



BHC-MSS 0064

Guide to the Papers of City Council Member Peter Spain

By Meg Rinn, December 2019

Descriptive Summary

Creator: Peter Spain

Title: Papers of City Council Member Peter Spain

Dates: 2015-2019 [bulk 2017-2018]

Quantity: 7.5 manuscript boxes

Abstract: Peter Spain served as a part of the Bridgeport City Council for a two year term, spurred on by the sudden 29% increase in Bridgeport's mill rate/property tax rate. As a city councilor, Spain's focus was primarily on health issues, education, economic development, and governmental transparency. This is well represented in the collection, and there is particular weight to the matter of the Water Pollution Control Authority and its aggressive approach to collecting payment.

Language: English

Repository: Bridgeport History Center

Note: Biographical history and scope and content note (especially with regard to WPCA) were written by Peter Spain and lightly edited by Meg Rinn for clarity.

Biographical History

The youngest of three children, Peter D. Spain was born in 1971 to John F. Spain (1939-2011) and Mary Mannion Spain (1941-). Peter attended public school in Bethel, Connecticut, graduated Phi Beta Kappa from the University of Virginia College of Arts and Sciences in 1993, and later earned a master's in chronic disease epidemiology from the Yale School of Public Health. In September of 2012, Spain and his spouse Kate Desmond Spain (1970-) move to the Black Rock area of Bridgeport from neighboring Fairfield.

Spain ran for office in 2016 to better represent the local community. This is due in no small part to the unanimous approval of the recent budget proposed by Major Ganim that forced a 29% increase in Bridgeport's mill rate/property tax rate.

Serving for one two-year term, Spain made an effort to publicly report his annual taxpayer funded stipend in order to encourage greater transparency from city officials. He also worked on health issues, education, economic development, and worked to engage constituents.

Scope and Content note:

The collection covers Spain's tenure as a councilman for the City of Bridgeport. This means a diverse array of topics are covered, from the city budget to matters related to the Board of Education to public health. As Spain served as a part of the Ordinance Committee, documents related to that process are present in large number.

In particular, there is a large amount of material within the Ordinance series that covers the Water Pollution Control Authority and its aggressive approach to collecting payment. This approach meant potential foreclosure for Bridgeport residents who were already in extremely vulnerable

positions. The Ordinance Committee, including Councilman Spain, worked with Bridgeport residents, retired Judge Carmen Lopez and Connecticut State Senator Marilyn Moore to try and address the issues at hand, which included liens on homes of elderly and disabled who'd failed to pay their sewer-use bills and/or to set up a payment plan resulting in foreclosures.

The efforts resulted in revised ordinances, making the collection process fairer by reducing the incentives of the outside lawyers to go for foreclosures and by increasing the power of the citizens in need to work with the city to establish a more manageable and timely payment plan.

Arrangement Note:

The collection is arranged into three series: subject files, ordinances, and city budget material. The arrangement of subject files reflects the original order that they were received in – alphabetical. Ordinances had some semblance of order imposed on them, with the first several folders in the series reflecting this fact. The rest of the ordinances did not, and so they were organized by topic. Material related to the WPCA take up the bulk of this series. Within the third series, related to city budget, the final published budgets (with Spain's annotations) are placed first and are followed by working materials and drafts.

Administrative information:

Provenance:

Donation from Peter Spain, accession #2019.32.

Preferred Citation:

Papers of City Council Member Peter Spain (BHC-MSS 0064) Bridgeport History Center.

Names and Subject Tracings

Personal names

Spain, Peter

Corporate names

City of Bridgeport

City of Bridgeport -- Board of Education

City of Bridgeport -- Budget

City of Bridgeport -- Ordinance Committee

Subject tracings

Bridgeport, Conn.

Corruption

Parks -- Capozzi Park

Detailed box and folder listing

Series I, Subject files

Box 1

1. City council information resource guide for Bridgeport city council members, 2017
Airport, 2018
2. Agendas, 2017-2018
3. Anti-corruption, 2018
4. Arts and culture, 2017-2018

5. Board of Education, 2015-2019
6. Board of Education – Superintendent, 2018
7. Bonding, 2014
8. Bridgeport Generation Now, 2017-2018
9. Bridgeport Regional Business Council and Bridgeport Chamber of Commerce, 2017-2018
10. Budget, 2017-2019
11. Budget, 2017-2019
12. Budget, monthly, 2017-2019

Box 2

1. Casino, 2018
2. Casino-Capozzi park, 2018
3. Capozzi park, 2018
4. Charter revisions, 2017
5. City-testing employees, 2017-2018
6. City phone numbers, 2016
7. Economic development, 2017-2018
8. Education, 2017-2018
9. Emoluments, 2017
10. Ethics, 2018
11. Financial task force, 2017
12. Financial task force, Fiscal stability and economic development, 2018
13. Freedom of Information Act, 2018
14. Garden apartments, 2018
15. Grants, 2018
16. Guns, 2018
17. Immigration, 2017-2018
18. Jetland lot, 2018
19. Legal settlements, 2017

Box 3

1. Municipal Accountability Review Board, 2018
2. NRZ, 2018
3. Opportunity zone, 2018
4. Petitions, 2016
5. Police commissioner, 2017
6. Police management, 2017-2018
7. Police management – police chief, 2017-2018
8. Promises and Q&As, 2017
9. PSEG, 2018
10. PT Barnum [housing] 2017-2018
11. Public forums, 2017-2018

Box 4

1. Public health, 2017-2018
2. Public health, 2017-2018
3. Public health, 2017-2018
4. Robert's rules, 2018-2019

5. Storycorps, 2018
6. Towers, 2018
7. Traffic safety, 2018
8. Webster arena, 2018
9. 4 Seabright, 2018
10. 4 Seabright, 2018
11. Water Pollution Contract Authority, 2018
12. Misplaced subject files, 2018
13. Plan Bridgeport draft, 2019

Series II, Ordinances

Box 5

1. Agendas, 2017-2019
2. Ganim reimbursements, 2018
3. Hire Bridgeport First, 2018
4. Residency, 2018
5. Tax abatements, 2017-2017
6. Ordinances related to Bridgeport schools, 2018
7. Ordinances related to Bridgeport schools, 2018
8. Ordinances related to Civil Service, Hiring, and Employment, 2018-2019
9. Ordinances related to economic development, 2018
10. Ordinances related to sales and marketing of tobacco, 2017-2019
11. Ordinances related to WPCA, 2017-2019
12. Ordinances related to WPCA, 2017-2019

Box 6

1. Ordinances related to WPCA, 2017-2019
2. Ordinances related to WPCA, 2017-2019
3. Ordinances related to WPCA, 2017-2019
4. Ordinances related to WPCA, 2017-2019
5. Ordinances, other, 2017-2019
6. Proposed tentative agreement with the National Association of Government Employees...regarding their bargaining unit contract, 2019

Series III, City budget

7. Annual operating budget, fiscal year 2017-2018

Box 7

1. Annual operating budget, fiscal year 2018-2019
2. Annual operating budget, fiscal year 2019-2020
3. Budget material, 2017-2019

Box 8

1. FY 2018-2019 Proposed general fund budget, 2018
2. FY 2018-2019 Proposed general fund budget, 2018
3. Budget material, 2017-2019
4. Budget material, 2017-2019