

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT  
PUBLIC SAFETY AND TRANSPORTATION  
COMMITTEE  
REGULAR MEETING  
FEBRUARY 13, 2024**

**ATTENDANCE:** Rolanda Smith, Co-chair; Aikeem Boyd, Eneida Martinez, Maria Valle (5:29); Aidee Nieves, Council President.

**OTHER:** Richard Ortiz, 135th District (6:01).

Thomas Gaudett, Deputy Chief of Staff;  
Isolina DeJesus, Director, Central Grants  
Captain Paul Grech, Police Department;  
Marc Donald, RYSASP, Streetsafe;  
Ebony Epps, Streetsafe;  
Cecilia Rodriguez, Developmental Coordinator of BCYL.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Co-chair Rolanda Smith called the meeting at 5:20 p.m. There was a quorum present at the time of the roll call.

Approval of Committee Minutes: October 3, 2023 (Regular Meeting)

**\*\*COUNCIL MEMBER BOYD MOTIONED TO TABLE THE MINUTES OF OCTOBER 3, 2023 FOR THE NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING.**

**\*\*COUNCIL PRESIDENT NIEVES SECONDED THE MOTION.**

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

- 02-23 Grant Submission: re State of Connecticut Court Support Services Division – Youth Violence Prevention Initiative (#24399).

Ms. Dejesus stated she was present with Captain Grech, from the Bridgeport Police Department, Mr. Donald & Ms. Epps from Streetsafe and other program leaders to speak on their initiatives for the grant funds. (Inaudible).

Council member Martinez (Inaudible).

Ms. Dejesus responded that there is the brother's keeper program. If she would like to hear more about street safe then it would be best to let Mr. Grech or Mr. Donald speaks on it as they run the technical parts of the program.

Council member Martinez said she is very educated with my brother's keeper. She is looking for a detailed description of streetsafe and the other programs.

Ms. DeJesus said as she mentioned before, just so that everyone is aware. They are putting back out the RFP for this. More than likely in April, not we, she means the police department. So any interested programs are more than welcomed to apply at that point.

Council President Nieves added before they take a vote, she would like to hear information, if captain Grech can report the last allocation. Her question is how much money was given to my brother's keeper and if they are putting these grants out again. She suggests when they go for reapplying, the committee should get data like councilwoman Martinez mentioned. So, they can have metrics moving forward. She understands these grants are repetitive but she doesn't know what these programs do but the committee wants to make sure they continue to get funding. She didn't want to mention this but she was recently at a funeral for Bassick Coach Bernie Loften and the mayor got slammed for not supporting youth programs and not having grants that are available on their website. With the data it can be shown that the city does fund a lot of programs.

Ms. DeJesus said thank you, she truly understands.

Council President Nieves said that is the only thing she would like to hear from Ms. DeJesus or Captain Grech.

Ms. DeJesus said she doesn't have that information in front of her, unfortunately because it snowed those documents are in the office but she can certainly share them with the committee tomorrow or if Capt. Grech has them available right now.

Captain Grech apologized. Which numbers are you looking for. Is it how many student scholars they serve every year between each different entity?

President Nieves (Inaudible). Ms. DeJesus cleared up this by going out to RFP again so there will be different individuals looking for funding. They would like to know about last year's grant, how it was allocated and how much was left over for the brother's keeper part of the initiative. She understands what Mr. Donald has done with his program and she was supposed to receive reporting from him with how many youths were involved. She understand there was a snowstorm but perhaps he sent it to Ms. DeJesus electronically that he might have access to.

Ms. DeJesus said she can give them an estimated budget for last year. For one year, about \$73,000 dollars went to BCYL, \$225,000 dollars went to (inaudible) and the remaining balance went to my brother's keeper which was around \$40,000 dollars.

**\*\*COUNCILWOMAN VALLE JOINED THE MEETING AT 5:29 PM.\*\***

Council member Martinez said the weather being bad and perhaps the city of Bridgeport not being open is unacceptable not to take information with you when you know that we have a public safety and transportation committee meeting. Anytime any department comes to

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participate in a meeting, you should all be ready to provide the information that is needed whether the building is open or not. She said this is an ongoing issue with the city of Bridgeport. (inaudible). But they all want the council to vote on grants and other items. She understands this is a sensitive item and that they need to move forward on this but she is not happy sitting here today not receiving any statistical information that they are requesting. It is just not acceptable, she is not sure if Capital Grech may be able to elaborate on this. As the city council president stated, the council needs to be more proactive when they are approached in the community to speak on behalf of the programs. They are blindfolded because they don't have that information at hand and they should always be provided that information.

Mr. Donald said he can send their impact report but currently they are working with 40 young people directly and (inaudible).

Ms. Rodriguez said this year BCYL has served 64 youth with their alternative sports programs and come this spring they anticipate serving at least 150 youth as well as 25 for the leadership development workshop.

Captain Grech wanted to add that the chief has met with the program directors on a biweekly basis to discuss the programs and impact. He has not gotten an update from the chief but he will not fund programs that are not to his liking.

Council member Valle said she is not okay with that but she will cross that road when she gets there.

Co-chair Smith asked if they could email the report to her so she can forward it to the committee. Captain Grech said yes.

Council member Martinez said her concern is my brother's keeper is the name of the actual grant. Ms. DeJesus replied no, the name of the grant is called youth violence prevention initiatives. My brother's keeper is technically a city department which Kingsley works part time.

Council member Martinez said we will not be using Kingsley any longer as he does not reside in the City of Bridgeport, he resides in the state of Maryland. They should not be paying out of the grant to someone that is not a local representative. She would like to make that clear and she understands that this is going to be out for RFP and we will chip in to name other organizations that we think throughout the City of BPT should hold these programs for. But unless we receive the condition regarding the data and report, they can pass this off to the council but they will not vote on it on the floor unless documentation is provided to them.

Ms. DeJesus said okay, she will work with the captain and certainly follow up with those reports tomorrow.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ MOTIONED TO APPROVED ITEM 02-23 UNDER THE CONDITION OF RECEIVING THE DATA REPORTS.**

**\*\*COUNCIL MEMBER VALLE SECONDED THE MOTION.**

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

- 16-23 Grant Submission: re State of Connecticut Department of Transportation (FY24-FY28) Speed and Aggressive Driving Enforcement (#24323 - #28323) Click it or Ticket Enforcement (#24326 - 28326) Distracted Driving – High Visibility Enforcement (#24327 - #28327)

Ms. Dejesus stated she is here with Capt. Grech to speak on the matter. They are coming back to the council as their five-year resolution for these grants are expiring this fiscal year so they would like to renew that five-year resolution. The resolution does cover three transportation grants that the police department receives for enforcement around the city and they are here again to receive approval to accept those grants for the next five years.

Council member Martinez asked Captain Grech if he could give them a breakdown on the selection of who is going to be out in the community participating in the speed and aggressive driving, the click it or ticket it, and distracted driving enforcement. She only asks because she sees a lot of times when they set up these locations, for example lakeview cemetery, she sees high ranking officers working those locations and she is concerned with the overtime. She asked if this is considered overtime.

Captain Grech said anyone who works in the traffic division from patrolman all the way up was included in these grants. The grant is all overtime so they get allocated a certain amount of dollars for additional enforcement. In certain areas, that goes by data-driven analysis where tickets, accidents and fatalities usually occur, and certain times of day - they require two police officers to work it in the increments of 4,6, or 8 hours. Each grant has different specifications. It will most likely go to the traffic division because the chief wants the pay scale to go to patrol officers and not high-ranking supervisors. So obviously more enforcement for a lesser cost. Due to the limited amount of manpower they have, unfortunately, due to so many fatalities the chief opened it up to the rest of the department.

Council member Martinez said this does help in a lot of ways, there are many unregistered vehicles and a lot of uninsured vehicles. She knows that on Stratford Avenue when they put the post up, we have come up with pretty good snatches of individuals with weapons and other violations in the vehicles. So, it is a great grant for the City of Bridgeport and she hopes they keep applying it accordingly to the areas that are most needed.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ MOTIONED TO APPROVED ITEM 16-23.  
\*\*COUNCIL MEMBER VALLE SECONDED THE MOTION.  
\*\*THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

- 17-23 Grant Submission: re State of Connecticut Office of Policy and Management – FY24 Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Program (#24604).

Ms. Dejesus said she is here again with Captain Grech to speak on the item. This is an application to the state of Connecticut office of policy and management for the use of their allocation of their JAG funding that they receive for the purpose of functioning (inaudible).

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Captain Grech added this is used for high pressure issues that are going around the state of Connecticut which was a priority. Bridgeport came up with the idea of a model task force because of the sheer amount of vehicles that were stolen, being used in violent crimes, drive-by shootings, etc. They put the application in several years ago and they were awarded, including the rest of the state. Bridgeport received one of the highest funds and they have been quite successful with some of the arrests and it has just continued to go on over the last couple of years. There have been a lot of investigations that have stemmed from this program. Before they have a staff between Fairfield, Bridgeport, and Trumbull with Lieutenant Andrew that spearheaded the program. Since John has retired and others were reassigned, they have Lieutenant Lostanksy directing it now.

Council member Martinez thanked Captain Grech for the explanation and said she is never against any grants, that is the safe haven to the city. But she would like to say since the removal of (inaudible), the city of Bridgeport has gotten worse. There are locations where they steal vehicles, commit crimes with them, then turn around and park these cars and leave them abandoned. Since they removed some of the original members to the task force who know the thefts, where they were going and parking the cars, the crimes has increased. Since Jason left, she doesn't see any action being done at all.

Captain Grech replied since the reassignment they assigned the lieutenant and I to oversee the program. Everyone that was involved originally got moved to different department minus the ones that retired. That whole task force did a phenomenal job, they recovered a lot of stuff and got many people off the streets.

Council member Martinez wanted to share it is unfortunate that a phenomenal individual who played a lot of roles in violence prevention was moved to the midnight position. (Inaudible).

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ MOTIONED TO APPROVED ITEM 17-23.  
\*\*COUNCIL MEMBER VALLE SECONDED THE MOTION.  
\*\*THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

### **ADJOURNMENT**

**\*\*COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ MOTIONED TO ADJOURN.  
\*\*COUNCILMEMBER VALLE SECONDED THE MOTION.  
\*\*THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:05pm.

Respectfully submitted by,

Vianca Rivera

Telesco Secretarial Services

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