

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
ORDINANCE COMMITTEE
PUBLIC HEARINGS
NOVEMBER 4, 2024**

ATTENDANCE: Eneida Martinez, Co-chair; Aikeem Boyd, Co-chair;
Ernest Newton, Maria Valle, Jeanette Herron (5:41 pm)

OTHER: Council Member(s): Scott Burns, Jorge Cruz
(6:04 pm); & Maria Pereira

CALL TO ORDER

Co-chair Boyd called the public hearing to order at 5:36 p.m.

Proposed Amendment to the Municipal Code of Ordinances, Chapter 10.12 Stopping, Standing and Parking Generally, amend Section 10.12.010 – Restrictions on Stopping or Parking Generally—Violations—Penalties—Exemption. [157-23]

Council Member Boyd asked if there was anyone present who wished to speak about the item 157-23.

Philip Kuchma
3200 Park Avenue
Bridgeport, CT

Mr. Kuchma shared he works in the downtown area along with having real estate in the area. He is in favor of the increase in fines as people use loading dock areas to park, he sees 18 wheeler trucks being parked overnight, and employees taking front door parking when it should be for guests. He believes parking enforcement and the police department need to communicate better as the ticketing system is not fair, they don't ticket everyone, or boot any cars who have been there past expired time.

****COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON JOINED THE MEETING AT 5:41 PM****

Lynn Mosher Howell
1115 Main Street
Bridgeport, CT 06604

Ms. Howell shared she is a downtown business owner that was awarded top massage parlor in Connecticut in 2022 and 2024 but unfortunately her sales are down, even with promotions she barely makes sale goals. She is not in favor of raising the pricing on the meters because after the last increase in 2015, all downtown businesses lost business. She states the real issue is on the weekends as people park on the sidewalks and in front of hydrants. They need parking enforcement to do their job during those hours and not during the day as service businesses will suffer.

Gemeem Davis
33 Cottage Place
Bridgeport, CT 06604

Ms. Davis shared she is opposed to the increase, she understands there is a parking issue in the area but there is simply not enough parking for businesses and residents. She cannot afford to pay for a monthly garage pass and it is difficult to maintain time on the meter as she is working her shift. She believes doubling the fine is outrageous.

Shaenna Taylor
131 Madison Terrace
Bridgeport, CT 06606

Ms. Taylor stated she was in opposition to the item as she did community outreach no one was in favor of the increase of parking fines. She got a lot of feedback regarding the revitalization of downtown and it seems like they are targeting the growing businesses to stunt their success. She stated with the increase Bridgeport would have the highest value in parking fines in the state and many teachers at capital prep have to park in the street receiving fines as they cannot leave their students to add time to the meter. She urged the committee not to hurt downtown as it is growing.

John Marshall Lee
30 Beacon Street
Bridgeport, CT 06605

Mr. Lee shared he has his office on Fairfield Avenue and sees meters that are knocked down that have not been restored, meters that are left on during the weekend using electricity, meters that blink orange that are not in service. He has reached out to the police department and parking enforcement and he has not received any communications back. He stated the operations is not a money maker, and has not seen the revenue line on the budget. He asked who is overseeing the operation of collections.

****COUNCIL MEMBER CRUZ JOINED THE MEETING AT 6:04 PM****

Council member Boyd ended the public session for 157-23 at 6:04 p.m.

Proposed Amendment to the Municipal Code of Ordinances, amend Chapter 10.16 – Parking, amend Section 10.16.070 A – Rates and charges; grace period; prompt payment discount; immobilization; exemptions. [158-23]

Council Member Boyd asked if there was anyone present who wished to speak about item 158-23.

Gemeem Davis
33 Cottage Place
Bridgeport, CT 06604

Ms. Davis asked what is going on with the city as parking should not be an avenue for revenue. She believes the people should be encouraged to shop and spend time downtown and not burdened with additional cost. She is opposed to the item and asked what is wrong with the budget.

Cecelia Corbin
111 Wall Street
Bridgeport, CT 06604

Ms. Corbin shared she has had a beauty business in downtown for 41 years and every change to the area hurts the small businesses. It is hard for clients to maintain the meter during a hair, massage or dental service. It hurts the downtown clientele and she feels blind-sided by both proposals as there was no outreach.

Kelvin Ayala
333 State Street
Bridgeport, CT 06604

Mr. Ayala shared he is annoyed with the idea of doubling the parking fine and carried on to say the meter revenue is not being properly utilized as this should not be a way to fill in budget holes. He shared they don't have the appropriate signage on the current pricing nor have they discussed the proposal with any downtown businesses or residents. He added that those same businesses drive the market in the area and those collections from the meter do not get used at all to advertise the area at all. He believes the city should reenact the parking authority to supervise because this is a management issue, they don't need enforcement to handle parking matters.

Lynn Mosher Howell
1115 Main Street
Bridgeport, CT 06604

Ms. Howell shared they need to consider the fragile ecosystem of downtown and how this will hurt small businesses.

Dave Schneider
1000 Main Street
Bridgeport, CT 06604

Mr. Schneider shared that many businesses have closed over the past few years as they couldn't navigate the climate of downtown. He is opposed to the item as it will only drive away more customers.

Council member Boyd ended the public session for 158-23 at 6:17 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

****COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON MOTIONED TO ADJOURN AT 6:18 PM.
**COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON SECONDED THE MOTION.
THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:18 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Vianca Rivera,
Telesco Secretarial Services.