

APRIL 13, 1953

The regular meeting of the Board of Representatives held on April 6, 1953 was reconvened April 13, 1953 at Burdick Junior High School at 8 P.M. by John L. Cameron, President.

The Clerk took the roll call at which time there were 30 present and 10 absent. The absent members were Paul Plotkin, Michael Vitti, Clifford Waterbury, Dr. Peter Somma, John Rubino, John Canavan, William Murphy, John Sandor, Vito Longo and Edward Hogan. Helen Bromley and John Cook arrived shortly after roll call was taken, making the attendance 32 present and 8 absent.

John Cameron presented Item #9 on the Agenda as the next in order of business.

~~Resolution re Senate Bill #733~~ - Patrick Hogan stated that the proposed resolution would not be introduced inasmuch as this bill was withdrawn and he MOVED that a letter be sent to Senator Benton H. Grant, Representative Madeline Weir and Representative Daniel H. Miller asking them to be on the alert should a similar bill be introduced at the last minute, seconded by Stephen Kelly and CARRIED.

Webster Givens asked for a ruling from the Chair prior to submitting his resolution to the Board stating he wished to speak to the resolution before presenting it for adoption.

The Chair ruled that the resolution be first submitted and Mr. Givens would be permitted to speak immediately thereafter to the resolution.

Webster Givens submitted the following resolution:

"It is requested that an investigation be conducted to clarify the operation and financial transactions between the City of Stamford, Planning Board and the so-called Board of Design in the preparation of plans for the new Municipal Building to be located on Hoyt Street.

This investigation shall be particularly directed to determine the following:

1. Cost of said plans to date.
2. Person or persons who were engaged to draft said plans.
3. Payments from City of Stamford with dates and amounts for services in connection with the above.
4. To determine, if any part of the charter of the City of Stamford has been violated in the transactions as disclosed.

It is further resolved that this investigation shall be conducted by the fiscal committee in conjunction with the Legislative and Rules Committee of the Board of Representatives of the City of Stamford."

Webster Givens MOVED adoption of said resolution, seconded by Ralph Nau.

Speaking to the resolution, Webster Givens questioned the legality of the appointment to the Planning Board of Lester Tichy if the agreement entered into previously contracting for services on the proposed municipal building was in effect and legal; he also questioned the payments of checks made to the Board of Design for the work performed inasmuch as Mr. Tichy, one of the members of the Board of Design, was also a member of the Planning Board at the time of two of the payments. Mr. Givens stated that full details were not given to the Board of Representatives at the time of Mr. Tichy's appointment to the Planning Board and that the Board is entitled to know about such facts. He further stated that such information is not a reflection upon anyone's character, but facts to which the Board is entitled.

In reply to a question by James Mulreed as to whether the intent of the resolution was to invoke the powers of the Board under Section 204.2 of the Charter, Mr. Givens replied in the affirmative.

191

APRIL 13, 1953

John Cameron asked that Karl Young, Jr. take the Chair inasmuch as he wished the opportunity to talk to this item.

John Cameron, in opposing the action, referred to the information available without resorting to a formal investigation, namely the Mayor's Budget for 1950-1951, the Mayor's report for 1949-1950, the report of the Planning Board to this Board dated November 8, 1950, in all of which reference to the \$7,000. fee was made publicly. He also referred to the report of the Board of Design on which Mr. Tichy's name appeared and Mr. Tichy's appearances, as a member of the Board of Design, before this Board, all of which occurred before June 1951 when this Board approved Mr. Tichy's appointment to the Planning Board by a vote of 36 - 0. He also read a copy of a letter from Mr. Sherman Hoyt, Chairman of the Planning Board, stating that Mr. Tichy had raised the question of the propriety of his serving on the Planning Board and had been assured in writing on May 8, 1951 that serving on the Board of Design would have no bearing on serving on the Planning Board, such assurance having been given by Mr. Hoyt after verbal consultation with the Corporation Counsel Hanrahan. He referred to the contract executed in September 1950, copies of which had already been furnished to all members by Mr. Givens and pointed out that all payments made to the Board of Design had been in accordance with the terms of this contract entered into long before Mr. Tichy was appointed to the Planning Board, and that the check issued before Mr. Tichy was appointed to the Planning Board were drawn and endorsed in the same way as the two issued afterward. He concluded that with all this public information it was evident Mr. Tichy acted completely in good faith and that the facts were already available without any formal investigation. He urged that the motion be defeated.

Patrick Scarella favored the investigation in order to determine if Section 708 of the Charter had been violated.

James Mulreed stated that such an investigation always leaves the impression that the Board implies some degree of guilt on the part of the party involved. Nothing has been brought forth at this meeting that would indicate an investigation is necessary, furthermore, if the Board wishes to use its investigatory powers, it may do so in fields more important to the taxpayers of Stamford.

Joseph Carlin MOVED that the debate be closed, seconded and defeated.

William Kaminski spoke to the resolution stating that in acting on such appointments facts passed by the previous Board often are not available to the new members and said he believed that most of the members would have voted differently had the true facts been stated. He upheld the procedure of investigation, referring to the investigation of the City Housing Authority.

Helen Bromley stated that the budgets and annual report stated several of the facts that Mr. Kaminski claimed were unknown to newer members of the Board. She spoke against an investigation under Section 204.2.

Leon Staples stated that if there is anything wrong, it is the fault of the Board. He did not think the reputation of Mr. Tichy should be at stake.

Frederick Littleworth stated that an investigation would do more harm than good.

Babette Ransohoff stated that on previous occasions clarification of the Charter has been requested by a regular motion, but a matter of clarification has never been submitted in the form of a resolution to investigate an individual.

Robert Lewis stated that inasmuch as our Corporation Counsel John Hanrahan had ruled that Mr. Tichy might accept this post even though he was a member of the Board of Design and under contract with the City, this specific charge is completely out of order and the resolution for an investigation should be voted against.

James Mulreed stated that the only time Section 204.2 of the Charter was used by the Board was during the investigation of the Purchasing Agent shortly after consolidation and, at that time, there were several methods questionable in the manner in which that office was being handled. This Board never officially investigated the City Housing Authority, but merely checked and reported on the housing conditions of Stamford.

Mr. P. Wardham Collyer stated that it is apparent that Mr. Tichy made a conscientious effort to serve these two boards in good faith and in the public interest, and requested that the resolution be defeated.

Joseph Carlin MOVED the question, seconded by Leon Staples. Debate was closed and the motion on the resolution was defeated by a vote of 11 for 19 opposed.

Patrick Scarella MOVED that the Corporation Counsel be requested to submit a formal opinion on Section 708 of the Charter and on the legality of Mr. Tichy serving on the Board of Design as well as the Planning Board, seconded by John Cook.

William Kaminski amended this motion to read "at the time of his appointment and continuously thereafter". Patrick Scarella and John Cook accepted the amendment and the motion was carried by 18 - 10.

Helen Bromley MOVED that the Chair appoint a committee of three or five to look into the matter of checking on a meeting place for the Board of Representatives, seconded by Joseph Carlin.

James Mulreed amended the motion to include some representatives from the Cove and Waterside sections.

Amendment accepted by Helen Bromley and Motion CARRIED.

John Cameron appointed the following representatives to this committee - Helen Bromley, George Connors, Helen Peatt, Stephen Kelly.

PLANNING & ZONING COMMITTEE

Joseph Zdanowicz referred to a letter sent by the Planning Board on new road construction through an undeveloped area off Hoyt Street.

James Mulreed MOVED that a detailed report be submitted by the committee at the May meeting, seconded by Walter Seely and CARRIED.

John Cameron then proceeded to read the figures from the Board of Finance to the members of the Board on the Operating and Capital Budgets for the fiscal year July 1, 1953 to June 30, 1954.

Karl Young MOVED, seconded by William Kaminski, that the meeting be recessed until Monday, April 20, 1953 at 8 P.M. at Burdick Junior High School. The motion was CARRIED and the meeting adjourned at 10:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted
 Babette Ransohoff
 Clerk