

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
ORDINANCE COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
JUNE 27, 2023**

ATTENDANCE: Tyler Mack, Co-chair; Rosalina Roman-Christy, Co-chair; Aikeem Boyd, Jorge Cruz, Michelle Lyons, Ernest Newton

OTHERS: Council Member(s): F. Hodges & M. Pereira; Thomas Gaudett, Deputy Chief of Staff; City Attorney Mark Anastasi; Anthony Paoletto, Mayor's Office; Kim Brace, Electronic Data Services, Call in User 1

CALL TO ORDER

Co-chair Mack called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. A quorum was present.

Council Member Lyons said that she had to leave the meeting due to a conflict in schedule.

Council Member Lyons left the meeting at 6:03 p.m.

APPROVAL OF COMMITTEE MINUTES:

- **May 23, 2023 (Regular Meeting)**
- **June 5, 2023 (Public Hearing)**
- **June 12, 2023 (Special Meeting)**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING MEETINGS AS SUBMITTED:**

- **MAY 23, 2023 (REGULAR MEETING)**
- **JUNE 5, 2023 (PUBLIC HEARING)**
- **JUNE 12, 2023 (SPECIAL MEETING)**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER CRUZ SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

79-22 Proposed Plan of Districting adopted by the Redistricting Commission on May 30, 2023 for Amendment of Code of Ordinances, Section 2.06.010, to comply with the Commission's Plan and for providing Suitable Polling Places in such Districts and Defining the Boundaries of the area to be served by each Polling Place. (For the purposes of withdrawing item)

Council Member Mack said that the City Attorney had requested that this item be withdrawn.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON MOVED TO WITHDRAW THE ITEM.**

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

Council Member Pereira said that the request for withdrawal must approved by the Council and must be in writing and wished to know who had submitted the request to withdraw. Council Member Mack said that the City Attorney had submitted the request, which was distributed at the last City Council meeting. Atty. Anastasi said that the final withdrawal is the one that requires a full Council Vote and that it would be presented to the full Council for that final vote on July 3rd.

Council Member Hodges joined the meeting at 6:08 p.m.

Council Member Pereira said that the item was the Redistricting Committee that introduced the item, not the City Attorney. Atty. Anastasi explained that the Redistricting Commission had taken a formal vote to direct the City Attorney to refer the matter to the full Council on the Commission's behalf. He went on to give the details.

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

84-22 Proposed Amendment to the Municipal Code of Ordinances, Section 2.06.010 – Districts for Election of Council Members, in order to comply with the Plan of Districting (Plan 3) adopted on June 12, 2023, by the Redistricting Commission and for providing suitable Polling Places in such Districts and defining the Boundaries of the Area to be served by each Polling Place.

Council Member Mack said that Atty. Maye had introduced this and had sent out a packet with all the information in it. The proposed motions were included in this packet. Atty. Anastasi then gave a brief overview of the numerous proposed motions.

Mr. Brace said that they had been working on the maps to insure that all the District boundaries changes were made. He explained that he had worked carefully with the Registrars of Voters to insure that the polling places were listed on the map with the precincts.

Council Member Newton said that only one of the 18 members of the Council had objections.

Council Member Pereira said that she was the one objecting. Council Member Newton reminded everyone that he had the floor and reminded everyone that Council Member Pereira was not a member of the Committee. He said that they have discussed this and there were only two Districts that were being impacted. Only the Council Member from the 138th has an issue with this. He suggested that they allow the Council Member to have her say and then move forward with the vote.

Council Member Pereira said that the City Council had never discussed the polling places and wished to know who created the map.

Atty. Anastasi replied that this was created for the Committee to discuss. The consultant created the map to make as few changes as possible and not to change the polling places. These are only a proposal and it is up to full City Council to make the final changes.

Council Member Pereira said that it is the only legislative body that has authority to change the polling place by State legislature. It is codified in the law and neither Mr. Brace or anyone else has the authority. She asked who prepared the map with the polling locations that was distributed today.

Atty. Anastasi said that he had already answered the question. The Legislative body is Council and there are staff that they rely on to assist in their efforts. The staff has proposed these polling places that reflect the minimum amount of required changes. Council Member Pereira objected and said her question was clear. She wished to know which staff members created the location map that has never been discussed by this committee or the Council as a body.

Mr. Brace said that he had worked in conjunction with the Registrars of Voters Office to look at the precinct boundaries and the polling place. The polling places had been used before and this was deemed successful by the Registrar's Office. That is why the polling places were included on the precinct maps.

Council Member Pereira then said that Mr. Brace had drawn the Districting map, which have nothing to do with polling and the Registrar's Office, which has nothing to do with selecting the polling places, created the maps distributed earlier in the day.

Atty. Anastasi said the full answer was as he stated earlier. What was done was they presented to the Committee and ultimately to the Council maps that reflected the minimal changes required to reflect the minimal changes in the District. Obviously, the input from the Registrar's Office had the current polling places indicated that the locations worked before and still work with the District boundary changes. If the Council wishes to change the polling places or the precinct line, they are free to do so. These maps are merely proposals that show the minimal changes required to reflect the minimal changes in the District to accomplish the goal.

Council Member Newton said that the polling places on the map in the Districts were the same ones for the last 20 or 30 elections. Nothing has changed other than the new Harding High School which has already hosted three elections already. The Committee's business is to move the motions forward to the Council for discussion.

A brief discussion followed about whether the motions should be consolidated or handled individually.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON MOVED TO ENTER INTO THE RECORD AS AN EXHIBIT A DOCUMENT TITLED "BRIDGEPORT 2023 REDISTRICTING – WARD CHANGES PLAN 3 AND THE FINAL PLAN OF DISTRICTING ADOPTION BY THE CITY'S COMMISSION ON REDISTRICTING ON JUNE 12, 2023".**

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

Council Member Pereira stated for the record and asked the stenographer to make sure to get this correctly in the minutes:

1. The 138th District and the 137th District are being gerrymandered.

2. This consultant that created the original maps for the illegal City Council maps then came back to the Redistricting Committee and said he found 850 more voters two years after the census was completed and not a single Redistricting Commissioner asked where they were found and how they were found.

3. Census blocks for all right turns. Asylum Street and my side of Boston Avenue is my census block yet on the left side of the Bond Street, it is going into the 139th with [inaudible] rules. It's right, right. I don't know how I have Asylum Street up to the cemetery on Boston Avenue and then the left side of Bond Street is in the 139th. That will also be addressed in court.

4. We have natural boundaries. U.S. 1 is a natural major boundary. It was I-95 before I-95 was built. The consultants showed that I would have the entire left side of Boston Avenue when I first met with them, which made sense. They should not cross a major U.S. State Highway.

So, all of these will be the basis for the lawsuit that I will be filing. And that's it. I just wanted to put it on the record. Thank you.

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON MOVED TO ENTER INTO THE RECORD AS AN EXHIBIT A DOCUMENT TITLED "BRIDGEPORT 2023 REDISTRICTING PLAN 3 VOTING DISTRICT AKA PRECINCT LINE MAPS WITH VOTING PLACES.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BOYD SECONDED.**

Council Member Pereira said that the City Council never referred or discussed boundary maps. They should have been created by the legislative branch of government instead of the administrative branch of government. This will be raised in court as well.

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON MOVED TO APPROVE AND ADOPT EXHIBIT ENTITLED BRIDGEPORT 2023 REDISTRICTING PLAN 3 VOTING DISTRICTS.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BOYD SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON MOVED TO FILE A COPY OF BRIDGEPORT 2023 REDISTRICTING PLAN 3 VOTING DISTRICTS WITH THE CITY CLERK'S OFFICE TO BE MAINTAINED IN THE CITY CLERK'S OFFICE UNDER THE TITLE "POLLING PLACES AND PRECINCT LINES ADOPTED BY THE CITY COUNCIL AT ITS JUNE 2023 FOLLOWING THE 2020 DECENNIAL CENSUS.**

Atty. Anastasi said that he believes that the final vote will be held on July 3, 2023.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON MOVED TO AMEND HIS MOTION TO CORRECT THE DATE TO JULY 3, 2023.**

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

Council Member Pereira said that she had repeatedly addressed this with Atty. Maye. Every census block maps have repeatedly only filed for certain districts. Every census block map showing how many residents on each block needs to be filed with the City Clerk, not just three or four Districts. It's a public document and been displayed in Committee. The maps need to be filed for every District showing the population of every census block.

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON MOTIONED TO AMEND 84-22 BY SUBSTITUTING THE FOLLOWING:**

2.06.010 DISTRICTS FOR ELECTION OF COUNCIL MEMBERS.

- A. THE TOWN AND CITY IS HEREBY DIVIDED INTO TEN DISTRICTS FOR THE ELECTION OF MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL.**
- 1. EACH DISTRICT FOR THE ELECTION OF MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL SHALL CONSIST OF THE RESIDENTS OF THE CENSUS BLOCKS LISTED FOR THAT DISTRICT ON THE ATTACHED CENSUS BLOCK LIST.**
 - 2. THE INFORMATION ON THE CENSUS BLOCK LIST SHALL BE RECORDED ON A CENSUS BLOCK MAP AND ON A STREET MAP OF THE CITY OF BRIDGEPORT.**
 - 3. THE CENSUS BLOCK LIST AND MAPS, BOTH DATED BRIDGEPORT [2022] 2023 COUNCIL REDISTRICTING PLAN [A] ENTITLED BRIDGEPORT 2023 REDISTRICTING – WARD CHANGES PLAN 3, SHALL BE FILED IN AND AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC IN THE OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK.**
 - 4. IN THE EVENT OF CONFLICT BETWEEN THE MAPS AND THE CENSUS BLOCK LIST, THE CENSUS BLOCK LIST SHALL CONTROL.**
- B. THERE SHALL BE TWO MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL ELECTED FROM EACH DISTRICT.**
- C. THIS SECTION SHALL REMAIN IN PLACE UNTIL A NEW PLAN IS ADOPTED FOLLOWING THE NEXT DECENNIAL FEDERAL CENSUS PURSUANT TO C.G.S. SEC. 9-169F AND THE CITY CHARTER, CHAPTER 5, SECTION 2, AND GOVERNING LAW AND CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS.**
- D. THE PLAN OF DISTRICTING HEREBY ADOPTED AND SET FORTH IN THE ATTACHED BRIDGEPORT [2022] 2023 CITY COUNCIL REDISTRICTING PLAN**

[A] ENTITLED BRIDGEPORT 2023 REDISTRICTING – WARD CHANGES PLAN 3 CENSUS BLOCK LIST AND MAPS, AND THE TEN DISTRICTS ESTABLISHED HEREIN SHALL BE UTILIZED FOR THE 2023 BRIDGEPORT MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

E. THE POLLING PLACES AND PRECINCT LINES FOR LOCAL, STATE, AND FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE DISTRICTS SHALL BE IN ACCORDANCE WITH, AND AS REPRESENTED ON, LISTS AND MAPS AND SUCH OTHER RELATED DOCUMENTS TO BE MAINTAINED IN THE CITY CLERK’S OFFICE UNDER THE TITLE “POLLING PLACES AND PRECINCT LINES ADOPTED PURSUANT TO THE 2020 DECENNIAL CENSUS. THE DOCUMENTS ENTITLED BRIDGEPORT 2023 REDISTRICTING – PLAN 3 – VOTING DISTRICTS SHALL REPRESENT THE POLLING PLACES AND PRECINCT LINES FOR THE CITY’S LOCAL OR MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS.

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

Council Member Mack said that they had all received the documentation and this was to update the ordinance to reflect 2023.

Council Member Pereira asked who received the emails. Council Member Mack said everyone should have received it. He said that he would check to make sure she received a copy. Council Member Pereira said that she needed to refer that document to her attorney.

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON MOVED TO ADD TO THE CONCLUSION OF ITEM 84-22 THE FOLLOWING TO BE EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY UPON PUBLICATION.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER CRUZ SECONDED.**

Council Member Pereira said that the motion states that the item will become effective immediately following the Council vote and publication in the newspaper.

Atty. Anastasi said that general rule in the Charter was that 30 days after publication, but time was now of the essence. Council Member Pereira asked why that might be. Atty. Anastasi said he knew why.

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON MOVED TO APPROVE PROPOSED REVISED ORDINANCE SECTION 2.06.010 AS AMENDED BY SUBSTITUTION BY THIS COMMITTEE.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BOYD SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Council Member Roman-Christy said that she did not appreciate having a Council Member who was not on the Committee continually interrupting and making comments during the meeting.

Council Member Pereira said that she was talking to herself.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON MOVED TO SCHEDULE A PUBLIC HEARING BEFORE THE ORDINANCE COMMITTEE ON ITEM 84-22 ON MONDAY, JULY 3 AT 6:00 P.M. IN THE CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER ROMAN-CHRISTY**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

ADJOURNMENT

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

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

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 6:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Telesco Secretarial Services