

AD HOC REPORT Hispanic Center

Honorable Mark D. Boughton, Mayor
Common Council Members

May 22, 2008

Chairman Robert Riley called the meeting to order at 6:35 P.M. In attendance were committee members Councilman Nagarsheth and Councilman Visconti. Ex-officio members Councilwoman Teicholz, Councilman Seabury, Councilwoman McMahon, Councilman Trombetta, Councilman Calandrino, Councilman Cavo, Councilman Knapp and Councilman Curran, Councilman Arconti (entered the meeting at 6:55PM) were also in attendance. Dan Garrick, Asst. Finance Director; petitioner Eva Colon, Executive Director of the Hispanic Center and members of the public were also present.

Chairman Riley stated that the charge of the meeting was to consider the restoration of funding for the Hispanic Center for FY 2007-2008.

Asst. Director of Finance, Dan Garrick, explained that any funds restored for FY 2007-2008 would come from the Contingency Fund, revenues are down and all accounts are frozen at the present time.

Executive Director Colon gave an overview of the Mission Statement and 2007 Annual Report for the Hispanic Center. Upon questions from Councilman Nagarsheth and Councilman Visconti, Ms. Colon stated that the impact of the loss of funding resulted in reduction of the job development component of the Center's program and the funding, if restored would only be for FY 2007-2008.

Ex-officio members asked questions regarding investigation of applications for grants, the amount withheld amounted to 8% of their working budget, other sources of funds that the Center received, the final quarter for the fiscal year would be approximately \$6,000, programs offered and the number of volunteers at the Center. There was also discussion regarding the education coordinator position, which was a volunteer position previously, would remain part time instead of the expectation of a full time position and funding from other towns. Councilman Cavo gave background information explaining the events leading up to the suspension of funding. He stated that if there is funding restored, that it is understood that the taxpayers of the City will not stand for legislative advocacy against the City, State or country enforcing its laws.

Ms. Colon stated that funding for the Hispanic Center also derives income from the Department of Social Services in the amount of \$130,000, United Way in the amount of \$72,000 for two years and the balance of their income comes from foundations and fundraising. There is not funding from any other towns and 99% of the clients are from Danbury.

Public Comment followed. Among other things the second building at #89 West St. 501-3C organizations influencing legislation, Meserve Foundation Grant in the amount of \$3,000 and grant funding for the Center for over 30 years were discussed.

Chair Riley asked for a motion.

Discussion continued regarding the ad, which appeared the newspaper, was funded by a private donation, which was cleared through and signed by the Board of Directors, services provided and charges for translation services.

Councilman Riley spoke in favor of restoring the funding for FY 2007-2008.

Chair Riley asked for a motion.

Councilman Nagarsheth moved to not restore funding for FY 2007-2008 to the Hispanic Center. Second by Councilman Visconti. Discussion followed. Councilmen Nagarsheth and Visconti voted in the affirmative and Councilman Riley cast a negative vote. **Motion carried 2-1**

Councilman Visconti moved to adjourn at 7:31P.M. Second by Councilman Johnson. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Riley, Chairwoman

Shay Nagarsheth

Fred Visconti