

**CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
PUBLIC SPEAKING  
MONDAY, MAY 20, 2019  
6:30 PM  
City Council Chambers, City Hall  
45 Lyon Terrace  
Bridgeport, CT**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Council President Nieves called the Public Speaking Session to order at 6:42 p.m. Council President Nieves reviewed the rules and reminded everyone they had five minutes to address the Council.

**ROLL CALL**

The City Clerk Lydia Martinez called the roll.

130th District: Christina Smith  
131st District: Jack Banta, Denese Taylor-Moye  
132nd District: Kyle Langan  
133rd District: Michael Defilippo, Jeanette Herron  
134th District: Michelle Lyons, AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia  
135th District: Mary McBride-Lee, Rosalina Roman-Christy  
136th District: Alfredo Castillo, Maria Zambrano Viggiano  
137th District: Aidee Nieves, Maria Valle  
138th District: Nessah Smith, Karen Jackson  
139th District: Ernie Newton

A quorum was present.

**THE FOLLOWING NAMED PERSON HAS REQUESTED PERMISSION TO ADDRESS THE CITY COUNCIL ON MONDAY, MAY 20, 2019 AT 6:30 P.M., IN THE CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL, 45 LYON TERRACE, BRIDGEPORT, CT.**

**NAME**

**SUBJECT**

**Cecil Young**  
99 Carroll Avenue  
Bridgeport, CT 06607

Unjust Termination Cover-up.

Mr. Young said that it was time to ban the high-speed police chases. He displayed a poster with color photos of various locations. He said that the police officers were trained to pursue rather than to communicate. It is more important to have Community Police Officers rather than ones who were trained to arrest. He said that it would be important to do real community policing so

they don't have the type of tragedies and suicides that the City has experienced in the last year or so. Mr. Young then waved a U.S. flag around and said that he has been talking about these situations for the last few years. He then displayed a white pharmacy bag and stated his wife was very sick.

**Dasha Spell**  
284 Beechwood Avenue  
Bridgeport, CT 06604

CSMA and BOE.

Ms. Spell came forward and said that she was present to announce some events, one of which was a community conversation that would be taking place on May 21st with the youth. She challenged everyone to come out and support the youth.

Secondly, she said that she had come to the Council when Council Member Newton had mentioned a Community Police substation. She started the Bridgeport Collaborative for Education is now up and running.

Ms. Spell said that juvenile detention is located directly across the street from a City building, and the North Avenue jail is located near a BOE facility. The pipeline is there. People need to be educated on what the elected officials are doing.

Ms. Spell said that the Classical Studies Academy school was not limited to specific students from one area. She said the students come from all over the City and proceeded to read off all the zip codes along with the number of students that were living in those areas.

*Mr. Young came forward and threw a handful of single dollar bills, which he claimed was \$42 dollars in Council Members' seating area. Council President Nieves told him that he was out of order. Mr. Young then left the Chambers.*

**John Marshall Lee**  
30 Beacon Street  
Bridgeport, CT 06605

Fiscal Governance.

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

What is more important to you at this moment? Summoning a member of the Police Department to come and assist your safety? Or is your larger concern, the future of a relation attending a public school? More likely, you have no immediate need for either police protection or academic instruction, and are dealing with other issues? Perhaps you are grateful for your blessings, doing OK?

If you are in that position as some of your constituents are, how do they follow the story of what is being done within their City, about taxes and spending? Where do folks learn about ongoing municipal issues? Where do they observe City priorities? Unfortunately, not in the Annual address to the City by the Mayor. No priorities. No conversations with City administrators. No two way conversations in public that explain why the PD gets

millions of funding every time they sign a contract and why there is no sense in the Ganim2 executive suite that education is a neglected part of the City landscape. I am not talking about the buildings. The Mayor shows up at buildings when the ground is broken or the ribbon needs cutting. But who provides enough revenue to operate all the spaces within the schools to assure that an attempt is made to deliver a suburban like result from gritty City kids?

The City payroll keeps uncut political patronage. You can name names, as I can. It's not a secret. Many are nice folks, but how do you describe the job they perform in a way that taxpayers see valuable? The Mayor does not do that. At budget time it is certainly not humorous. When some folks are not operating at a standard and level known to the public and that persists for years, day in and day out, with names on the lists of the 100 best paid, is it any reason that the public has stopped voting?

Across the City we are lucky to summon 30% to the polls these days. The excuses given, if asked, are: "Too busy". "Don't know enough". "They are all corrupt". "It does not do any good".

You have heard the same words I have, and a low turnout allows incumbents, friends and families to enjoy the perquisites of office without real challenge. A one party town has all the funds needed to keep real information difficult for people to obtain and City processes either secret or favorable to incumbents. That describes Bridgeport today. Doesn't it?

Within the past week I have heard two phrases new to my ears: "Civic courage" and "inherent contempt". "Inherent contempt" is the attitude and trail of evidence from those in the public square who fail to fully respect and serve their neighbor. And "civic courage" is the extra character value required for public life when you can sense, hear and see greedy, predatory and careless humans seeking to get their own needs met first.

Is it "inherent contempt" when politicians spend more time courting absentee ballots than explaining to a wider group what they are doing with public funds?

Does "civic courage" require cleaning up municipal messes left by a previous administration, rather than point at it as if a new "strong Mayor" were merely a victim?

Doesn't a "strong Mayor" have tools to investigate, identify, and solve problems, along the way letting the public know in detail how it was done?

Consultants? Competence? Communication?

The City budget grows ever larger in public safety and education stagnates. Police return to the table every year with problems managing overtime yet crime stats are reduced. Did they look for evidence of expertise in staffing, community policing and compensation in their most recent hiring? With the cutting at all levels in the Board of Ed in the past four years, thank the personnel remaining for keeping the ship afloat. How much longer can that endure? Time will tell.

**Pamela Williams**  
91 Clearview Drive  
Bridgeport, CT 06606

Calvary Seventh Day Adventist  
Church on Trumbull Avenue.

Ms. Pamela Williams came forward to speak about the construction that was going on at Calvary Seventh Day Adventist Church behind her house. Ms. Williams asked a number of questions such as when the construction came up at the Council and when the traffic study was done. She pointed out that there was a school just down the road. She asked why the neighbors were not notified and when the public hearings were held. She asked about the environmental impact on this and now her backyard was totally exposed. This has been a problem since March of last year when she got a disrespectful letter from the church and no one has been giving them any answers. She said that she was a home owner and the value of her home dropped since this project started. As a voter, she needs to elect people who care about the residents.

**Joseph Epps**  
146 Clearview Drive  
Bridgeport, CT 06606

Construction at Calvary Seventh Day  
Adventist Church on Trumbull  
Avenue.

Mr. Epps came forward and asked the following questions to the Council:

When did this construction project come up in the City Council meeting, who gave the okay and who was in attendance?

Why is it that no one is aware that Clearview Drive is all septic?

Was a traffic study done regarding Chopsey Hill Road, as we already have a school 1 block away?

Was a study done regarding the effects this construction will have on the residents in the surrounding area?

Were any public hearings held regarding this project, if so, when and why weren't the residents notified?

What effect will the blasting and construction have on our septic tanks and our home values?

Who is the contractor on the project and why weren't any signs posted on the fence?

Was an environmental impact study done, when and by whom? As we are now dealing with rodent issues, once they cleared the property of trees.

Is the Church willing to put up some sort of sound barrier as our backyards are now exposed and people are cutting through from Trumbull Avenue to our backyards?

The Church was supposed to leave a tree line. Do you consider what they did accurate?

The residents were told that it would not affect the houses across the road, but his mother's house now has cracked walls. Mr. Epps said that they had come down to City Hall to find out what was going on but couldn't get any answers. His taxes are going up.

**Jacquelyn Cauthen**  
397 Charles Street  
Bridgeport, CT 06606

Teen "Veggie" Garden/Community  
Garden Becoming D.I.V.A.S.  
and Project Mother Boot Camp.

Ms. Cauthen came forward to speak and said that she was looking for young people who would be interested in learning how to use a community garden and grow vegetables. There is no cost to anyone.

Dr. Gloria Barksdale then came forward and encouraged everyone to be either college bound or entrepreneurs. She then spoke about the Bootcamps -- Project MEETS which will start on June 24<sup>th</sup> and then run through the 28<sup>th</sup>.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Council President Nieves adjourned the Public Speaking portion of the Council meeting at 7:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

S. L. Soltes  
Telesco Secretarial Services

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT  
CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
MONDAY, MAY 20, 2019**

**7:00 PM**

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

Mayor Ganim called the meeting of the City Council to order at 7:20 p.m.

**PRAYER**

Mayor Ganim requested Council Member McBride-Lee to lead those present in a prayer.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mayor Ganim requested a Junior Council Member to lead those present in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ROLL CALL**

The City Clerk called the roll.

130th District: Christina Smith  
131st District: Jack Banta, Denese Taylor-Moye  
132nd District: Marcus Brown, Kyle Langan  
133rd District: Michael Defilippo, Jeanette Herron  
134th District: Michelle Lyons, AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia  
135th District: Mary McBride-Lee, Rosalina Roman-Christy  
136th District: Maria Zambrano Viggiano  
137th District: Aidee Nieves, Maria Valle  
138th District: Nessah Smith, Karen Jackson  
139th District: Ernie Newton

A quorum was present.

**Informational Session presented by OPED re: Neighborhood Assistance Act Tax Credit Program.**

A staff member came forward and said that those who might be interested in applying should contact Mr. Max Perez in OPED. He then listed the upcoming dates for submissions.

Council Member Jackson asked how much funding the City would get. The staff member explained that the organizations would get the tax credits. Mr. Bill Coleman, the Deputy Director, came forward and said that the language used by the State refers to the municipalities, but the reality was that the credits would go to the non-profits.

There were no additional questions from the Council Members at this time.

**78-18 Public Hearing re: Proposed Resolution Authorizing Execution of an Easement Agreement for 337 Knowlton Street.**

*Mayor Ganim opened the item at 7:25 p.m.*

Mr. Coleman came forward and said that there were some photos of the property that were being passed around. He introduced the developer and gave a brief overview of the proposed project.

Mr. Shawn Olson came forward and said that he was purchasing 337 Knowlton and that he would make it more accessible to the public. He said that he was very excited about the project.

Mayor Ganim said that this item would be before the ECDCE Committee tomorrow night.

There was no one else who wished to address the Council on the easement agreement.

*Mayor Ganim closed the public hearing in 7:32 p.m.*

Council Member N. Smith requested a point of personal privilege. She said that former Council Member John Olson had been hospitalized and that he was doing well.

Council Member McBride-Lee said that there were some residents from the North End who were present and that they had concerns about their septic tanks because of the construction of a school by the Seventh Day Adventist Church. She said that it would be important to help these people keep their homes.

**MINUTES FOR APPROVAL:**

**Approval of City Council Minutes: April 15, 2019**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON MOVED TO APPROVE THE APRIL 15, 2019 CITY COUNCIL MINUTES.**

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

**\*\* THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE APRIL 15, 2019 CITY COUNCIL MINUTES AS SUBMITTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**COMMUNICATIONS TO BE REFERRED TO COMMITTEES:**

**80-18 Communication from Fire Department re: Proposed Request by the Fire Chief Pursuant to and in accordance with C.G.S. §7-430 and their Collective Bargain Agreement,**

**Fire Fighters Local 834 that Dennis Rodgeron having or soon to attain the age of sixty-five years or more to remain employed by the City for another year, referred to Contracts Committee.**

**81-18 Communication from Mayor re: Appointment of Jenny Rosario-Mora (D) to the Board of Assessment Appeals, referred to Miscellaneous Matters Committee.**

**82-18 Communication from Mayor re: Appointment of Kyle J. LaBuff (D) to the Zoning Board of Appeals, referred to Miscellaneous Matters Committee.**

**83-18 Communication from Finance Department re: Proposed Contract with Municipal Valuation Services (MVS) for 2020 Revaluation, referred to Contracts Committee.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER LANGAN MOVED TO REFER THE FOLLOWING COMMUNICATIONS TO COMMITTEES:**

**80-18 COMMUNICATION FROM FIRE DEPARTMENT RE: PROPOSED REQUEST BY THE FIRE CHIEF PURSUANT TO AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH C.G.S. §7-430 AND THEIR COLLECTIVE BARGAIN AGREEMENT, FIRE FIGHTERS LOCAL 834 THAT DENNIS RODGERSON HAVING OR SOON TO ATTAIN THE AGE OF SIXTY-FIVE YEARS OR MORE TO REMAIN EMPLOYED BY THE CITY FOR ANOTHER YEAR, REFERRED TO CONTRACTS COMMITTEE.**

**81-18 COMMUNICATION FROM MAYOR RE: APPOINTMENT OF JENNY ROSARIO-MORA (D) TO THE BOARD OF ASSESSMENT APPEALS, REFERRED TO MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS COMMITTEE.**

**82-18 COMMUNICATION FROM MAYOR RE: APPOINTMENT OF KYLE J. LABUFF (D) TO THE ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS, REFERRED TO MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS COMMITTEE.**

**83-18 COMMUNICATION FROM FINANCE DEPARTMENT RE: PROPOSED CONTRACT WITH MUNICIPAL VALUATION SERVICES (MVS) FOR 2020 REVALUATION, REFERRED TO CONTRACTS COMMITTEE.**

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

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

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

**\*77-18 Contracts Committee Report re: Professional Services Agreement with Metropolitan Council of Governments for the Administration of the Connecticut Avenue and Stratford Avenue Transportation Development and Safety Corridor Study.**



**\*63-18 Education and Social Services Committee Report re: Resolution in Support of General Assembly Legislation SB-874 – An Act concerning Education Initiatives and Services in Connecticut and HB-7192 – An Act concerning Municipal and Regional Opportunities and Efficiencies.**

Mayor Ganim asked if there was any Council Members who would like to remove an item from the Consent Calendar. Council Member Newton requested Agenda Item 77-18 be removed from the Consent Calendar.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER LANGAN MOVED THE FOLLOWING CONSENT CALENDAR ITEM:**

**\*63-18 EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE REPORT RE: RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY LEGISLATION SB-874 – AN ACT CONCERNING EDUCATION INITIATIVES AND SERVICES IN CONNECTICUT AND HB-7192 – AN ACT CONCERNING MUNICIPAL AND REGIONAL OPPORTUNITIES AND EFFICIENCIES.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON SECONDED.**

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

**77-18 Contracts Committee Report re: Professional Services Agreement with Metropolitan Council of Governments for the Administration of the Connecticut Avenue and Stratford Avenue Transportation Development and Safety Corridor Study.**

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

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER LANGAN SECONDED.**

Council Member Newton thanked the Economic Development Department for seeking out the grant and the proposal to return these key streets back to two-way streets.

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

**MATTERS TO BE ACTED UPON:**

**66-18 Contracts Committee Report re: Request by the Fire Chief Pursuant to and in accordance with C.G.S. §7-430 and their Collective Bargain Agreement, Fire Fighters Local 834 that Robert Whitbread having or soon to attain the age of sixty-five years or more to remain employed by the City for another year.**

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

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

Council Member Herron gave a brief overview of the item and explained that the Committee vote on this item had not been unanimous.

**\*\* THE MOTION TO APPROVE PASSED WITH FIFTEEN (15) IN FAVOR (C. SMITH, BANTA, TAYLOR-MOYE, BROWN, LANGAN, DEFILIPPO, HERRON, MCBRIDE-LEE, ROMAN-CHRISTY, ZAMBRANO VIGGIANO, NIEVES, VALLE, JACKSON N. SMITH AND NEWTON); ONE (1) OPPOSED (VIZZO-PANICCIA) AND ONE(1) ABSTENTION (LYONS).**

**74-18 Contracts Committee Report re: Agreement with Bridgeport Police Local #1159 and Council 4 AFSCME, AFL-CIO regarding their Bargaining Contract.**

Council Member Herron said that this was passed with only one vote against it in Committee.

Council Member Langan said that he had attended the Contracts meeting and was not comfortable voting in favor of this because the letter was dated May 1st but the contract was dated May 6th. Mayor Ganim said that the Labor Relations Director assured him that it was not an issue.

Atty. Phil White came forward and said that the letter that went to the City Council Members was dated May 1st. Council Member Langan said that they had not received the full contract, just the amendment. He said that he had not received the item in its entirety. Council Member Langan cited a number of sections that he had concerns about including the fact that the police officers can receive OT counted on top of the base pay rate. Council Member Langan then spoke about the mental health of the officers and noted that this does not protect either the officers or the public. He wished to know why there was such a rush being put on the final approval of the contract.

Mayor Ganim said that these items were negotiated over a period of three years and the rush on it was due to a State statute which requires the Council to approve the contract within a certain period of time after the agreement is reached.

Council Member Newton said that these were Labor Relations negotiations and while he recognizes this is not the Council's purview, this contract went to arbitration.

Council Member Newton hoped that the City would follow other cities where they have private contractors doing the outside contract jobs. The question is how to free up the police to protect the residents of the City. It is time for the City to move into the 21st Century.

Council Member Jackson said that she had attended the meeting and did not like the fact that the police officers were being paid OT. She added that if a resident makes a complaint, nothing will be done about it for years. She said that when things go to arbitration, the City has no money. She said that they have money for the police officers, but no money for education.

Council Member Herron said that she appreciated the difficulty that Council Members have in attending the Committee meetings but questions or problems can be solved by contacting the Chairs of the Committees. She added that she reads and reviews every single contract that comes to the Contracts Committee very carefully.

Council Member Lyons said that during the last administration, the disciplinary authority was taken away from the Police Commission and given to the Police Chief.

Regarding the issue of mental health, Council Member Lyons updated Council Member Langan about the recent changes in mental health issues.

Council Member Lyons said that Council Member Herron had pointed out that the contractors are required to have the officers on site.

Council Member Taylor-Moye said that she would keep it brief. She said that they had done a lot in the last budget cycle. They had made sure to do something for the tax payers and for the schools. However, it is important to remember that the children who go to school need to be safe. While it is important to do more every year, it is critical not to do it at the expense of others.

Council Member Jackson said that she was not speaking about internal OT but outside OT work. She said that the outside contracts were non-essential. She said that she didn't appreciate the fact that she was being blasted for her opinion. This should not go to arbitration because the City has no money.

Police Officer Chuck Paris, the president of the Police Union, thanked the Council. He said that this contract has been in process for three years. He said that the Department was trying to keep the officers. Every time new officers come in, they lose experienced officers. He thanked the Council for their time regarding this contract.

**\*\* THE MOTION TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 74-18 CONTRACTS COMMITTEE REPORT RE: AGREEMENT WITH BRIDGEPORT POLICE LOCAL #1159 AND COUNCIL 4 AFSCME, AFL-CIO REGARDING THEIR BARGAINING CONTRACT PASSED WITH THIRTEEN (13) IN FAVOR (BANTA, TAYLOR-MOYE, BROWN, DEFILIPPO, HERRON, LYONS, VIZZO-PANICCIA, MCBRIDE-LEE, ROMAN-CHRISTY, NIEVES, VALLE, N. SMITH AND NEWTON) AND FOUR (4) OPPOSED (C. SMITH, LANGAN, ZAMBRANO VIGGIANO AND JACKSON).**

Mayor Ganim said that he had presented a budget to the Council and they had returned their changes to the budget to him. This is the 14th day and he could veto it. However, this was the first time in 12 years that there was a tax reduction. The Council Members made some strong commitments to the residents. He said that the Council had saved \$5 million dollars by converting the health insurance to the State coverage.

Mayor Ganim said that he was signing the budget and submitting it to the City Clerk right now. He said that this was setting the mill rate slightly lower. A brief discussion followed regarding the time requirements for approving the mill rate.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER ZAMBRANO VIGGIANO MOVED TO ADD AN ITEM FOR IMMEDIATE CONSIDERATION TO THE AGENDA CONCERNING A COMMUNICATION FROM THE MAYOR REGARDING ESTABLISHING A MILL RATE FOR FISCAL YEAR 2019-2020.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER TAYLOR-MOYE SECONDED.  
\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY. (ITEM #84-18)**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER ZAMBRANO VIGGIANO MOVED TO IMMEDIATELY CONSIDER A RESOLUTION REGARDING SETTING THE MILL RATE FOR FISCAL YEAR 2019-2020 IN ORDER TO COMPLY WITH THE TIME DEADLINE ESTABLISHED BY THE BRIDGEPORT CITY CHARTER, CHAPTER 9, SECTION 5(F).**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON SECONDED.  
\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER ZAMBRANO VIGGIANO MOVED THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTION:**

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT: THE CITY OF BRIDGEPORT FY 2019-2020 MILL RATES BE AND HEREBY ARE, SET AT 53.00 MILLS FOR REAL PROPERTY AND PERSONAL PROPERTY AND 45.00 MILLS FOR MOTOR VEHICLES.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON SECONDED.  
\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY. IMMEDIATE CONSIDERATION – (ITEM #84-18)**

**ADJOURNMENT**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON MOVED TO ADJOURN.  
\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BROWN SECONDED.  
\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

S. L. Soltes  
Telesco Secretarial Services