to eligible cities and towns. A number of criteria can be used to establish eligibility but Barnes felt that our bonding frequency, credit rating and other City statistics including the City “fund balance” provided qualifying evidence. Our “fund balance” rests at the lower end of a yardstick measuring “unrestricted and unreserved” cash relative to 2-8% of the City annual operating budget.

MARB offers review, advice and perhaps financial assistance if you qualify as Tier 3, present your need and how you plan to deal with it. Bridgeport, in major ways, has increased its responsibilities to current workers for their futures when working years are behind them. It is a root of the retirement plan funding difficulties and Other Post Employment healthcare liabilities that stand in excess of One Billion Dollars. Funding pensions and bond costs crowd out our ability to responsibly fund school for our young where almost 40% are either English language learners or designated as “special education” students. Each category bears extra expense in order to provide a closer experience to “fair and equal” treatment enjoyed in other systems. Obviously we cannot succeed, working in the same manner of recent years.

When Mayor Ganim came into office he referenced the difficult operating deficit he faced. But he dealt with it in several ways by himself. He never raised one or more situations where illegal or inappropriate activity likely happened. Therefore there were NO CONSEQUENCES and no community learning about what to look out for, was there? Shameful?

He raised taxes very significantly, property values reduced and the community responded. Some offered advice, alternatives, ongoing consulting on City management and especially fiscal problems. State Rep Stafstrom helped some of his constituents reach out to the Mayor but Ganim deigned to do nothing like sitting down, forming an “advisory group” and listen to some folks who had life experience and were willing to help. In certain campaign materials the Mayor is quick to suggest that there is nothing more that he enjoys doing than sitting down with a group of fellow citizens and listen to their comments about the community. But does he do this?

Look at the record of our “second chance Mayor”. In what District has he sat down with folks to listen and chew the fat?? In other towns around the State, politically active citizens and taxpayers have had a better chance of a one-time sit down with the Mayor, campaigning for Governor, than has a Bridgeport resident. Honest and true?

So MARB might be a way that Bridgeport may avail itself of some expert and balanced commentary from a Board that sees both best and worst practices from around the State. Wouldn't it be helpful to have someone else asking questions and supplying answers across a broader video screen? Might the questions from the MARB group help our Finance Department and OPM look at our own statistics, such as they are, and help us get better where we can? What is a downside to filing a request? Is there a downside to learning how to make better informed decisions? Expenses reported do not seem great relative to the potential relief offered.

Were we to have a Charter Review Commission appointed once again, the subject of having a fiscal review group inserted between the Mayor's administrative team and the legislative body would likely rise again? Many surrounding communities with better credit ratings and lower mil rates have such groups. In the meantime, your Legislative budget allows room to spend throughout the year a part of your budget for financial services that can begin to produce a picture of where dollars are being raised, and spent; what is bonded that might be treated less expensively and alternatively; and how to include your constituents in your Council fiscal process more effectively than is your current effort....and that would be earlier when the taxpayer voices can be heard by you. Time will tell.

Anissa Alicea
240 Linwood Street
Bridgeport, CT 06604

One school, one building.

Council President Nieves called Ms. Alicea's name. There was no response. She called it two more times. There was no response.

Cecil C. Young
99 Carroll Avenue
Bridgeport, CT 06607

Termination cover-up.

Council President Nieves called Mr. Young's name. There was no response. She called it two more times. There was no response.

Steven Auerbach
151 Kennedy Drive
Bridgeport, CT 06606

Sacred Heart/Safety.

Council President Nieves called Mr. Auerbach's name. There was no response. She called it two more times. There was no response.

Maria Pereira, Member
Board of Education
45 Lyon Terrace
Bridgeport, CT 06604

BBOE Funding and Capital Budget.

Ms. Pereira came forward and spoke about a recent press release where Mayor Ganim said that it was a civil right for every student to receive an education. She pointed out that at the same time, Mayor Ganim oversaw three budgets, which did not allocate more money to the BOE. She noted that it was the Council had actually appropriated more funding for the BOE. There have been devastating cuts in State and Federal funding, most of which had happened after the school year began.

Ms. Pereira commented that the City had just approved a \$13,000 raise to an employee but ignored the students in the schools. Bridgeport will not prosper until it allocates money to

education. Oddly enough, the City could not give the BOE more money, but found \$2 million for police overtime.

In closing, Ms. Pereira thanked Council Member Martinez, Council Member Spain and Council Member Langan for voting against the budget.

Council President Nieves announced that Superintendent Johnson was the next speaker. She was told that Superintendent Johnson was delayed in her office. Council President Nieves said that she would call a short recess to allow Superintendent Johnson to come down to the Council Chambers.

RECESS

Council President Nieves called a recess at 6:55 p.m. She reconvened the meeting at 6:57 p.m.

Aresta L. Johnson, BOE
Superintendent of Schools
45 Lyon Terrace
Bridgeport, CT 06604

Bridgeport Board of Education.

Superintendent Johnson thanked the Council for allocating more funds to the BOE. She said that they were still facing a \$2.2 million deficit. Ms. Johnson said that she would like to address the comment about the District being "top-heavy". She then listed the various positions that had been cut and added that they had closed one of the alternative programs they had. Because the funds are so tight, they are actually thinking about having a four-day week from Tuesday through Friday and having the schools closed on Mondays.

Mr. Chris Taylor
Board of Education
45 Lyon Terrace
Bridgeport, CT 06604

Mr. Chris Taylor came forward to address the Council. He said that he was not here as a NAACP member, a BOE member, but as a concerned citizen. He said that he appreciated all the work that has been done by the Council Members. Mr. Taylor commented that he feels like he is a mushroom, kept in the dark and fed B.S. He said that he would like to thank everyone for their efforts but added that he did not see any solutions. If the Council can see their way to give more money to the BOE, he suggested that it be done through designated funding.

ADJOURNMENT

Council President Nieves closed the public speaking portion at 7:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

S. L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services

City of Bridgeport
City Council
Regular Meeting
May 21, 2018

CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
MONDAY, MAY 21, 2018

7:00 PM

City Council Chambers, City Hall - 45 Lyon Terrace
Bridgeport, Connecticut

Council President Nieves called the City Council to order at 7:16 p.m.

PRAYER

Council Member McBride-Lee was then asked to lead those present in prayer.

Following the conclusion of Council Member McBride-Lee's prayer, Council Member Martinez requested a moment of silence for Council Member McBride-Lee who would be undergoing surgery the following day.

Council President Nieves announced that Council Member McCarthy was unable to attend due to work obligations; Council Member Lyons was not present due to repairs underway at her home; Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia had family obligations and Council Member Zambrano Viggiano was on maternity leave.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Council Member Valle was then asked to lead those present in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

The City Clerk called the roll.

130th District: Christina Smith, Pete Spain
131st District: Denese Taylor-Moye, Jack Banta
132nd District: Marcus Brown, Kyle Langan
133rd District: Jeanette Herron
134th District:
135th District: Mary McBride-Lee, Rosalina Roman-Christy
136th District: Alfredo Castillo
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138th District: Karen Jackson, Nessah Smith
139th District: Ernest Newton, Eneida Martinez

A quorum was present.

City of Bridgeport
City Council
Regular Meeting
May 21, 2018

Mayor Ganim joined the meeting and assumed the Chairmanship at 7:20 p.m.

77-17 Public Hearing re: Amendment #6 to the West End Municipal Development Plan and Authorizing the Transfer and Redevelopment of 340 Cherry Street and 1565 Railroad Avenue.

Mayor Ganim asked if there was anyone present in favor of the amendment. No one came forward.

Mayor Ganim then noted that Mr. Coleman from OPED was present to answer any questions the Council Members had.

Mr. Coleman came forward and said that this item would allow the City to transfer property. He described the current structure, which currently has no roof. A developer has been working in the area and he is interested in acquiring this parcel and rehabbing the building. Discussions are underway. The developer will pay the appraised value.

Council Member Newton said he had asked about this and had spoken to Mr. Coleman about the triangular part of the parcel and whether the developer would be liability to pay for the appraisal. Mr. Coleman said that the developer would have the liability.

Council Member Newton asked about the loss of value if the City was going to demo the building. Mr. Coleman said that this would be discussed in the negotiations and noted that there were some environmental issues.

Council Member Taylor-Moye asked if the environmental portion was part of the discussion from the beginning. Mr. Coleman confirmed that the environmental portion had been part of the discussion from the beginning.

Council Member Brown asked about the location of the charter school in relationship to the parcel. Mr. Coleman described where the school was located in relationship to the parcel.

Council Member Brown said that he had been told that there would be housing for teachers. Mr. Coleman said that the charter school complex had set aside some residential units for the tutors and paid staff.

Council Member Banta asked if there had been any identification of what kind of contaminants were on the parcel. Mr. Coleman said that the City had not started the process, but noted that the State had done some highway work nearby and they might have more information.

Council Member Langan asked Mr. Coleman about the cost of demolition. Mr. Coleman said that he would have get back to Council Member Langan about that.

Council Member Langan asked if the goal was to demo the building. Mr. Coleman said that they wanted to remove the eyesore.

Council Member Jackson asked why they had to demo the entire building. She said that she was not comfortable with this.

Mr. Coleman said that cost was a factor and that the environmental issues were involved with what was in the building.

Council Member Spain asked when the appraisal was done. Mr. Coleman said that it was done recently. Council Member Spain asked about the status of the sale. Mr. Coleman said that the earliest that City could close would be within weeks.

Council Member Spain asked if there were any tax abatements involved. Mr. Coleman said that it was too early to tell.

Council Member Roman Christy asked about the demolition. Mr. Coleman said that the building will be taken down to the ground and the developer has had some success in getting funding for abatement. She said that her concern was that she did not want to see the parcel sitting there for 10 years before something moves forward on it. Mr. Coleman said that it was not possible to know what kind of contaminants were in the ground. It could sit for a few years, but it will be less of an eyesore.

Mayor Ganim asked if there was anyone present in opposition to the amendment. Hearing none, Mayor Ganim closed the public hearing on Agenda Item 77-17 Public Hearing re: Amendment #6 to the West End Municipal Development Plan and Authorizing the Transfer and Redevelopment of 340 Cherry Street and 1565 Railroad Avenue at 7:40 p.m.

Council President Appointment of Special Committee for Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG).

Council President Nieves announced the appointment the following Council Members to the Special Committee for Community Development Block Grant Program:
Council Member Alfredo Castillo, Council Member Mary McBride-Lee, Council Member Thomas McCarthy, Council Member Ernest Newton, Council Member Rosalina Roman-Christy, Council Member Christina Smith, and Council Member Nessah Smith.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON MOVED TO APPROVE THE APPOINTMENT OF THE FOLLOWING COUNCIL MEMBERS TO THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM:**

**COUNCIL MEMBER ALFREDO CASTILLO,
COUNCIL MEMBER MARY MCBRIDE-LEE,
COUNCIL MEMBER THOMAS MCCARTHY,
COUNCIL MEMBER ERNEST NEWTON,
COUNCIL MEMBER ROSALINA ROMAN-CHRISTY,
COUNCIL MEMBER CHRISTINA SMITH, AND
COUNCIL MEMBER NESSAH SMITH.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER CASTILLO SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

MINUTES FOR APPROVAL:

Approval of City Council Minutes: April 11, 2018 (Special Meeting)

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BROWN MOVED THE APRIL 11, 2018 CITY COUNCIL MINUTES.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER TAYLOR-MOYE SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE APRIL 11, 2018 CITY COUNCIL MINUTES AS SUBMITTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

ITEMS FOR IMMEDIATE CONSIDERATION:

104-17 Communication from Mayor re: Establishing of Mill Rates for Fiscal Year 2018-2019 FOR IMMEDIATE CONSIDERATION.

Council Member Newton said that there needed to be two motions: one for immediate consideration and a second one for the approval of the item.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON MOVED FOR IMMEDIATE CONSIDERATION OF AGENDA ITEM 104-17 AS REQUIRED BY THE CITY CHARTER CHAPTER 8, SECTION 5(F) ESTABLISHING OF MILL RATES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2018-2019.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER N. SMITH SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON MOVED TO ESTABLISH THE CITY OF BRIDGEPORT FISCAL YEAR 2018-2019 MILL RATES BE AND HEREBY ARE, SET AT 54.37 MILLS FOR REAL PROPERTY AND PERSONAL PROPERTY AND 45.00 MILLS FOR MOTOR VEHICLES.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER N. SMITH SECONDED.**

Council Member Spain requested a roll call vote.

**** THE MOTION PASSED WITH TWELVE (12) IN FAVOR (C. SMITH, BANTA, TAYLOR MOYE, HERRON, MCBRIDE-LEE, ROMAN CHRISTY, CASTILLO, NIEVES, VALLE, JACKSON, N. SMITH, AND NEWTON) AND FOUR (4) AGAINST (SPAIN, BROWN, LANGAN, AND MARTINEZ).**

Following the conclusion of the vote, the Mayor thanked the Council for all their hard work on the budget.

COMMUNICATIONS TO BE REFERRED TO COMMITTEES:

105-17 Communication from Board of Education re: Grant Submission: State of Connecticut Office of Early Childhood for the FY 2019 School Readiness Grant Program

to Provide Preschool Spaces for Children that are three and four-years-old who reside in the City for the Period of July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019, referred to Education and Social Services Committee.

106-17 Communication from Central Grants re: Grant Submission: Southwestern CT Agency on Aging (SWCCA) Title III Funding Older Americans Act Grant Program – Bridgeport Senior Center Recreational Activities Program (#19533), referred to Economic and Community Development and Environment Committee.

107-17 Communication from Central Grants re: Grant Submission: Southwestern CT Agency on Aging (SWCCA) Title III Funding Older Americans Act Grant Program – Elderly Hispanic Program (#19270), referred to Economic and Community Development and Environment Committee.

108-17 Communication from Housing and Community Development re: Program Year 44 Annual Action Plan: Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG), Homeless Emergency Solutions Grant Program (HESG), HOME Investment Partnership Program, Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS Program (HOPWA), referred to Special Committee on CDBG Program.

109-17 Communication from Finance re: Proposed Amendment to the Municipal Code of Ordinances, Title 3 – Revenue and Finance, amend to add new Chapter 3.80 – Establishment of an Other Postemployment Benefits Trust and an Other Postemployment Benefits Trust Fund, referred to Ordinance Committee.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ MOVED THE ITEMS TO BE REFERRED TO THE APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE ITEMS TO BE REFERRED TO THE APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

10-17 Ordinance Committee Report re: Resolution requesting that the City Attorney's Office, Small and Minority Business Resource Office and Purchasing Department work with the City Council to develop language concerning the hiring of city residents and ex-felons.

Council Member Newton said that Agenda Item 10-17 had been carried forward on the agenda as unfinished business. He then asked that this be approved while they were continuing to work on the language.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 10-17 17 ORDINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT RE: RESOLUTION REQUESTING THAT THE CITY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE, SMALL AND MINORITY BUSINESS RESOURCE OFFICE AND PURCHASING DEPARTMENT WORK WITH THE CITY COUNCIL TO**

DEVELOP LANGUAGE CONCERNING THE HIRING OF CITY RESIDENTS AND EX-FELONS.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER N. SMITH SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER N. SMITH MOVED TO ADD AN ITEM TO THE AGENDA FOR REFERRAL TO THE MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS COMMITTEE.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER TAYLOR MOYE SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY. (ITEM #110-17)**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER N. SMITH MOVED TO REFER AN ITEM REGARDING SETTLEMENT AMOUNT FOR PROPOSED WORKER'S COMPENSATION PPD STIPULATION REGARDING LAFLAMME VS. CITY OF BRIDGEPORT TO THE MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS COMMITTEE.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER TAYLOR MOYE SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY (ITEM #110-17)**

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT NIEVES SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned 7:51 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

S. L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Service