

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS
REGULAR MEETING
DECEMBER 26, 2023**

ATTENDANCE: AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia, Co-chair; Aikeem G. Boyd, Co-chair; Rolanda Smith; Maria Pereira; Tyler Mack (6:08)

OTHERS:

Council Members: Aidee Nieves, Council President & Jazmarie Melendez; Andy Toledo, Mayor's Office; Jerome Roberts, Appointee to Fair Rent Commission; Mr. Amado, Personnel Director, Civil Service

CALL TO ORDER

Co-chair Vizzo-Paniccia called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m. There was a quorum present.

APPROVAL OF COMMITTEE MINUTES: OCTOBER 23, 2023 (REGULAR MEETING)

Council Member Pereira made a note that she was not present at the October 23, 2023 meeting and would have to abstain from her vote.

**** COUNCIL MEMBERBOYD MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF OCTOBER 23, 2023.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBERSMITH SECONDED THE MOTION.**

****THE MOTION WAS APPROVED WITH THREE (3) IN FAVOR (VIZZO-PANICCIA, BOYD, AND SMITH) AND ONE (1) ABSTENTION (PEREIRA).**

08-23 APPOINTMENT OF JEROME ROBERTS (U) TO THE FAIR RENT COMMISSION.

Council Member Pereira asked when the referral was sent for his appointment. Co-chair Vizzo-Paniccia responded the first meeting in December.

Mr. Roberts greeted the council and introduced himself as a resident of Bridgeport for 17 years, homeowner, currently on of the commission for people with disability. His interest to serve on the fair rent commission is from his background experience having problems with housing, being formerly homeless and discriminated against when he would apply for housing. He believes the work ties in with the current committee he serves, and he is also a member of the disabled community. It was approved by the Ethics commission and he is here for the next steps.

Council Member Pereira commented that if he is currently serving the commission for people with disabilities then cannot serve on both. Mr. Roberts responded he spoke with Mr. Toledo who got confirmation from the city council that nothing was in the charter regarding that. Mr. Toledo confirmed they did look at the charter and nothing was mentioned but internally they would speak with him to select one committee to serve on for best practice.

Mr. Roberts added he would step down if that was an issue.

Council Member Pereira asked if he was an investor or had tenants in his property. Mr. Roberts said he was not an investor or had any tenants in his property. Council Member Pereira followed up by asking what if he was an investor, how would he handle a complaint regarding one of his properties. Mr. Roberts said he would excuse himself from any involvement of the complaint and investigation.

Pereira asked how many are on the commission. Mr. Toledo responded there are 4 currently appointed, Mr. Roberts would be the fifth, and they have 2 pending going before the ethics commission in January. Council Member Pereira asked how many minority representatives are needed. Mr. Toledo replied they needed 3 minority representatives.

**** COUNCIL MEMBERBOYD MOTIONED TO APPROVE THE ITEM 08-23 APPOINTMENT OF JEROME ROBERTS TO THE FAIR RENT COMMISSION.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBERMACK SECONDED THE MOTION.**

****THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

23-23 PROPOSED APPROVAL TO ESTABLISH TWO (2) NEW PERMANENT POSITIONS FOR JOB CLASSIFICATIONS AND SPECIFICATIONS OF LIBRARY MAINTENANCE AND FACILITIES MANAGER AND THE LIBRARY INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICES MANAGER (ITS) PURSUANT TO MUNICIPAL CHARTER CHAPTER 17 SECTION 206(D).

Mr. Amado, Personnel Director presented the item and highlighted that the department needs these positions to alleviate the librarians from doing ITS and infrastructure development. This would allow designated people in place for these special needs.

Co-chair Boyd asked if this would essentially take the burden off of librarians' backs. Mr. Amado replied that historically, librarians help ITS in their field but ITS is a special field on its own.

Council Member Pereria asked when did the library board approve this. Mr. Amado replied they voted on this on September 20, 2023 which was unanimously passed. If approved tonight they will proceed to go forward to the city council for review.

Council Member Pereria commented she supports the library board as they aren't politicized and if the board supports it then she can also stand behind it.

**** CO- CHAIR BOYD MOTIONED TO APPROVE THE ITEM 23-23.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBERSMITH SECONDED THE MOTION.**

****THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

24-23 PROPOSED APPROVAL TO UPDATE THE JOB DESCRIPTION OF THE CLASSIFICATION OF PURCHASING AGENT PURSUANT TO CIVIL SERVICE RULE IX, SEC 3.

Personnel Director, Eric Amado presented the item and highlighted the job description was created in 1958 and has not been updated. They would like to complete examinations to interested applicants which requires a job analysis or validation study.

Mr. Platto added on the job description is similar to the original but really just modernized.

Council Member requested the following amendments to the job description:

- To remove from the job description, under supervision exercised: “a staff of five (5) positions” and to be read as [The purchasing Agent supervises the department in the Assistant Purchasing Agent and Purchasing Buyer job classifications. May supervise other positions applicable to the Purchasing Department.].
- To remove from the job description, under minimum educational and experience requirements: “Bachelor's” and to be read as [May also possess an associates degree in business, finance, public administration, or related fields.].
- To remove from the job description, under desired knowledge and skills: “some” and to be read as [Working knowledge of Connecticut General Statutes related to municipal purchasing (Title 7).].

**** COUNCIL MEMBERPEREIRA MOTIONED TO TABLE THE ITEM AS AMENDED.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBERSMITH SECONDED.**

**** THE VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.**

20-23 PROPOSED RESOLUTION CALLING FOR AN IMMEDIATE DE-ESCALATION AND PERMANENT CEASEFIRE IN ISRAEL, GAZA, AND THE OCCUPIED WEST BANK.

City Attorney Anastasi presented this proposal and highlighted this is just an advisory notice and there is no binding effect and there is not a formal position taken on the issues.

Council Member Melendez shared the council has heard a lot of testimony at the council meeting and deaths are still increasing. There are many municipalities and city councils that have approved a ceasefire and de-escalation.

Council Member Pereria added she has read the city council charter and they do not have any power in international affairs or even national wars. The people of Bridgeport put the council together to focus on local issues. She shared when she was running her seat, none of the constituents brought up this issue and this matter is in fact biblical. She doesn't see how this proposal would stop the feud between Palestinians and Israelis. Council Member Pereria adds the United States vetoed the NATO proposal due to Hamas not taking ownership of war. She is not an expert in this matter but she does know the Israeli leader is as corrupt as the Bridgeport city mayor. She will not be supporting this proposal because she is not an expert on the matter and doesn't understand what is really going on in the middle east.

Council Member Melendez responded when Council Member Pereria is saying the people of Bridgeport don't want this, she is completely ignoring the crowded room they are in with supporters of this and the council has seen the passion at the council meetings as well. This issue isn't complex at all, they shouldn't be complacent with what they are seeing and the death occurring. Having residents share their families being murdered should be enough to support the proposal.

Co-chair Vizzo-Paniccia shared she understands the issues on the charter. Certain items should not go into resolution form, usually in letter form with signage of those city council members who are interested to support. Putting it in resolution form making it legal binding.

Council Member Melendez responded this should be in resolution form and that's what the people want.

Council Member Mack added he supports this resolution; cities like Detroit and Atlanta have already approved resolutions, along with the Carter center has approved stuff like this. Regardless of this being an international issue, local municipalities are taking a stance on certain issues. Whether or not this is a law binding legal issue it is a resolution saying they support

something, as elected officials everyday they make decisions to approve and support items everyday.

Council Member Pereria stated from the proposal, the federal government hold the immense power to end the war. As the city council, the charter is their constitution, in her 14 years of service the voters have never amended the character for something like this. Issues that Bridgeport voters bring up are public school, road paving, public safety, tractor trailers parked all over the place. She added she has only got two emails from Pro Israeli community members.

Council Member Mack mentioned if they are going by the charter, the city council can form their own legal opinion without the city attorney involved. They passed a resolution to give their own legal opinion during the last budget cycle. If they are going by the charter which was created in 1996 then he understands the complaints.

Council President Nieves has a concern for the first whereas, if they can change the word targeting as it sounds like they are picking a side. As humanitarians they are responsible for doing something but on a council level it is not their responsibility but they should support and represent all their constituents.

Co-chair Vizzo-Paniccia added targeting is a strong word.

Council Member Pereria asked, if this passes, who would bring this to governmental processes. Council President Nieves responded this would be sent from the city clerk.

Council President Nieves reiterated to amend the following:

- To remove from the first line, “and the targeting of” to read as [Whereas, All life is precious, civilians, no matter their faith or ethnicity, is a violation of humanitarian law; and].
- To add into line two (2) of Now, therefore be it resolved: “adequate and sufficient” and to read as [Call upon the Biden administration to promptly send and facilitate the entry of adequate and sufficient humanitarian assistance to Gaza and the occupied West Bank:].

**** CO-CHAIR BOYD MOTIONED TO APPROVE WITH THE ITEM WITH THE AMENDMENTS.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MACK SECONDED.**

**** THE VOTE WAS APPROVED WITH FOUR (4) IN FAVOR (VIZZO-PANICCIA, SMITH, BOYD, AND MACK) AND ONE (1) OPPOSED (PERERIA).**

****COUNCIL MEMBER TYLER MACK LEFT THE MEETING AT 7:06 P.M.****

EXECUTIVE SESSION

- ** CO-CHAIR BOYD MOVED TO ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION.**
- ** COUNCIL MEMBERPERERIA SECONDED.**
- **THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The Committee entered into Executive Session at 7:14 p.m. for the following items 09-23, 10-23, and 18-23.

**** THE EXECUTIVE SESSION ENDED AT 7:40 P.M. ****

09-23 PROPOSED SETTLEMENT OF PENDING LITIGATION IN THE MATTER OF LONNIE BLACKWELL DOCKET NO. 3:21-EV-778(KAD).

- ** CO-CHAIR BOYD MOTIONED TO TABLE ITEM 09-23.**
- ** COUNCIL MEMBERPERERIA SECONDED.**
- ** THE VOTE WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

10-23 PROPOSED SETTLEMENT OF PENDING LITIGATION IN THE MATTER OF JONATHAN JOHNSON DOCKET NO. FBT-CV-21-6111245-S.

- ** CO-CHAIR BOYD MOTIONED TO TABLE ITEM 10-23.**
- ** COUNCIL MEMBERPERERIA SECONDED.**
- ** THE VOTE WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

18-23 PROPOSED SETTLEMENT OF PENDING LITIGATION IN THE MATTER OF KIANA GALLIMORE DOCKET NO. FBT-CV-21-6111992-S.

- ** CO-CHAIR BOYD MOTIONED TO TABLE ITEM 18-23.**
- ** COUNCIL MEMBERPERERIA SECONDED.**
- ** THE VOTE WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

ADJOURNMENT

**** CO-CHAIR BOYD MOTIONED TO TABLE THE MEETING FOR JANUARY 2ND, 2023 AT 6P.M.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBERPERERIA SECONDED.**

**** THE VOTE WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting was recessed at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Vianca Rivera,
Telesco Secretarial Services