



***Public Safety & Health Committee - Board of Representatives***

Jeffrey Stella, Chair

Eric Morson, Vice Chair

**Committee Report**

**Date:** Thursday, October 25, 2018

**Time:** 6:30 p.m.

**Place:** Democratic Caucus Room, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Government Center,  
888 Washington Boulevard, Stamford CT

The Public Safety & Health Committee met as indicated above. In attendance were Vice Chair Morson and Committee Member Reps. Giordano, Lutz, Matherne, McMullen and Sherwood. Absent or excused were Chair Stella and Reps. Kolenberg and Pratt. Also present were Ludwig Spinelli, CEO Optimus Health Care; Michael Pollard, Chief of Staff, State Rep. Patricia Billie Miller; Jay Fountain, Director of OPM; Ted Jankowski, Director of Public Safety Health and Welfare; Chief Trevor Roach and Assistant Chief Mike Robles, Stamford Fire Department; Tom Lombardo, Alarm Administrator, and Mayor Martin.

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

<b>Item No.</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Committee Action</b>
	The Committee first considered Item No. 5.	
5. PS30.015	REVIEW; Future Plans for the WIC program in Stamford. 08/30/18 – Submitted by Reps. Moore, Sherwood, Cottrell, Wallace, Nabel, Giordano, Coleman and Zelinsky	<b>Report Made</b>

Mr. Spinelli discussed this item with the Committee as follows:

- Optimus Health Care took over operation of the WIC program as of October 1<sup>st</sup>
- The program covers Stamford, Norwalk and Greenwich
- WIC covers women and children up to age 5
- The program is in the same location as it was previously; all the personnel who were with the City continued except for 1 person who moved out of state; they are seeking to fill this position
- Optimus is planning to move to a larger space, because the current space is too small
- The hours and phone number have not changed at this point
- They will be adding an additional late night in January and will be changing the Saturday hours to 9-1 to reflect the usage
- Eligibility for WIC is set by the federal government
- They are going to do more outreach in order to increase participation; they need to increase participation in order not to lose funding

- They are going to start a breast feeding program, which has not been done before and will try to work with CLC and Head Start to reach out to people who may not take advantage of WIC

Due to the absence of invited guests, the Committee recessed from 6:45 pm until 7:00 pm.

The Committee next considered Item No. 4

4. PS30.014      REVIEW; Complaints regarding Demolition of UConn Garage. **Report Made**  
 08/07/18 – Submitted by Reps. Moore, Giordano and Zelinsky

Mr. Pollard stated that he attended the session with residents who had complaints about vibrations caused by the equipment and possible structural damage to their houses as well as the noise level. All of these complaints seem to have been addressed. There will be an opportunity for residents to submit claims to UConn after the construction, which will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. There was no discussion of dust, as that situation had been resolved. The City has no direct role in the remediation of the site, but it is under the purview of DEEP or the federal government, depending upon the level of PCBs found. The State has confirmed that the demolition is adhering to standards to minimize impact.

Rep. Miller stated that there was an informational forum on September 5<sup>th</sup> at which residents, DEEP, the EPA, UConn and elected officials participated. She has since asked UConn for an update. They have reached an agreement with the owner of the property next to the staircase regarding the removal of the staircase. Not all residents are willing to give UConn access to perform remediation. UConn will remediate the soil and do plantings in the spring, given the weather.

Mr. Pollard noted that UConn has tested the soil to see if the PCBs have leached over property lines and there has been no leaching beyond 12 feet of the property lines. The City will get involved if non-conforming structures need to be taken down and then rebuilt, at which time they must be conforming.

Rep. Miller will obtain the test results for Vernon Place described by Mr. Pollard from UConn. When water was used to keep down the dust, there were barriers in place to keep the water from running off into the Mill River.

1. [PS30.016](#)      ORDINANCE for publication; Amending Chapter 70, Article 1, Burglar and Fire Alarms to Permit Setting of Fees and Penalties By Resolution. **Approved, as amended, 6-0-0**  
 10/04/18 – Submitted by Mayor Martin

The Committee discussed this item with Mr. Fountain, Mr. Lombardo, Mr. Jankowski, Chief Roach, Assistant Chief Robles and Mayor Martin as follows:

- Under the ordinance, a resident who has registered their alarm does not get fined for the first false alarm
- The fines were last increased in 2007; the proposed increase for false alarms for registered alarms is from \$90 to \$110, which is about 2% per year since the last increase; from \$75 to \$110 for failure to register and \$90 to \$150 for each false alarm for unregistered alarms
- There were over 2100 false alarms in FY 2017-18 and 2800 in FY 2016-17
- This will be a deterrent and encourage people to make sure that their alarms work
- False alarms put people at risk; the goal is to reduce the risk to the public
- The Fire Department will always respond to an alarm. An alarm will be called off if a person cancels, but not if what was triggered was a panic alarm

- There are 39 locations to which there have been more than 5 false alarm responses – this only includes business and high rise residential buildings, not houses
- It is difficult to estimate the real cost of a false alarm – there is the possibility of an accident, or the risk of being in the wrong place at the wrong time
- \$100 is more effective than \$90
- Registrations are going to be integrated into information database so the police and fire departments will have contact information
- There could be a requirement that locations with multiple false alarms have their system inspected and certify that inspection to the City, but this might require an administrative fee
- The current fine for failing to register is \$90
- People are informed by their installer that they need to register; the City reaches out to installers annually to let them know that they need to inform clients; the problem is that people can install alarms themselves; something should be included in the tax bill every few years
- There is no fine for an unregistered alarm if there is a real alarm
- If there is a structural problem, a renter won't be charged
- The fine is paid by the person who owns and registered the alarm
- They spend a lot of time educating people about registering
- The building permit restrictions and possible lien would be placed for unpaid false alarm fines
- The lien would have to be placed by the law department
- There are multiple attempts to collect the fines; a letter is sent at the end of the month; notices are sent every month
- Appeals of the fines go to the Alarms Administrator
- The minimum cost of a police officer is \$100/hr, and responding to a false alarm eats up about an hour of time, as well as 911 time and the time of the Alarm Administrator
- Most alarms are no longer hard wired and so a building permit is not required
- Without building permits to track installations, automatic registration is not possible.

A motion to amend §§ 8 and 9 to add the phrase “alarm violation” before the word “fines” was made, seconded and approved by a vote of 6-0-0 (Reps. Morson, Giordano, Lutz, Matherne, McMullen and Sherwood in favor).

A motion to amend the proposed ordinance to add a new §5 stating “Notwithstanding the above, the fine for five (5) or more false alarms during any calendar year shall be \$250 for each false alarm.” was made, seconded and approved by a vote of 6-0-0 (Reps. Morson, Giordano, Lutz, Matherne, McMullen and Sherwood in favor).

A motion to change \$110 in §2 to \$100; \$150 in §2 to \$120 and \$110 in §4 to 120 was made, seconded and failed by a vote of 3-3-0 (Reps. Giordano, Lutz and McMullen in favor; Reps. Morson, Matherne and Sherwood opposed.)

Rep. McMullen made a motion to strike §8, which did not receive a second.

Committee members discussed what the appropriate amount for the fine should be.

A motion to change all dollar amounts in §§2 and 4 to \$120 was made, seconded and approved by a vote of 4-1-0 (Reps. Morson, Giordano, Lutz and Matherne in favor; Rep. McMullen opposed).

A motion to strike §10 was made, seconded and approved by a vote of 3-2-1 (Reps. Matherne, McMullen and Sherwood in favor; Reps. Morson and Giordano opposed; Rep. Lutz abstaining).

A motion to approve the ordinance, as amended, was made, seconded and approved by a vote of 6-0-0 (Reps. Morson, Giordano, Lutz, Matherne, McMullen and Sherwood in favor).

2. [PS30.017](#) RESOLUTION and approval of public hearing; **Held 4-0-1**  
Establishing Alarm Fees and Penalties.  
10/04/18 – Submitted by Mayor Martin

Committee members discussed that the proposed amendment to PS30.106 would not permit this resolution. A motion to hold the resolution was made, seconded and approved by a vote of 4-0-1 (Reps. Morson, Giordano, Lutz and Matherne in favor; Rep. McMullen opposed).

3. PS30.012 REVIEW; Monitoring of Food Trucks **Withdrawn**  
7/10/18 – Submitted by Rep. DePina  
08/02/18 – No Action Taken  
**10/15/18 – Withdrawn**

***As a Secondary Committee:***

4. [LR30.046](#) REVIEW; Exterior Lighting Regulations  
7/11/18 - Submitted by Rep. Lion  
08/02/18 – Held in Public Safety Committee  
10/09/18 – Moved from Public Safety Committee

No action, as L&R held the item this month.

Vice Chair Morson adjourned the meeting at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Eric Morson, Vice Chair

This meeting is on video ([Pt. 1](#) and [Pt. 2](#))