

**CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
PUBLIC SPEAKING FORUM  
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2023  
City Council Chambers, City Hall  
45 Lyon Terrace  
Bridgeport, CT 06604**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Council President Pro Tempore Newton called the public speaking portion of the meeting to order at 6:42 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

The City Clerk Lydia Martinez called the roll.

130<sup>th</sup> District: Scott Burns, Matthew McCarthy  
131<sup>st</sup> District: Jorge Cruz, Tyler Mack  
132<sup>nd</sup> District: Rolanda Smith  
133<sup>rd</sup> District: Aikeem Boyd, Jeanette Herron  
134<sup>th</sup> District: Michelle Lyons, AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia  
135<sup>th</sup> District: Mary McBride-Lee, Rosalina Roman-Christy  
136<sup>th</sup> District: Frederick Hodges, *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: Ernest Newton

A quorum was present. Names shown in italics did not respond when the roll was called. Council President Nieves and Council Member Valle had excused absences.

**THE FOLLOWING NAMED PERSON HAS REQUESTED PERMISSION TO ADDRESS THE CITY COUNCIL ON MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2023 AT 6:30 P.M. IN THE CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL, 45 LYON TERRACE, BRIDGEPORT, CT 06604.**

**NAME**

**SUBJECT**

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

Governance/Process.

I suggest that I do not need to identify the ‘news’ subject which has become the “talk of the town” since last Friday from social media video. And election processes in the City, ethical behavior on the part of employees and citizens as well as law enforcement are among matters brought to your attention. I have a

few questions to raise tonight. Perhaps if you cannot answer one or more, you will be kind enough to direct me to where the answers may be found.

The subject of a front-page column in the CT Post this morning and social media since last Friday were videos taken by cameras trained on the entrance area to our second City Hall, the Annex. I cannot account for the who, what, where, of the visual narrative circulating, but first I must ask if the folks in the picture are assumed to have keys to the Annex? And what normal City protocol has one or more of them in the hours of darkness before dawn doing City business? Was it business in which they are normally employed or outside political business? It does not look like something that falls under the heading of good governance. Camera technology has come a long way and taxpayers have spent dearly for it though spotlights on this subject have been dim or just plain dark. That leads me to ask how many cameras are currently trained on auto travel, people in school or around those sites, at other public buildings or City locations, programs and monitored in the City by the City? Which departments are responsible for and paying for the equipment and communication services annually? What is the total dollar amount spent? The Police Department has audio and video equipment in cars and on officers in addition to the fixed or mobile operations. Who else is watching if anyone? Are video feeds operating 24/7? Or on a different schedule?

It is likely that disclosure of specific locations is protected from general revelation, but for reasons of oversight, where is that responsibility held today?

It will take some time for legal investigations and other research to find the bulk of answers raised in public discussions. But trust and respect for elections by the voter population is critical in a democracy. Where will the Council seek a response to this increase in questions? Where do we go to find respected, unconflicted, folks who care about “justice for all”? I hope you can inform me. I do trust that time will tell.

**Ms. Denise Ellis**  
253 Carroll Avenue  
Bridgeport, CT

Ms. Ellis came forward and said that it was her third time in addressing the Council. She said that there were vehicles that were being left on their street with no tags, other vehicles that are being towed to the street for repairs by a mechanic that lives on the street. People have to walk half a block or more just to get home. People on the street can't have friends or family over because there is nowhere to park. She has contacted Zoning and a variety of other departments about this, but nothing has changed. She wants help with getting a designated handicapped space in front of her home for her elderly mother.

**Maria Pires**  
65 Lourmel Street  
Bridgeport, CT

Ms. Pires said that she was present to inform the Council Members that there is a Council Member in the 136th District that has his vehicles registered in Shelton in order to avoid the Bridgeport taxes. CT State law requires the vehicles be registered where the owner resides. That is \$2000 a year that the City is not receiving. The Council Member is breaking the law. Why are elected officials allowed to break the law. The Council President is aware of this but has done nothing. If the Council Members do not do anything, they can be voted out.

**Eve Parsons**  
506 Dewey Street  
Bridgeport, CT

City of Bridgeport

Ms. Parsons said that she was present to speak on behalf of the people of Bridgeport. Ms. Barton was raised to be honest and to speak the truth. Those who tell the truth will be set free. The video tells the truth. She asked how the Council Members can say they represent the people when they ignore this. The residents are here as winners and not losers. She told the Council Members to stand for the truth. (Ms. Parsons raised her voice and her words became inaudible) She concluded by saying that the truth should not go by the wayside.

**Minister Willie Medina**  
34 Court A, Apt. 64  
Bridgeport, CT

Council Members

Minister Medina came forward and said that he was calling on the City Council to stand up and speak the truth. He said that many of the Council Members were quiet and he asked where the truth was and where their God was. He said that each and every person in the Council could identify the person in the video, but they are saying that they don't know who it was. Joe's gotta go along with everyone tied to him. 999 Broad street belongs to the residents. (The audience began to shout.) Minister Medina concluded by saying he hoped God would bless and visit each Council Member.

**Shaenna Taylor**  
131 Madison Terrace  
Bridgeport, CT

Council Members

She Said that everyone was aware of the video and they were being careful not to say who was involved. She said she had been hearing many comments and people are feeling sad, lost and felt that there was no democracy. She said that she keeps hoping that change was going to come. The Council Members were not elected to be silenced. The residents are scared and hopeless. She said that she hopes that something gets done.

City of Bridgeport  
City Council  
Regular Meeting  
September 18, 2023

**ADJOURNMENT**

Council Member Newton closed the public session at 7:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Telesco Secretarial Services

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT**  
**CITY COUNCIL MEETING**  
**MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2023**

**7:00 PM**

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

**Bridgeport, Connecticut**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Council President Pro Tempore Newton called the Regular Meeting of the City Council to order at 7:12 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

The City Clerk Lydia Martinez called the roll.

130<sup>th</sup> District: Scott Burns, Matthew McCarthy  
131<sup>st</sup> District: Jorge Cruz, Tyler Mack  
132<sup>nd</sup> District: Rolanda Smith  
133<sup>rd</sup> District: Aikeem Boyd, Jeanette Herron  
134<sup>th</sup> District: Michelle Lyons, AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia  
135<sup>th</sup> District: Mary McBride-Lee, Rosalina Roman-Christy  
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138<sup>th</sup> District: Maria Pereira, Samia Suliman  
139<sup>th</sup> District: Ernest Newton

A quorum was present. Names shown in italics did not respond when the roll was called. Council President Nieves and Council Member Valle had excused absences.

**PRAYER**

Council President Pro Tempore Newton asked Minister Medina to lead those present in prayer.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Council President Pro Tempore Newton asked City Clerk Martinez to lead those present in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Council Member Herron asked for a point of personal privilege and was acknowledged. She then informed those present that former Council President Thomas McCarthy's father had recently passed away and requested a moment of silence for the family.

**MINUTES FOR APPROVAL:**

• **July 3, 2023**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER MCBRIDE-LEE MOVED THE MINUTES OF THE JULY 3, 2023 MEETING.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BOYD SECONDED.**

The following correction was noted:

Page 3, bottom of the page. Please change "Kelvin Ayid" to "Kelvin Ayala" and all references to "Mr. Ayid" to "Mr. Ayala"

**\*\* THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF JULY 3, 2023 AS CORRECTED PASSED WITH TWELVE (12) IN FAVOR (BURNS, CRUZ, SMITH, BOYD, HERRON, VIZZO-PANICCIA, MCBRIDE-LEE, ROMAN-CHRISTY, HODGES, PEREIRA, SULIMAN AND NEWTON) AND THREE (3) ABSTENTIONS (MCCARTHY, MACK AND LYONS).**

**COMMUNICATIONS TO BE REFERRED TO COMMITTEES:**

**124-22 Communication from Mayor re: Nomination of Elizabeth Rivera-Rodriguez for the Appointment to the City's Director of Health Position, referred to Contracts Committee.**

**125-22 Communication from Public Facilities re: Proposed Site Access Agreement with The Connecticut Light and Power Company, d/b/a Eversource Energy for the Installation of New Poles and Power Lines on City and Park Properties, referred to Contracts Committee.**

**126-22 Communication from Public Facilities re: Proposed Tower Cell Site Lease Agreement with DISH Wireless, L.L.C. for the Installation of Antennas and other Equipment at Kennedy Stadium, referred to Contracts Committee.**

**\*\* COUNCIL PRESIDENT NIEVES MOVED TO REFER THE FOLLOWING AGENDA ITEMS:**

**124-22 COMMUNICATION FROM MAYOR RE: NOMINATION OF ELIZABETH RIVERA-RODRIGUEZ FOR THE APPOINTMENT TO THE**

**CITY'S DIRECTOR OF HEALTH POSITION, REFERRED TO CONTRACTS COMMITTEE.**

**125-22 COMMUNICATION FROM PUBLIC FACILITIES RE: PROPOSED SITE ACCESS AGREEMENT WITH THE CONNECTICUT LIGHT AND POWER COMPANY, D/B/A EVERSOURCE ENERGY FOR THE INSTALLATION OF NEW POLES AND POWER LINES ON CITY AND PARK PROPERTIES, REFERRED TO CONTRACTS COMMITTEE.**

**126-22 COMMUNICATION FROM PUBLIC FACILITIES RE: PROPOSED TOWER CELL SITE LEASE AGREEMENT WITH DISH WIRELESS, L.L.C. FOR THE INSTALLATION OF ANTENNAS AND OTHER EQUIPMENT AT KENNEDY STADIUM, REFERRED TO CONTRACTS COMMITTEE.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BOYD SECONDED.**

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

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

**\*109-22 Public Safety and Transportation Committee Report re: Grant Submission: The Justice Education Center – Project Safe Neighborhoods (#24485).**

**\*113-22 Public Safety and Transportation Committee Report re: Resolution regarding the 2023 “First” Round of City Sidewalk Repair Pilot Program.**

Council President Pro Tempore Newton asked if there was anyone who wished to remove an item from the Consent Calendar.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia requested that Agenda Item 113-22 be removed from the Consent Calendar.

The City Clerk read the following item into the record:

**\*109-22 Public Safety and Transportation Committee Report re: Grant Submission: The Justice Education Center – Project Safe Neighborhoods (#24485).**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER MCCARTHY MOVED AGENDA ITEM 109-22 PUBLIC SAFETY AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE REPORT RE: GRANT SUBMISSION: THE JUSTICE EDUCATION CENTER – PROJECT SAFE NEIGHBORHOODS (#24485).**

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

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

**113-22 Public Safety and Transportation Committee Report re: Resolution regarding the 2023 “First” Round of City Sidewalk Repair Pilot Program.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER CRUZ MOVED AGENDA ITEM 113-22 PUBLIC SAFETY AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE REPORT RE: RESOLUTION REGARDING THE 2023 “FIRST” ROUND OF CITY SIDEWALK REPAIR PILOT PROGRAM.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BOYD SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED WITH FOURTEEN (14) IN FAVOR (BURNS, MCCARTHY, CRUZ, MACK, SMITH, BOYD, HERRON, LYONS, MCBRIDE-LEE, ROMAN-CHRISTY, HODGES, PEREIRA, SULIMAN AND NEWTON) AND ONE (1) AGAINST (VIZZO-PANICCIA).**

*Council Member Smith left the meeting.*

**ROLL CALL VOTE ITEMS:**

**\*92-22 Public Safety and Transportation Committee Report re: Appointment of Sarah Lewis (D) to the Fire Commission.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER CRUZ MOVED AGENDA ITEM 92-22 PUBLIC SAFETY AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE REPORT RE: APPOINTMENT OF SARAH LEWIS (D) TO THE FIRE COMMISSION.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER MCBRIDE-LEE SECONDED.**

Council Member Pereira said that the candidate was the treasurer for the 138th District Council Member for the campaign. She noted that this was the worst finance report she had seen in all her years. It was not on time or accurate.

Council Member McBride-Lee said that Council Member Pereira had gone into the home of a woman who was 90 years old with dementia for the absentee ballot. However, whenever there were accusations against Council Members they were not allowed to speak to defend themselves.

Council Member McCarthy said that he did not know the individual and pointed out there were only 14 Council Members present.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER MCCARTHY MOVED TO TABLE AGENDA ITEM 92-22 PUBLIC SAFETY AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE REPORT RE: APPOINTMENT OF SARAH LEWIS (D) TO THE FIRE COMMISSION.**

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

**\*\* THE MOTION TO TABLE PASSED WITH ELEVEN (11) IN FAVOR (BURNS, MCCARTHY, CRUZ, MACK, BOYD, HERRON, LYONS, VIZZO-PANICCIA, MCBRIDE-LEE, ROMAN-CHRISTY, AND PEREIRA) AND THREE (3) AGAINST AND (HODGES, SULIMAN AND NEWTON).**

Council President Pro Tempore Newton said that this was an example of why people do not want to serve on a Board or Commission.



Council President Pro Tempore Newton asked if there was anyone who wished to change their votes. Council Member Roman-Christy and Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that they would like to change their vote. Council President Pro Tempore Newton announced they would do the roll call again.

Council Member Pereira said that for a motion to reconsider would have to be made by someone on the prevailing side. She pointed out that Council President Pro Tempore Newton had announced the results.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER ROMAN-CHRISTY MOVED TO RECONSIDER AGENDA ITEM 92-22 PUBLIC SAFETY AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE REPORT RE: APPOINTMENT OF SARAH LEWIS (D) TO THE FIRE COMMISSION.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER MCCARTHY SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION TO RECONSIDER PASSED WITH TWELVE (12) IN FAVOR (BURNS, MCCARTHY, CRUZ, MACK, HERRON, LYONS, VIZZO-PANICCIA, MCBRIDE-LEE, ROMAN-CHRISTY, HODGES, SULIMAN AND NEWTON) AND TWO (2) AGAINST (BOYD AND PEREIRA).**

A roll call vote was required.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER MCCARTHY MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 92-22 PUBLIC SAFETY AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE REPORT RE: APPOINTMENT OF SARAH LEWIS (D) TO THE FIRE COMMISSION.**

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

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED WITH TWELVE (12) IN FAVOR (BURNS, CRUZ, MACK, BOYD, HERRON, LYONS, VIZZO-PANICCIA, MCBRIDE-LEE, ROMAN-CHRISTY, HODGES, SULIMAN AND NEWTON) AND TWO (2) AGAINST (MCCARTHY AND PEREIRA).**

*Council Member McBride-Lee left the meeting at 7:45 p.m.*

#### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

**\*112-22 Miscellaneous Matters Committee Report re: Appointment of Soledad Nunez (D) to the Planning and Zoning Commission.**

**56-22 Miscellaneous Matters Committee Report re: Appointment of John Mariani, Jr. (D) to the Planning and Zoning Commission.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BOYD MOVED TO COMBINE AND TABLE THE FOLLOWING AGENDA ITEMS:**

**\*112-22 MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS COMMITTEE REPORT RE: APPOINTMENT OF SOLEDAD NUNEZ (D) TO THE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION.**

**56-22 MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS COMMITTEE REPORT RE: APPOINTMENT OF JOHN MARIANI, JR. (D) TO THE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION.**

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

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

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BURNS MOVED TO SUSPEND THE RULES TO ADD AGENDA ITEM 120-22 GRANT SUBMISSION: RE CONNECTICUT STATE LIBRARY PUBLIC - LIBRARY CONSTRUCTION GRANTS LOWER EAST SIDE BRANCH (#24268) TO THE AGENDA.**

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

Council Member Pereira asked if there was a time constraint. Council Member Burns said that the application has to be submitted to the State by September 30<sup>th</sup>. The next Council meeting is in October.

**\*\* THE MOTION TO SUSPEND THE RULES TO ADD AGENDA ITEM 120-22 GRANT SUBMISSION: RE CONNECTICUT STATE LIBRARY PUBLIC - LIBRARY CONSTRUCTION GRANTS LOWER EAST SIDE BRANCH (#24268) TO THE AGENDA PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BURNS MOVED TO AMEND AGENDA ITEM 120-22 GRANT SUBMISSION: RE CONNECTICUT STATE LIBRARY PUBLIC - LIBRARY CONSTRUCTION GRANTS LOWER EAST SIDE BRANCH (#24268) TO THE AGENDA.**

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

Council Member Burns explained that the amendment has to do with the contract listing and he gave a brief overview of the adjustments on the paperwork.

*Council Member McCarthy left the meeting at 7:49 p.m.*

Council Member Pereira asked why the cost was over \$4 million. Council Member Burns reviewed the details of the financing with the Council Members.

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

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA MOVED TO SUSPEND THE RULES FOR THE POINT OF PERSONAL PRIVILEGE.**

This was granted by Council President Pro Tempore Newton.  
Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia the read the following statement into the record:

I asked to suspend the rules for a point of personal privilege.

I received a call from Rosa Correa, who I have known since the mid-1980's. She informed me that her and Eddie's Son, David A. Correa, was appointed as a Correspondent to the NY Latino Film Festival Family.

David is Bridgeport raised, has many family here and is a Host and entertainment correspondent as well as an Emmy nominated producer.

I, through the National League of Cities, am also associated with their LGBTQ Constituency Group and proudly support all, including David's accomplishments. Wishing him well.

The festival runs for September 15-24th, 2023 and tickets can be purchased: [nylatinofilmfestival.com](http://nylatinofilmfestival.com).

Council Member Cruz said that he was glad to see the City Attorney present. He was disturbed to see the Mayor was advertising a project that would be completed in 2025. The Council Members should be notified of these projects in their Districts. The constituents need to know what is going on. He will fight against the project because the Council Members should have been informed. Private entities should not be exempt from informing the Council Members.

Council President Pro Tempore Newton pointed out that the developers only made an announcement. He noted that the developers were going to have to come back before the Council and various Commissions for approval.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

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

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

The meeting adjourned at 7:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Telesco Secretarial Services