

**CITY OF NORWALK
ORDINANCE COMMITTEE
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2024
VIA TELECONFERENCE**

ATTENDANCE: Lisa Shanahan; Chair, Jalin Sead Sr., Johan Lopez, Ann Wennerstrand

STAFF: Brian Candela

OTHER: Kristina Testa-Buzzee; Chair of the Commission for the Status of Woman, Shannon O'Toole-Giandurco; Co-Chair of the Commission on the Status of Women.Chief James Walsh, Nicole Eaddy, Deanna D'Amore; Director of Health, Stuart Wells; Democratic Registrar of Voters,Diane Palladino-Christopher; Republican Registrar of Voters

I. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Shanahan called the meeting to order at 7:03

II. ROLL CALL

Ms. Shanahan Called the roll as reflected above.

III. PUBLIC HEARING

- A. Discuss and vote on Chapter 95, Streets and Sidewalks, Sections 95-0 through 95-39.

Ms. Shanahan described Chapter 95. She indicated there had been several changes and the purpose was to coordinate Chapter 95 with the new Complete Streets Ordinance passed in November. She also noted they were making sure Chapter 95 works together with the DPW and TMP roles as outlined in the Complete Streets Ordinance.

Diane Lauricella
21 Little Fox Lane

Ms. Lauricella was concerned about the enforcement of encroachments with regard to the removal of vehicles and trucks from sidewalks. She felt there should be more detail under the categories of removal, including a definition of cars and trucks as obstructions. She outlined what she would like to see included in the wording and policy. She stated she hoped they would discuss her observations. Ms. Lauricella also thanked the committee for their use of gender-neutral language.

Ms. Shanahan pointed out they were voting on moving Chapter 95 to the Common Council. She noted Ms. Lauricella's suggestions were substantive changes that would require going back through the process. She stated they would not be considered at this time. Ms. Shanahan repeated the purpose of the vote. She explained why they couldn't make the suggested changes at this time. She then assured Ms. Lauricella that her comments were not being ignored.

**** MR. GOLDSTEIN MOVED TO TAKE CHAPTER 95 TO THE
COMMON COUNCIL.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Diane Lauricella
21 Little Fox Lane

Ms. Lauricella expressed her opinions on the renaming of the Commission on the Status of Women. She wanted to be assured that women's concerns and the role women play would not become subservient to other gender issues. She also noted the lack of gender equity on the various commissions. She stated she had an open complaint with the Commission on the Status of Women related to a committee she was on, that she felt wasn't properly handled.

V. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

A. Regular Meeting: November 19, 2024

**** MR. SEAD MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS FILED.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

VI. OLD BUSINESS

No old business was brought up for discussion.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Shanahan moved to rearrange the agenda items to accommodate Mr. Sead's need to remove himself.

**** MR. GOLDSTEIN MOVED TO REORDER THE AGENDA ITEMS LISTED UNDER NEW BUSINESS.**
**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

B. Discuss new Vape Shop ordinance.

Mr. Candela discussed what he described as a multi-layered issue related to vaping. He stated it involved improperly selling vape items and illegal sales of vape products that are dangerous to the public. He noted in drafting the vaping ordinance they used the massage parlor ordinance as a guide. He discussed licensing and enforcement. Mr. Candela made clear that this ordinance was the first draft.

Chief Walsh addressed the concerns of illegal sales of marijuana and high THC products in local vape and smoke shops. He stated there are ongoing investigations. He commented on the outcomes of previous investigations over the past three years. Chief Walsh noted that marijuana crimes are misdemeanors which leaves them without a civil process to follow through at the state or local level. He compared this with the authority given to the Department of Consumer Protection in their handling of liquor sales. Chief Walsh said the new ordinance was an attempt to deter future illegal and dangerous activity.

Mr. Cardela talked about the benefits of a licensing program to monitor and regulate the sales of vape and products containing THC.

Chief Walsh answered Mr. Goldstein's question describing what those selling unregulated black market and adulterated weed can be charged with. Mr. Candela added they were trying to create a system that makes it easier for the police to monitor the shop owners.

Mr. Lopez described the ordinance as a guideline to provide licensing to monitor the way retailers and their salespeople operate. He pointed out that the ordinance is in its second iteration and is a working multi-dimensional document.

Mr. Goldstein wanted to know the process by which current shops would be licensed. Mr. Candela pointed out that P&Z was amending its regulations to say that any shop selling vape products would be considered a vape shop and would require licensing to continue. He continued

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by saying the ordinance outlined the various requirements to sell the items in the city of Norwalk.

Mr. Candela pointed out that this ordinance is about licensing and due process for people violating the ordinance. He stated those shops already in business and operating legally will be grandfathered in.

Mr. Sead commented it was a no-brainer and they had to protect the citizens of Norwalk. He gave his full support for the move forward.

Ms. D'Amore thanked all those involved for their work on crafting the ordinance.

C. Discuss Chapter 115: Commission on Status of Women.

Ms. Testa-Buzzee and Ms. O'Toole-Giandurco gave a slide presentation on their proposed name change. Ms. Testa-Buzzee presented background on the commission. She discussed their two committees and their priorities for 2024 through 2025. The amending of the reasoning for the changing of their bylaws. She described Article I of the bylaws. She then asked for the consideration of the Ordinance Committee to change the name from the Commission on the Status of Women to The Commission on Gender Equity.

Ms. Wennerstrand indicated she was very supportive of the change. She suggested they use the more inclusive term gender-diverse rather than gender non-conforming. Ms. Shanahan indicated that any language changes should be made throughout the ordinance. She stated if they were making changes in the ordinance this would be the time to do it. Mr. Candela offered to work with Ms. Testa-Buzzee and Ms. O'Toole-Giandurco to create a more updated document to be brought back at a regular meeting followed by a public hearing and if approved sent to the Common Council.

Mr. Sead wanted to make sure Ms. Lauricella's concerns would not be overlooked.

A. Discuss and vote on Section 9-32, entitled Districts Established (concerning the Reapportionment of Common Council Voting Districts).

Ms. Shanahan thanked both Registrar of Voters for helping to attune the language to define the districts. Mr. Candela described Sections 9-32 as indicated in the meeting packet. He noted changes were made and Mr. Wells added language seen in redline format to ensure the most accurate description of each of the districts. Mr. Candela also stated there would not be a vote at the current meeting. The vote would be taking place at a special meeting in early January to finalize the language and send it to a public hearing before the regular meeting in January. He said if there were no changes or extremely minor changes, the special meeting could be

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bypassed. If those changes were anything more than minor a special meeting might be necessary.

Ms. Palladino-Christopher felt comfortable moving forward with the current permutation. Mr. Wells stated he was comfortable that it followed the map to the point they could determine which houses were in which district subject to the usual problems with the taxing of district lines. Mr. Candela reiterated that if Mr. Wells and Ms. Palladino–Christopher were satisfied with the proposed changes attached to the agenda and did not see any real changes to the document then it could be moved to a public hearing on January 21st. Mr. Wells said he didn't see anything more than trivial changes.

**** MR. GOLDSTEIN MOVED TO TAKE 9-32 TO A PUBLIC HEARING ON
JANUARY 21, 2025
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

VIII. DISCUSSION

There was no additional discussion.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

**** MS. WENNERSTRAND MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted
China Mayhew
Telesco Secretarial Services