

**CITY OF NORWALK
BOARD OF ESTIMATE & TAXATION
APRIL 3, 2017**

ATTENDANCE: Gregory Burnett, Chairman; Mayor Harry Rilling; Anne Yang-Dwyer (Via Phone); James Page

STAFF: Robert Barron, Finance Director; Donna King, City Clerk; Lunda Asmani; Director of Management and Budgets

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Burnett called the meeting to order at 6:33 p. m. A quorum was present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

March 6, 2017

Page 1 Add commas between names on attendance list.

Page 2 Change “due to the sale of promotional sale of ID cards” to “due to the promotional sale of ID cards.”

**** MAYOR RILLING MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MARCH 6, 2017 MINUTES AS AMENDED.
** THE MOTION PASSED WITH TWO ABSTENTIONS (MS. YANG DWYER AND MR. PAGE.)**

March 22, 2017 Special Meeting

**** MAYOR RILLING MOVED TO APPROVE THE MARCH 22, 2017 SPECIAL MEETING AS SUBMITTED.
** THE MOTION PASSED WITH TWO ABSTENTIONS (MS. YANG DWYER AND MR. PAGE.)**

March 22, 2017 Public Hearing

Page 1 Change “our goal is to take taxes as low” to “our goal is to make taxes as low”

Page 2 Change “look for bang for the buck” to “Look for more bang for the buck”

**** MAYOR RILLING MOVED TO APPROVE THE MARCH 22, 2017 PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES AS AMENDED.
** THE MOTION PASSED WITH TWO ABSTENTIONS (MS. YANG DWYER AND MR. PAGE.)**

SPECIAL APPROPRIATIONS AGENDA (SECTION A)

List of Resolutions

Advertised Items – 1

Report on Special Appropriations

Justification/Backup Material

Mr. Asmani stated that the Corporate Counsel is requesting a \$40,000 special appropriation into their Other Professional Services account to meet ongoing expenses related to tax appeals and for expenses related to the Walk Bridge project through the end of the year. He stated that there are currently four commercial tax appeal cases scheduled to go to trial this fiscal year. He stated that with the Walk Bridge project, a cost of \$20,000 is anticipated for the assistance of outside counsel for issues specifically dealing with the state and federal processes being conducted by the CT Department of Transportation and Federal Transit Authority. Mr. Asmani stated that the original approved budget for the Other Professional Services account was \$100,000. In November 2016, \$30,172 was transferred out of this account for workspace modifications in the Corporation Counsel Office. In December 2016, \$10,000 was transferred out of this account for workspace modifications expenses in the Corporation Counsel Office.

- ** MR. PAGE MOVED TO RESOLVE THAT A SUM NOT TO EXCEED \$40,000 BE AND THE SAME IS HEREBY TRANSFERRED FROM CONTINGENCY TO THE CORPORATION COUNSEL DEPARTMENT TO COVER THE COSTS OF ONGOING EXPENSES PERTAINING TO TAX APPEALS AND THE WALK BRIDGE PROJECT. (ACCOUNT #01-03-00-5258).**
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

TRANSFER AGENDA (SECTION B)

Purchasing Department Transfer \$1,000

Mr. Asmani stated that the transfer is coming to the BET because a previous transfer of \$4,500 had already been processed by Finance and now exceeds the \$5,000 threshold. The prior transfer was to cover costs associated with advertising bids and RFPs in the local newspaper. The current request for \$1,000 is in order to cover costs associated with maintenance of the centralized fleet of vehicles.

- ** MAYOR RILLING MOVED TO APPROVE THE PURCHASING DEPARTMENT TRANSFER FROM WAGES & SALARY – PART TIME TO OTHER PROFESSIONAL SERVICES IN THE AMOUNT OF \$1,000.**
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Youth Services Department Transfer \$33,744

Mr. David Walenczyk came forward in support of the transfer. He stated that the transfer is to cover the shortfall in the part-time account due to the Assistant JRB Coordinator being staffed as a part time position. He stated that the time labor grade placement for the new full time position has yet to be negotiated by the Personnel and Labor Relations Director and the NMEA bargaining unit. He stated that the full time position should have been filled on July 1, 2016, but has been staffed with part time staff pending completion of the negotiations.

- ** MR. PAGE MOVED TO APPROVE THE YOUTH SERVICES DEPARTMENT TRANSFER FROM WAGES & SALARIES – REGULAR TO WAGES & SALARY – PART TIME IN THE AMOUNT OF \$33,744.**
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

OTHER BUSINESS (SECTION C)

RESOLUTION, requesting a Special Capital Appropriation in the amount of \$277,000 to the Public Works Department for West Rocks Middle School Windows and Doors Replacement.

Mr. Alan Lo came forward in favor of the Special Appropriation. He stated that the windows are in extremely poor condition. He stated that the work done at West Rocks School will be done in two phases. Phase One will be completed in the summer of 2017 and Phase Two will be completed in the summer of 2018. He stated that the city received state approval to go out for bids for Phase One and the estimated cost is now approximately \$1,377,000. As part of the state approval process, the city is considering a projected reimbursement to the city of \$277,000. Mr. Lo stated that the actual reimbursement amount will not be determined until after the project has been completed and a State audit has been issued.

- ** MR. PAGE MOVED TO APPROVE A SPECIAL CAPITAL APPROPRIATION IN THE AMOUNT OF \$277,000 TO INCREASE THE APPROPRIATION TO FUND WEST ROCKS MIDDLE SCHOOL – WINDOWS & DOORS REPLACEMENT PROJECT INTO ACCOUNT #0917-5010-5777-C0566.**
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Appointment of Auditors to audit Fiscal Year 2016-17

Mr. Barron stated that Connecticut General Statutes require the BET, every year, to report to the Office of Policy and Management the name of the independent auditor designated to conduct the audit. He stated that in 2014, the City issued a RFP soliciting proposals from audit firms to perform the City's financial statement audit for a five year period beginning July 1, 2014.

- ** Ms. Yang-Dwyer moved to approve the appointment of RSM US LLP to perform the City's financial statement audit for Fiscal Year 2016-17, the third year of the contract at a fixed fee of \$95,000.**
- ** The motion passed unanimously.**

Oak Hills Park Authority By-Laws

Mr. Jerry Crowley and Mr. Mark Gartner came forward to review the changes that have been made to the Oak Hills Park Authority By-Laws. Mr. Crowley stated that the part-time Executive Director position has been eliminated and a Controller position has been created. The Controller will be in charge of all financial activities for OHPA operations. The Controller will be responsible for safeguarding and maintaining accurate financial records. Mr. Crowley stated that the Golf Course Superintendent/Property Manager position and the General Manager/Head Golf Professional will remain in place.

Mr. Crowley stated that a Master Plan Committee has been added to the By-Laws. An OHPA Master Plan was put in place 4 years ago, and a requirement to review the plan at least once every five years has been put in place.

Mr. Crowley stated that the new By-Laws was voted on by the Authority. Mr. Burnett recommended including in the By-Laws how often they would be reviewed, when the review would occur and what the review process would include. Ms. King stated that the By-Laws should prohibit members from calling in to Executive Sessions.

Adoption of Tentative FY 2017-18 Operating Budget

Mr. Barron stated that the City of Norwalk adopted a \$20.9 million budget for FY 2016-17. He stated that in June of 2016, the state adopted a \$19.2 million budget for Norwalk in FY 2016-17. This is a \$1.6 million cut. In February of 2017, the stated indicated an \$18.3 million budget for Norwalk in FY 2016-17. He stated that this is an additional cut of \$0.9 million.

Mr. Barron stated that in February of 2017, the stated indicated that it was appropriating \$8.3 million more for Norwalk in FY 2017-18 over its adjusted FY 2016-17. He stated that when he deducted the \$2.5 million in cuts from the base FY 2016-17 budget and the lost \$4.1 million Excess Cost grant, the net increase is only \$1.7 million. He stated that the increase of \$1.7 million is surprisingly close to the \$1.6 million it cut from its adopted budget in June of 2016.

Mr. Barron reviewed the contents of a memorandum to be sent from the BET to the Members of the Common Council. He stated that in the memorandum, the BET requests that the Common Council increase the FY 2017-18 operating budget cap to \$338,667,747. The tentative operating budget was set at \$357,909,487 and includes an estimated payment to the Teachers Retirement System of \$9,215,371 as proposed by the Governor in his February 8, 2017 biennial budget. Without the payment to the TRS, the tentative budget is \$11,369,975 or 3.4% over the current FY 2016-17 adopted budget and a total tax levy increases by 2.9% which is a 1.1% increase in the grand list and a 1.8% increase in mill rate.

Mr. Burnett stated that he would like it included in the memorandum that Local Property Tax Revenue on Hospital Real Property in the amount of \$9,931,560 could be realized under the Governor's biennial budget.

**** MAYOR RILLING MOVED TO TRANSMIT THE MEMORANDUM TO THE COMMON COUNCIL ASKING FOR THE INCREASE IN THE SPENDING CAP TO \$338,667,747, WHICH IS \$8,700,635 MORE THAN THE CAP ESTABLISHED BY THE COMMON COUNCIL ON FEBRUARY 28, 2017.**
**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION SECTION D

Status of Contingency

Financial reports

Oak Hills Financial Status – February 2017

Year-to-date Capital Budget Report – FY 2016-17

Year-to-date City Operating Expenditure Report - FY 2016-17

Year-to-date City Operating Revenues Report – FY 2016-17

Year-to-date BOE Operating Expenditure Report - FY 2016-17
Tax Collector's Narrative – February 2017
Tax Collector's Report – February 2017

Salary accounts

Police

Fire

Public Works

Mr. Barron submitted the financial reports and salary accounts.

ADJOURNMENT

**** MAYOR RILLING MOVED TO ADJOURN**
**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:04 p. m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tom Blaney
Telesco Secretarial Services