

**BOARD OF ESTIMATE & TAXATION MEETING ACTIONS**

**MARCH 16, 2005**

ATTENDANCE: Mayor Knopp; Randall Avery; Ron Coley; Richard J. McGregor; Jim Clark; Tanya Court; Tim Buzzee; Gregg Burnett (7:25 p.m.)

OTHERS: Thomas Hamilton; Pam Stark; Ann Twomey

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Knopp called the meeting to order at 6:45 p.m.

The Mayor stated that he wanted to discuss changes in light of comments received recently in setting cap last week.

Debt service has been reduced by \$30,000. This will not impact cap adopted by Common Council. On Tuesday, the city refinanced \$22.8M in outstanding bonds. The city had requested to refinance existing debt once. The higher interest debt was replaced by a lower interest debt, saving \$700,000, and it exceeds 2% savings. The refinancing is effective and the credit rating has been updated. The City's AAA rating and S&P's have been affirmed. The impact of the debt savings will be felt later. The debt service increase is due to school plan.

Moved Youth Services Contingent to Department. At the regular Board of Taxation and Estimate meeting in April, the final budget will be adopted. Changes can be made then.

**\*\* TANYA COURT MOVES TO APPROVE THE BUDGET  
\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

Tax Rates for Fiscal Year 2005-06.

The Mayor reports on the tax increase in 4th District. The breakdown and impact on the average tax increase is 3.5% increase on average 4th District home; \$169 over a year; Board of Ed receives \$90 of that amount (1.87%); Municipality receives \$79 of that amount (1.63%). The debt service is allocated proportionately between the two. Implementation has begun for the 2nd year of revaluation (4 year total). In addition, tax impact of budget and revaluation has tax burden shifted between property owners.

Recommended Fiscal Year 2005-06 Capital Budget.

The Mayor reported that the capital budget has a separate process from the operating budget. The department heads make recommendations to the Finance Director, then to the Planning Commission, then to the Mayor, to the Board of Estimate, and then to Common Council. The Mayor stated that the deadline was yesterday (March 15, 2005)

for the budget recommendations. A letter and a list of projects was put before everyone. There is a massive school facilities project and it was funded. The State will reimburse the City. While it could be considered excessive, the amount cannot exceed \$6M per year. The City's AAA bond rating could be jeopardized. A surplus amount of funds from the Board of Education has been moved into the Textbook reserve.

The Water Pollution Control Authority (WPCA) and the Norwalk Parking Authority (NPA) debt service are funded by their revenues and wouldn't count against the \$6M. The priorities are the school facilities project, the computer upgrade project, textbooks, and affordable housing. Sources are not in budget for the CDBG. City funding has 20 affordable housing units to be constructed on the Reed Putnam site next to Maritime Center in excess of \$1M. The next highest priority is the improvement of roads. The road reconstruction program over last 11 years has a proposed increase of 54% over 11 year average. The Flax Hill Road project over two years received about \$600/year during 1994-95, and 1999-2000. In addition, adding funds to the 4R Program short of major reconstruction by \$250,000 to accomplish line safety striping. It is not adequate for 250 miles of road. The DPW has been asked to come up with a 5 year plan. The hiring of two additional maintenance/signage/pothole repairmen is in capital budget.

The Fire Department accepted purchase of breathing air compressor. The Parking Authority has special appropriations for an additional booth at Washington Street and Webster. Garage improvements have been made to the Yankee Doodle garage out of their revenue control. The Parks and Recreation department added a showmobile. The Historical Commission is doing well. They are working on the Burning of Norwalk and the Flood of '55. The Parcel 3 site is a healthy recommendation for an increase for IT department. It has a new telephone system. It will be open next month, with a formal opening in May. In E. Norwalk, five schools are complete and five more will file in June. The improvements to the infrastructure are due to better management. The required projects are not funded but all are worthwhile. Schools and children are a priority. Mr. Hamilton reports that in terms of action of Board, the Mayor said to set limit and recommendations are for a maximum cap of \$6M. The debt is to be repaid through a general fund. Mr. Clark inquires as to the GIS implementation not being funded, and does it have relationship to roads? Would they use it as a technology tool? Mayor Knopp replied that basically, the GIS is a view of the city, and it enriches amount of data via aerial photographs. The primary use was to take new pictures and record new changes, as some of the material was 10 years old. The neglect of roads would also be visible through the use of the GIS. Mr. Hamilton reports the proposed reorganization of the IT department. Human resources are being put in place to support the city's technology initiatives. GIS is an application that needs to be an enterprise wide application. It is currently focused on DPW and should be expanded.

Mr. Burnett arrived at 7:25 p.m.

**\*\* MAYOR KNOPP MADE MOTION TO APPROVE MOVE TO COMMON COUNCIL.**

\*\* MR. BUZZEE SECONDED.  
\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

\*\* MAYOR KNOPP MADE MOTION TO GO TO EXECUTIVE SESSION.  
\*\* MR. AVERY SECONDED.  
\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

The committee went into Executive Session at 7:27 p.m. and reconvened at 7:35 p.m.  
In attendance were Mayor Knopp, Mr. Avery, Mr. Burnett, Mr. Buzzee, Mr. Clark, Mr. Coley, Ms. Court, Mr. Hamilton, and Ms. Twomey.

\*\* MR. CLARK MADE MOTION TO ADJOURN MEETING.  
\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn Marr  
Telesco Secretarial Services

