CITY COUNCIL MEETING

PUBLIC SPEAKING FORUM

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 2020

6:30 P.M.

This meeting was conducted by Zoom/Teleconference.

CALL TO ORDER

Council President Nieves called the meeting of the City Council to order.

ROLL CALL

The City Clerk Lydia Martinez called the roll.

130th District: Scott Burns, Matthew McCarthy
131st District: Denese Taylor-Moye, Jorge Cruz
132nd District:
133rd District: Jeanette Herron
134th District: Michelle Lyons
135th District: Rosalina Roman-Christy
136th District:
137th District: Maria Valle, Aidee Nieves
138th District: Maria Pereira
139th District: Eneida Martinez, Ernest Newton

Council President Nieves reviewed the rules for addressing the City Council and announced that there was a 3 minute time limit for each speaker.

THE FOLLOWING NAMED PERSON HAS REQUESTED PERMISSION TO ADDRESS THE CITY COUNCIL ON MONDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 2020 AT 6:30 P.M.

<u>NAME</u>

SUBJECT

Maria Pereira 85 Nutmeg Road Bridgeport, CT 06610 Repeated violations of the City Charter by the Council President, City Clerk & Deputy City Clerk & Governor Lamont's Executive Order 7B, etc.

Council Member Pereira read the following statement into the record:

City Council President Nieves, thank you for elevating me in the eyes of many since your orchestrated coup removing me from all my committee assignments based on as you put it, my inability to work well with others. I have since received an outpouring of support from throughout Bridgeport and beyond.

I have received emails, text messages, phone calls and Facebook messages from residents throughout the City as well as Stratford, Fairfield, Trumbull, Norwalk and Stamford with many of these individuals being complete strangers praising me for always standing up for honesty, integrity and transparency in Bridgeport's governance and encouraging me to remain steadfast with a number of these strangers pledging to financially support my next campaign. I doubt you have been the recipient of similar feedback.

I also want to discuss the flagrant violations of Governor Lamont's Executive Order 7B, the City Charter & the City Council Rules which every one of my colleagues voted for as I was the only one that voted in opposition.

Governor Lamont's Executive Order 7 B specifically states "1. Suspension of In-Person Open Meeting Requirements "... to permit any public agency to meet and take such actions authorized by the law without permitting or requiring in-person, public access to such meetings, and to hold such meetings or proceedings remotely by conference call, videoconference or other technology, provided that 2) any such meeting or proceeding is recorded or transcribed, and such recording or transcript shall be posted on the agency's website within seven (7) days of the meeting or proceeding..."

Executive Order 7B doesn't state that "minutes" must be made available on the agency's website within 7 days; it specifically states a "recording or transcript" must be made available, yet the City Council President had the audacity to state that there are different kinds of "transcription." In what reality does the word "transcription" not mean "...the act or process of making a written, printed, or typed copy of words that have been spoken." Transcription means word for word.

The City Charter Chapter 4- City & Town Clerks states the City Clerk, and in her absence the Deputy City Clerk, "SHALL make and keep TRUE records of all the votes and proceedings of the city council..." which is in all honesty is an absolute joke.

Chapter 4, Section 1.-Duties of the City Clerk specifically states "...the city clerk SHALL prepare the agenda for the meetings of the city council in the manner provided in the rules of the city council, yet the City Clerk has repeatedly violated City Council Rule XIII: Reference to Committees Section 12. Requiring all agenda items be filed by 4:30 PM the preceding Wednesday prior to a Regular City Council Meeting. The City Clerk has repeatedly violated this provision including the September 21st Regular Meeting

Agenda where TEN new agenda items were added on the Friday AFTER the Wednesday deadline.

City Council Rule XXV: Public Speaking Forum specifically states "*there SHALL be a public speaking forum before the City Council on EACH night the city Council meets in regular session...*" The public only has 22 opportunities per year to address the City Council on any topic important to them, yet the City Council President without any authorization from the City Council has repeatedly and unilaterally cancelled the Public Speaking Forum when she has no such authority to do so.

The only thing that Bridgeport residents can really count on is flagrant lawlessness, incompetence at every level of government, unethical, dishonest and corrupt behavior and being brazenly disrespected by those who are supposed to govern effectively.

If you want any level of credibility, you have to uphold the state statutes, City Charter, Ordinances, City Council Rules, etc., with fidelity. Not just when it suits your purpose.

The good news is I sincerely believe that there is light at the end of the tunnel as Mayor Ganim and those aligned with him will be ousted in 2023. That I feel absolutely confident of.

Colin Schlank

2759 Fairfield Avenue Bridgeport, Ct 06605 Committee assignments, governance, violations of the City Charter and City Council Rules.

Council President Nieves announced Mr. Schlank was the next speaker. There was no response.

Stanley Lord, NAACP President	Committee assignments, City
1138 Hancock Avenue	Charter, City Council Rules
Bridgeport, CT 06605	and governance.

Mr. Lord greeted the Council Members and said that he was the NAACP President. He said that he was concerned about the Council Member who had been removed from all her Committees. He said that there were times that members may agree or disagree with one another. They have to learn to find common ground with Council Member Pereira. Replacing her with other members is disheartening. He said that excluding Council Member Pereira from the Committee meetings would not help the situation. [Call disconnected]

Nichola Hall	Committee assignments, leadership,
105 Pond Street	governance, City Charter and
Bridgeport, CT 06606	City Council Rules.

Ms. Hall greeted the Council Members and said that her comments were regarding Council Member Pereira's leadership. She said that Council Member Pereira displayed traits that indicated Council Member Pereira was a community leader. She displays strength, passion, ability to put the cause first over popularity, vision, innovation. Ms. Hall said that as a basketball

coach, she guides and works with the team's strength. They should not shy away from community leaders and Council Member Pereira shows her leadership strengths.

Kelvin Ayala

333 State Street, Apt. 702 Bridgeport, CT 06604 Committee assignments, leadership and governance.

Mr. Ayala said that he wanted to reiterate a few points [Call disconnected] He said that he hope that they would include Council Member Pereira when the new Committee assignments are given out in the new year.

Mr. Ayala went on to speak about the \$3 million COVID grant funding for small businesses. He asked why the OPED was holding on to the funding for more than 7 months.

Maria Pires	Committee assignments, governance
45 Fleet Street	and public speaking.
Bridgeport, CT 06605	

Ms. Pires said that the Council Members would hear the good, the bad and the ugly. At the last Council Meeting, the Council decided not to have the Public Speaking. She mentioned that some of the forms were submitted a little late, but Public Speaking is part of the agenda. Mike, Michelle and Maria are doing their jobs. This is not a puppet show, not a dictatorship.

Helen Olga Losak	Prepared statement to be read into
302 Bradley Street	the record on behalf of Jeff Kohut.
Bridgeport, CT 06610	

Ms. Losak greeted the Council and said that she would be reading a statement from Mr. Jeff Kohut.

Mr. Kohut's letter stated he was concerned about the censorship and the democratic process. [Call disconnected]

Sheresha Rainey	Committee assignments and
180A Yaremich Drive	governance.
Bridgeport, CT 06606	

Council President Nieves announced Ms. Rainey was the next speaker. There was no response.

Andre WhaleyCommittee assignments and181 Wessels Avenuegovernance.Bridgeport, CT 06610governance.

Mr. Whaley said that he was impressed with Council Member Pereira's work and felt that he no longer had a voice on the Council. He said that Council Member Pereira had walked the streets distributing flyers about rental assistance. He spoke about how she worked on the parks and

obtained a splash pad for one of the parks. She also worked to get one of the parks redone when there were pieces of debris scattered all over it.

Colin Schlank 2759 Fairfield Avenue Bridgeport, Ct 06605 Committee assignments, governance, violations of the City Charter and City Council Rules.

Council President Nieves announced Mr. Schlank was the next speaker. There was no response.

Harvey Allen Harvey's Kitchen 392 Granfield Avenue Bridgeport, CT 06610 Committee assignments and public speaking.

Mr. Allen said that he and his wife own a restaurant in Bridgeport and just recently purchased a building just before the COVID lockdown. He gave a contractor \$8,000 for renovations of the kitchen, but after three months, there was no work done. He was given Council Member Pereira's number and Council Member Pereira looked into the situation. She ended up calling News12 when the contractor did not respond. The Department of Consumer Affairs got involved and Mr. Allen received a refund.

He went on to speak about how a tree had to be removed. Council Member Pereira helped him. For all these reasons, he would like Council Member Pereira returned to the Council Committees.

ADJOURNMENT

Council President Nieves adjourned the public speaking at 7:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Telesco Secretarial Services

CITY OF BRIDGEPORT

CITY COUNCIL MEETING

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 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 7:06 p.m.

PRAYER

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

ROLL CALL

The City Clerk Lydia Martinez called the roll.

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

MINUTES FOR APPROVAL:

Approval of City Council Minutes: October 5, 2020 & October 19, 2020.

** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED THE MINUTES OF OCTOBER 5, 2020 AND OCTOBER 19, 2020.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER CRUZ SECONDED.**

Council Member Pereira that there was something she had never seen before in the October 19, 2020 Public Speaking minutes. She stated that "During the roll call, there appeared to be no response from the individuals whose names are listed in italics." should be removed.

** COUNCIL MEMBER PEREIRA MOVED TO AMEND THE MINUTES TO FIX THE PUBLIC SPEAKING ATTENDANCE FOR OCTOBER 19, 2020. ** COUNCIL MEMBER CRUZ SECONDED.

Council Member Brantley asked what the problem was. Council Member Pereira stated that the minutes noted that Council Member Brantley along with Council Members McBride-Lee, Castillo, Silva, Valle, Suliman and Martinez were noted as not responding during the roll call for Public Speaking.

Council Member Suliman said that she was out of the country.

Council Member Pereira said that she would be filing with the Freedom of Information Commission.

Council Member Brown said that there was a major issue about amending the last sets of minutes for October 19th and he was opposed to approving them because they were incorrect.

** THE MOTION TO AMEND THE MINUTES OF OCTOBER 19, 2020 FAILED TO PASS WITH SIX (6) IN FAVOR (MCCARTHY, DEFILIPPO, LYONS, SILVA, CASTILLO AND PEREIRA) AND FOURTEEN (14) OPPOSED (BURNS, CRUZ, TAYLOR-MOYE, BROWN, BRANTLEY, HERRON, VIZZO-PANICCIA, MCBRIDE-LEE, ROMAN-CHRISTY, NIEVES, VALLE, SULIMAN, MARTINEZ, AND NEWTON).

** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF OCTOBER 5, 2020, OCTOBER 19, 2020 AS SUBMITTED PASSED WITH EIGHTEEN (18) IN FAVOR (BURNS, MCCARTHY, CRUZ, TAYLOR-MOYE, BROWN, BRANTLEY, HERRON, DEFILIPPO, VIZZO-PANICCIA, LYONS, MCBRIDE-LEE, ROMAN-CHRISTY, SILVA, CASTILLO, NIEVES, VALLE, SULIMAN, MARTINEZ, AND NEWTON) AND TWO (2) OPPOSED (PEREIRA AND BROWN).

Mayor Ganim assumed the Chairmanship of the meeting.

COMMUNICATIONS TO BE REFERRED TO COMMITTEES:

197-19 Communication from City Attorney re: Proposed Settlement of Pending Litigation with Peter Diaz – Case #3:19-cv-1534 (VLB), referred to Miscellaneous Matters Committee.

198-19 Communication from Engineering re: Proposed On-call Bridge Inspection and Structural Engineering Professional Services Agreement with RHS Consulting Design, LLC; A. DiCesare Associates, P.C. and Wengell McDonnell & Costello, Inc., referred to Contracts Committee.

199-19 Communication from Central Grants re: Grant Submission: State of Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection – Elton Rogers Park Dam – Ox Brook Rehabilitation (#0C482), referred to Economic and Community Development and Environment Committee.

200-19 Communication from Central Grants re: Grant Submission: State of Connecticut Department of Transportation – Seaview Avenue Corridor Project – Construction (#16311), referred to Economic and Community Development and Environment Committee.

202-19 Communication from City Attorney re: Proposed Settlement of Pending Litigation in the Matter of James Quinn, referred to Miscellaneous Matters Committee.

203-19 Communication from City Attorney re: Proposed Workers' Compensation Stipulation in the Matter of David DeFeo, referred to Miscellaneous Matters Committee.

204-19 Communication from City Attorney re: Proposed Workers' Compensation Stipulation in the Matter of Robert Sapiro, referred to Miscellaneous Matters Committee.

** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ MOVED TO CONSOLIDATE AND REFER THE ITEMS TO THE COMMITTEES. ** COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON SECONDED.

Council Member Brantley expressed concerns about Agenda Items 199-19 and 200-19 that were added to agenda and would be referred to the Committee tomorrow with no time to consider the items. Council Member Valle said that she agreed with Council Member Brantley.

** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

MATTERS TO BE ACTED UPON (CONSENT CALENDAR):

*146-19 Ordinance Committee Report re: Resolution for the City Attorney to draft language to amend Municipal Code Ordinance, Chapter 2.36 – Officers' Salaries, Section 2.36.010 – Officers' and Unaffiliated Employee Salaries.

*185-19 Public Safety and Transportation Committee Report re: Grant Submission: State of Connecticut Court Support Services Division – Youth Violence Prevention Initiative (#21399).

Mayor Ganim asked if there was any Council Member who would like to remove an item from the Consent Calendar. Council Member Brown said he would like to remove Agenda Item 146-19. Council Member Pereira said she would like to remove Agenda Item 185-19.

146-19 Ordinance Committee Report re: Resolution for the City Attorney to draft language to amend Municipal Code Ordinance, Chapter 2.36 – Officers' Salaries, Section 2.36.010 – Officers' and Unaffiliated Employee Salaries.

** COUNCIL MEMBER BROWN MOVED AGENDA ITEM 146-19 ORDINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT RE: RESOLUTION FOR THE CITY ATTORNEY TO DRAFT LANGUAGE TO AMEND MUNICIPAL CODE ORDINANCE, CHAPTER 2.36 – OFFICERS' SALARIES, SECTION 2.36.010 – OFFICERS' AND UNAFFILIATED EMPLOYEE SALARIES. ** COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON SECONDED.

Council Member Brown said that the item came out of committee unanimously. He had some questions about it.

Council Member Newton said that the reason it was submitted had to do with Mayoral appointees that were in unions. There are employees that have been working for many years and they make less than the appointees. Council Member Newton said that they should return to the previous practice where the Mayor would come to the Council and to ask for raises for appointees. Council Member Newton asked his colleagues to support it.

Council Member Lyons asked to add her name to the resolution. This topic has come up at various times and has always been denied.

Council Member Cruz said he would like to add his name to the resolution.

Council Member Brantley said that she would like to add her name to the resolution.

Council Member Herron said that she would like to add her name to the resolution.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that she would like to add her name to the resolution.

** THE MOTION TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 146-19 ORDINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT RE: RESOLUTION FOR THE CITY ATTORNEY TO DRAFT LANGUAGE TO AMEND MUNICIPAL CODE ORDINANCE, CHAPTER 2.36 – OFFICERS' SALARIES, SECTION 2.36.010 – OFFICERS' AND UNAFFILIATED EMPLOYEE SALARIES PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

185-19 Public Safety and Transportation Committee Report re: Grant Submission: State of Connecticut Court Support Services Division – Youth Violence Prevention Initiative (#21399).

** COUNCIL MEMBER VALLE MOVED AGENDA ITEM 185-19 PUBLIC SAFETY AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE REPORT RE: GRANT SUBMISSION: STATE OF CONNECTICUT COURT SUPPORT SERVICES DIVISION – YOUTH VIOLENCE PREVENTION INITIATIVE (#21399).

Council Member Valle noted that the item was approve unanimously in Committee.

** COUNCIL MEMBER CRUZ SECONDED.

Council Member Pereira said that she would not vote for this because there were provisions allowing the administration to sign agreements involving funding.

** THE MOTION TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 185-19 PUBLIC SAFETY AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE REPORT RE: GRANT SUBMISSION: STATE OF CONNECTICUT COURT SUPPORT SERVICES DIVISION – YOUTH VIOLENCE PREVENTION INITIATIVE (#21399) PASSED WITH NINETEEN (19) IN FAVOR (BURNS, MCCARTHY, CRUZ, TAYLOR-MOYE, BROWN, BRANTLEY, BROWN, HERRON, DEFILIPPO, VIZZO-PANICCIA, LYONS, MCBRIDE-LEE, ROMAN-CHRISTY, SILVA, CASTILLO, NIEVES, VALLE, SULIMAN, MARTINEZ, AND NEWTON) AND ONE (1) OPPOSED (PEREIRA).

ITEMS FOR IMMEDIATE CONSIDERATION:

201-19 Communication from Central Grants re: Grant Submission: State of Connecticut Office of Policy and Management – Police and Community Violent Crime Reduction Partnership (#20280), FOR IMMEDIATE CONSIDERATION.

** COUNCIL MEMBER VALLE MOVED AGENDA ITEM 201-19 COMMUNICATION FROM CENTRAL GRANTS RE: GRANT SUBMISSION: STATE OF CONNECTICUT OFFICE OF POLICY AND MANAGEMENT – POLICE AND COMMUNITY VIOLENT CRIME REDUCTION PARTNERSHIP (#20280), FOR IMMEDIATE CONSIDERATION. ** COUNCIL MEMBER CRUZ SECONDED.

Ms. DeJesus said that the Office of Policy and Management was making \$250,000 available for Police and Community Violent Crime Reduction Partnership. She said that the Bridgeport Police Department was choosing to pass those funds through to RYSAP.

Council Member Valle asked who made the decision for RYSAP to receive the funding. Ms. DeJesus explained that the funding was for crime reduction and RYSAP was the only organization that qualified.

Council Member Brantley asked Ms. DeJesus to read the criteria, which Ms. DeJesus did.

Council Member Martinez asked about Project Longevity and said she did not feel Street Safe did not do a good job in this area. Ms. DeJesus said that Project Longevity was not a non-profit organization.

Council Member Cruz said he would have liked to have other organizations included and have more discussions about the grant.

Council Member Cruz said there had been a mention of some funding that OPED was holding for the small businesses. He said that that funding was also important.

Council Member Brown asked for clarification on organizations that deal with violent crime prevention. Ms. DeJesus said she had reached out to the State of Connecticut Office of Policy

and Management about this. Council Member Brown said violent crimes are reduced when there is employment available. Ms. DeJesus said RYSAP does include mentorship and job training, Discussion followed.

Council Member Burns asked about the police overtime. Ms. DeJesus said that Lt. Paul Grech was available to speak about this. She mentioned they have a focus on housing projects where there have been shots fired. There will be a report produced at the end of December.

Council Member Pereira said RYSAP has been around a long time and knew members of Street Safe. She wished to know why they did not require data about their effectiveness. Ms. DeJesus said at the end of every grant performance period, the organizations are required to present a report on outcomes and she could provide the Council Members with the reports. Discussion followed.

Council Member Pereira said the fact that the grantees are reporting on themselves is never a good thing and they should have some credible data to support this.

Council Member Brantley said she agreed with Council Member Pereira and had not heard people talk about what Street Safe had done. She said she would like to have someone at the ECD&E meeting tomorrow to discuss this. Ms. DeJesus said it would go to Public Safety. Council Member Brantley asked that someone attend Public Safety Committee to speak regarding this grant.

Council Member Valle said Ms. DeJesus' items could be included on the ECD&E agenda, but the agenda for tomorrow's meeting had already been posted.

** THE MOTION TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 201-19 COMMUNICATION FROM CENTRAL GRANTS RE: GRANT SUBMISSION: STATE OF CONNECTICUT OFFICE OF POLICY AND MANAGEMENT – POLICE AND COMMUNITY VIOLENT CRIME REDUCTION PARTNERSHIP (#20280), FOR IMMEDIATE CONSIDERATION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

**COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 201-19 COMMUNICATION FROM CENTRAL GRANTS RE: GRANT SUBMISSION: STATE OF CONNECTICUT OFFICE OF POLICY AND MANAGEMENT – POLICE AND COMMUNITY VIOLENT CRIME REDUCTION PARTNERSHIP (#20280). ** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA SECONDED.

** THE MOTION TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 201-19 COMMUNICATION FROM CENTRAL GRANTS RE: GRANT SUBMISSION: STATE OF CONNECTICUT OFFICE OF POLICY AND MANAGEMENT – POLICE AND COMMUNITY VIOLENT CRIME REDUCTION PARTNERSHIP (#20280) PASSED WITH NINETEEN (19) IN FAVOR (BURNS, MCCARTHY, CRUZ, TAYLOR-MOYE, BROWN, BRANTLEY, BROWN, HERRON, DEFILIPPO, VIZZO-PANICCIA, LYONS, MCBRIDE-LEE, ROMAN-CHRISTY, SILVA, CASTILLO, NIEVES, VALLE, SULIMAN, MARTINEZ, AND NEWTON) AND ONE (1) OPPOSED (PEREIRA).

Council Member Lyons asked for a point of personal privilege. When recognized by the Mayor, Council Member Lyons then read the following statement into the record:

I was at the Public Speaking and came in on at 6:33. I was not absent. Councilwoman Rosalina Roman-Christy can verify my attendance.

Below is what I read into the record.

Whereas Rule XII was violated on September 21, 2020, in a couple of ways that went against both the spirit and the letter of Rule XII.

Rule XII clearly states: The President may remove or reassign to a different committee any Committee Member upon ratification by the City Council. The reason (including, but not limited to a pattern of poor committee attendance) for the removal or reassignment and shall be stated by the Council President prior to the City Council vote to ratify.

The record shows that the Council President Nieves then made the following statement:

"After careful consideration of the behavior of all members of the council I decided to exercise my right under City Council Rule XII. Council Members have been warned in the past that they must adhere to all City Council rules and follow the appropriate parliamentary protocol."

The record does not specifically mention Council members Michelle Lyons, Michael DeFilippo and Maria Pereria and does specifically mention any reasons for removal. It did not include advance notice, and did not allow them a defense or explanation thereby denying them their right to due process.

Rule XII makes no mention of removing Co-Chairs nor does it mention removal of Liaisons to Boards and Commissions thereby exceeding the powers granted under this rule.

It is not enough to take action to go back and require the President to put it in writing after the fact. The process should begin anew with specific charges stated:

Furthermore any member being removed or reassigned, in order to provide them with due process, must be given advance notice of the Council President's or any intended action and a statement of specific reasons so that there would be sufficient time to prepare for a response.

I am looking to put in the following changes in the future to be put in the Council Rules during the next session by a resolution.

ADJOURNMENT

** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED TO ADJOURN. ** COUNCIL MEMBER CRUZ SECONDED. ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

The meeting adjourned at 7:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Telesco Secretarial Services