



## **Legislative & Rules Committee – Board of Representatives**

Benjamin Lee, Chair

Elise Coleman, Vice Chair

# **Committee Report**

**Date:** Tuesday, May 18, 2021

**Time:** 7:00 p.m.

**Place:** This meeting was held remotely.

The Legislative & Rules Committee met as indicated above. In attendance were Chair Lee, Vice Chair Coleman and Committee Member Reps. Fedeli, Florio, Jacobson, Lion, Miller, Nabel and Zelinsky. Also present were Appointments Committee Chair Summerville and members Liebson, and Matherne; President Quinones and Reps. McMullen and Sherwood; Mark McGrath, Director of Operations; Chris Dellaselva and Mike Toma, Law Department; and Marty Levine, Mayor's Office. Rep. Lion left the meeting at 7:30 p.m. Rep. Florio joined the meeting at 8:10 p.m.

Chair Lee called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

<b>Item No.</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Committee Action</b>
1. <a href="#">LR30.108</a>	RESOLUTION <u>and public hearing</u> ; Approving an Amendment to the Lease Agreement between City of Stamford and Representative James A. Himes for <del>996</del> <u>966</u> ft <sup>2</sup> of Office Space on the 10th Floor of the Government Center. 04/06/21 – Submitted by Mayor Martin 04/06/21 - Approved by <a href="#">Planning Board</a> 05/13/21 – Approved by Board of Finance 5-1-0	<b>Held 7-0-0</b>

Chair Lee opened the public hearing. There being no members of the public present wishing to speak, the public hearing was closed.

Committee members discussed this lease with Mr. McGrath and Mr. Dellaselva:

- The rent for this lease is \$1796.47/month. There is no change to the previous rent.
- The Government Center is a Class C building.
- The rent has not increased since 2015
- Is this amendment consistent with Code §9-7(b), which permits 1 1 year renewal, since only the term of the lease has changed? This is being treated as a new lease, and is being approved by all 3 boards. An opinion will be requested from the Law Department prior to the Board meeting
- What do other tenants in the building pay? This information will be provided. The EPA rent is not comparable because of how the EPA sets its rent
- Rep. Himes provides a service to the community by being in the building
- Rep. Himes should be paying fair market rent and the assessor's office lists the Government Center as a Class A building.

A motion to hold Item No. 1 was made, seconded and approved by a vote of 7-0-0 (Reps. Lee, Coleman, Fedeli, Jacobson, Miller, Nabel and Zelinsky in favor).

The Committee next took up Item No. 3.

3. [LR30.109](#) ORDINANCE for publication; Creating a Stamford Appointments Commission. **Held 8-0-0**  
05/05/21 – Submitted by President Quinones  
**As a Secondary Committee: Appointments**

Committee members discussed the proposed ordinance with President Quinones and Mr. Levine:

- The goal of the ordinance is to create a structure for a more transparent process for volunteers to serve on boards and commissions
- The ordinance establishes a requirement for the reporting on vacancies and demographics of boards and commissions
- There is currently no official mechanism for unaffiliated or 3<sup>rd</sup> party volunteers
- Should BOR members be members of the Commission? This might create a conflict, since Board members review the Mayor's proposed appointments
- 31.9% of residents are not Republicans or Democrats, but only 11% of members of boards or commissions are not Republicans or Democrats
- It is hard to attract people with less time or familiarity with government
- The City needs an increased and more diverse pool of applicants
- What would the screening function of this commission be? Would it only focus on qualifications, or would it focus on opinions?
- This would not prevent the DCC and RTC from submitting names to the Mayor
- This would not change the approval role of the Board of Representatives
- The Commission would still have the reporting obligation, even if they Mayor chose not to use it for screening or recruitment
- There is a quarterly public participation session so the public can gain information about openings
- This would not apply to elective boards or commissions
- Would Mr. Levine continue to serve in the Mayor's office or be part of the Commission?
- There are currently empty seats on boards and commissions

A motion to hold Item No. 3 was made, seconded and approved by a unanimous voice vote (Reps. Lee, Coleman, Fedeli, Florio, Jacobson, Miller, Nabel and Zelinsky in favor).

2. [LR30.103](#) ORDINANCE for publication; Potential Amendment to [§111-6](#) of the Code of Ordinances, Relating to the Control of Dogs. T. Cobb  
K. Emmett  
12/07/20 – Submitted by Rep. Jacobson  
12/22/20 – Held by Committee 8-0-0  
01/19/21 – Held by Committee 8-0-1  
02/16/21 – Report Made & Held by Committee 9-0-0  
03/26/21 – Held by Committee 9-0-0  
04/20/21 – Held by Committee 6-0-0

Rep. Jacobson explained that he had submitted revised language, which removes the prior changes and only adds language requiring an owner or keeper to be present and within sight of a dog who is tethered. Mr. Cobb has said this will be easier to enforce.

Committee members discussed this proposed change:

- How will this be enforced? Is it complaint based?
- Will the ACO have discretion?
- What if the owner is home and went inside for a minute?
- Is there data about the harm of short-term tethering
- Is there a happy medium, such as a short time limit

The proposed language was amended to read “Unless the owner or ~~custodian~~ keeper is outside and the dog is in ~~sight~~ the owner’s or keeper’s view.”

A motion to amend Item No. 2 to replace the draft with Rep. Jacobson’s 5/14/21 submission was made, seconded and approved by a vote of 8-0-0 (Reps. Lee, Coleman, Fedeli, Florio, Jacobson, Miller, Nabel and Zelinsky in favor).

A motion to approve Item No. 2, as amended, was made, seconded and approved by a vote of 8-0-0 (Reps. Lee, Coleman, Fedeli, Florio, Jacobson, Miller, Nabel and Zelinsky in favor).

Chair Lee adjourned the meeting at 9:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Benjamin Lee, Chair

This meeting is on [video](#).