



Public Safety & Health Committee - Board of Representatives

Jeffrey Stella, Chair

Eric Morson, Vice Chair

Committee Minutes

Date: Thursday, March 23, 2023
Time: 6:30 p.m.
Place: *This meeting was held remotely.*

The Public Safety & Health Committee met as indicated above. In attendance were Chair Stella, Vice-Chair Morson, and Committee Member Reps. Berns, Campbell, Coleman, Garst, and Pierre-Louis. Rep. Pavia was excused, and Rep. Roqueta was absent. Also present were Reps. Adams, Baxter, Boeger, Matheny, Pollack, Summerville, and Walston; Eugene Dohmann, Police Lieutenant; Dana Lee, Law Dept.; Mike Toma, Law Dept.; Matt Quinones, Director of Operations; Shawn Reed, Chief Building Official; and five members of the public.

Vic Chair Morson called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

ITEM NO.	DESCRIPTION	COMMITTEE ACTION
1. PS31.036	ORDINANCE for <u>public hearing and final adoption</u> ; Amending Code of Ordinances, Chapter 72, Alcoholic Beverages §72-2 , to Prohibit all Consumption of Alcoholic Liquor on any Public Highway or Municipally-Owned Public Area or in a Building or Room without a License for the Sale, Distribution or Dispensing of Alcoholic Liquors. 02/13/23 – Submitted by Reps. Stella, Baxter, Campbell, Matheny, Tomas, Walston, and Sherwood 03/01/23 – Approved by Committee 7-0-0	REPORT MADE AND HELD 4-2-0

Vice Chair Morson opened the Public Hearing. Two members of the public spoke on this item, and the Public Hearing was closed.

Lt. Dohmann spoke on this item. There are serious problems on Stephen Street and Alden Street. Residents have been complaining for a long time. People are getting drunk, gambling, urinating, and fighting. The Stamford Police Dept. and several other community organizations attempted a shoulder-to-shoulder initiative for 18 months. The expectation was to offer services to the people on these streets who are drinking all day, and causing other problems. The initiative had very little effect.

People who live in this neighborhood are afraid to walk to the store, and have their children walk home from the bus stop through this situation. The Stamford Police Dept. is not trying to hurt anybody. The community has been asking for help for a long time. Voluntary compliance and community outreach have not worked. Something stronger is needed to eliminate this problem. The threat of a consequence might help voluntary compliance to work.

Attorney Lee noted a scrivener's error. Section C should read "Title 30", instead of "Chapter 30".

Vice Chair Morson read questions from Rep. Cottrell. After Section D.2, could a chart be inserted listing all parks, whether or not alcohol is permitted at each, and the reason for whether or not it is allowed? Even if a chart is not inserted into the ordinance, can one be made up for law enforcement so they know how to create appropriate signage? Can this signage be procured before the summer season in places where it does not already exist?

Attorney Lee stated that yes, a chart could be inserted into the ordinance, and signage can be posted.

Attorney Lee explained that these citations are civil, not criminal. He will have to research if failure to pay multiple citations could result in criminal charges. This is the case with certain motor vehicle infractions, but civil citations do not always escalate into criminal charges.

Lt. Dohmann stated he is unsure about the criminality, but there would have to be some mechanism to address failure to pay multiple citations, otherwise people would ignore them.

Some other points discussed:

- There should be more foot patrol officers in these areas.
- Children should not have to live with this.
- Are we creating more problems for people with substance abuse issues by giving them citations? This could create an endless cycle if people are put in jail for non-payment.
- The BOR needs to move quickly on this as the warmer season is approaching and the situation will only get worse on these streets.

A motion to hold Item #1 was made, seconded and approved by a vote of 4-2-0 (Reps. Morson, Berns, Coleman, and Pierre-Louis in favor; Reps. Campbell and Stella opposed).

2. [PS31.037](#) ORDINANCE for publication; Inoperable Elevators.
03/06/23 – Submitted by Matt Quinones

**REPORT MADE
AND HELD 7-0-0**

Director Quinones reviewed this item.

This ordinance aims to allow the City greater authority in enforcement capabilities in the event of inoperable elevators in residential buildings. It has been brought to the attention of the Operation and Public Safety Departments that there are elevators in residential buildings that remain inoperable for significant time periods, causing undue burden on residents. This ordinance is an enforcement tool to incentivize property owners to facilitate and expedite the repair of the elevators.

The enforcement would rest with Stamford's Chief Building Official.

There would be a \$250 per day fine. The property owner would be required to notify residents of the problem, give a timeline of fixing it, and also notify the residents of this ordinance.

The City has the authority to pass this ordinance, as State statute gives municipalities the legal authority to legislate when it involves protection of health and safety.

Rep. Berns discussed that with co-ops and condos, this ordinance would penalize the owners, most of whom are the very people suffering from the broken down elevators. He suggested the ordinance should have the language changed so that the penalties are directed towards the people who have the power to ensure the elevators get fixed, such as the management companies.

Attorney Toma stated that this ordinance was drafted with broad language and it can be changed to address limiting the applicability.

A motion to hold Item #2 was made, seconded and approved by a vote of 7-0-0 (Reps. Stella, Morson, Berns, Campbell, Coleman, Garst, and Pierre-Louis in favor).

Director Quinones stated that if any Representatives have additional ideas on the ordinance to let Attorney Toma or him know, so the most comprehensive draft will be available at the next Committee meeting.

3. PS31.035	REVIEW; Overview of Department of Public Safety, Health, & Welfare. 01/04/23 – Submitted by Rep. Cottrell 01/09/23 – Held at Steering 02/13/23 – Moved to Pending	HELD 7-0-0
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Due to the unavailability of the invited guest, a motion to hold Item #3 was made, seconded and approved by a vote of 7-0-0 (Reps. Stella, Morson, Berns, Campbell, Coleman, Garst, and Pierre-Louis in favor).

Vice Chair Morson adjourned the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Vice Chair Morson

This meeting is on [video](#)