

**CITY OF NORWALK
PLANNING COMMISSION
DEPARTMENT REVIEWS FOR CAPITAL BUDGET
January 31, 2019**

PRESENT: Frances DiMeglio, Chair; David Davidson; Brian Baxendale; Mike Mushak; Tammy Langalis; Nora King; Steve Ferguson

STAFF: Steve Kleppin

OTHERS: Fire Chief Gino Gatto; Deanna D'Amore; Mike Barbis; Tom Hamilton; Bill Holdel; Ralph _____; Kathryn Hebert; Mike Yeosock; _____; Vanessa Valadares; Christine Bradley; Sherelle Harris; Alex Knopp; David Westmoreland; Patsy Brescia; David Scott Parker; Anna Keegan

1. Fire Department - Fire Chief Gatto began the presentation with the Capital Funding request for Apparatus Replacement but he explained that they were not able to use the Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) codes. He noted that they had to replace a ladder truck which they regularly replace. The old truck then goes into reserve. He noted that the department was supposed to purchase it last year but it was pushed forward to this year. The next item was for portable radio upgrade which could be used with the Police Department Combined Radio Dispatch. These radios would replace 3 in each vehicle with one. This was another item that was supposed to purchase it last year but it was pushed forward to this year. He said it was needed. The next item was for Battery Powered Extrication Equipment which would replace the Jaws of Life that they currently use to take people out of vehicles after an accident. It is a new request. The new equipment would be able to cut through the vehicles quicker than the current equipment. The next item was vehicle replacement so that the Fire Dept. could purchase 2 Ford Escapes, one of which was a 2007 and the other was for an additional staff member who was currently driving a police car. There was a discussion about purchasing a hybrid or electric vehicle. The next item was for Building Repairs in Various Stations. Chief Gatto said that the amount requested was the same amount requested every year. He said that they use the money for repairs as they come up during the year. The next item was for an air compressor and explained that how it was used. He said that it was 35 years old and it was difficult to get parts for it. The next item was for Security Cameras and Intercom System. The only building with an intercom system and security is the main headquarters. This funding would be for an intercom system and security at the other fire stations as well. The next item was for an outdoor sign for the outside of the Headquarters on Connecticut Avenue. He showed them a picture of what they would like to put in front. The department would need a variance and zoning permit. Ms. King noted that Chief Gatto should speak with those people that installed a sign in front of Brien McMahon. The next item was the training tower but they could not use it to burn. They had to replace thermal tiles which are what the Capital Budget funding request was for. He did, however, mention that there are fewer fires these days. The next item was for funding in a later year for SCBA airpicks and facepieces. Chief Gatto said that they did receive some grant funding. However, they would still have to pay for others to be replaced. The last item was also for one of the later years, the Fairfield Avenue Construction Match for the mechanics doors. They are 35 years old and not working correctly. Mr. Davidson noted that there was some funding still available in a previous year but Chief Gatto explained it was encumbered and currently being used. Since it was a large amount of money, Mr. Davidson asked that Chief Gatto submit an explanation in writing to Mr. Kleppin by Monday morning.

The commissioners asked for Chief's priority items. He said they would be the apparatus replacement and the portable radios were his top two.

2. Health Department – Deanna D'Amore began the presentation by explaining that the Capital Funding request for the clinic exam rooms had been in last year's Capital Budget request. She also explained how they needed new tables, lights, etc. but that this was not for this cycle. She said that Building Management also had items in their budget as well.

3. Board of Education – The commissioners acknowledged and thanked Tom Hamilton for stepping into the role of assisting the city's Finance Department, especially with the budgets and the reevaluation and other projects. They said he has been working dual roles at this time. Mike Barbis, Chair of the Board of Education, began the presentation with a discussion of the Jefferson School and the Columbus School. On both, they are working on plans for the renovations of those schools. He noted that both would qualify for state reimbursement, as renovation as new projects. He takes a long time to get the money back, however. For work done on Norwalk High School, the Board took money from the Jefferson budget which was unplanned. He then began a brief description of the work to be done on the Jefferson school as well as the logistics of the construction. This school has not been renovated since it was 1972. Mr. Hamilton explained the grant process for the Jefferson school, which even though, construction wouldn't start for a while, paperwork had to be submitted quickly. Mr. Barbis said that the Jefferson school plans were online and that he had shown them to the school community. He also noted that they did look at other available spaces around Norwalk, including the Toys R Us space but none would work. There was a discussion about the cost of school bus transportation around the city. Mr. Barbis said that the additional request was for a gymnasium because Jefferson currently has 1 room that is used as a gymnasium/cafeteria/auditorium. There was then a discussion about further increases in the school budget when this had already been approved last year. Mr. Hamilton noted that schools are now required to have a separate gymnasium and have all the schools be the same. There was then a discussion about how the city receives back the state funding. Mr. Barbis then continued the presentation by discussing the Columbus International Baccalaureate (IB) School. He explained how the program worked, how it was suggested to start an elementary program since they had a program at Brien McMahon and how it would work at the Columbus School. It is the oldest school in the city and needs some environmental remediation. It also needs a separate gymnasium. He also noted that with a new Director of Recreation and Parks, they would like to be able to collaborate with them for after school programming, using Board of Education facilities. The next item that was discussed was the Facilities Master Plan which identified problems in every building, some being critical and others not as critical. This request was to try to do some of the work on that list which included the Tracey School kitchen, and the West Rocks cafeteria renovation. There was also a discussion about central air conditioning at the Cranbury School. Mr. Hamilton said that the lack of central air conditioning has been a problem. There was a discussion about the reasons for air conditioning problem and one was that the electrical power to the school is not sufficient. Some of the commissioners that had children in the elementary schools noticed a difference in them once a gymnasium had been added. Mr. Barbis discussed a new Capital Funding request for Marine Sciences Pathway Renovation. He said that many students were not suited for college so there were opportunities to work in marine type jobs, since Norwalk was a coastal town. Ralph _____, from the Board of Education, spoke further about the program which would include a pathway for going to a Naval Academy and/or an officer track. It would also include aquaponics to grow food. It would go into the current auto shop which had been used for storage for

10 years. There was a discussion about funding for this program which included teacher certification so that Norwalk teachers could teach this. Mr. Barbis noted that there are different pathways to give students different options. Ms. King noted to them that the Manresa Island plan which included a similar program so that both parties could work together. Some of these programs would offer college credits to Norwalk Community College and possibly the University of Bridgeport. It was also noted that these pathways are open to all students. The next item was the air conditioning program. Mr. Barbis noted that there are 20 buildings and but nine do not have central air conditioning. It is cost prohibitive so they have come up with an interim plan to use stand up units that are vented outside. It is being done in West Rocks. The Capital Budget request was to do two schools in the upcoming year, Kendall and Roton. The next item was on instructional technology. Mr. _____ discussed the One to One Chromebook program and said they would like to continue that. He noted that the request was a little lower because the Chromebooks were lasting a little longer than expected. There was a discussion on cost savings such as the e-rate funding which gave the district an 80% reimbursement for internet. Going forward, every 9th grader would receive a Chromebook which they would keep for all 4 years of high school. Every middle school student has one that they return at the end of the day. There is also a BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) program. However, it is easier for the students to use the Chromebooks and easier to lock down. Mr. _____ said that he was working on a project to upgrade switches because they had not been changed since his previous employment with the district. There was a discussion about keeping the kids safe on the internet. Mr. _____ said that the district can see what they are writing in Google Docs and if something is not right, a principal or the police would be notified. He noted that Minecraft would be used educationally. There was a discussion about a program with Sprint giving out WiFi hotspots to high school students. He would be reaching out to other school districts to talk about this Sprint program. Mr. Barbis introduced a new curriculum, Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) and that the Capital Fund request was for new textbooks to implement the curriculum. The next item was for capital repairs for mechanical equipment that breaks down during the year and cannot be planned for. They are monitoring air quality in all buildings so as not to have problems as there are in other districts. Last year's money had not been spent but there are projects for this year which it is being spent on. The next item was for Rowayton Asbestos Abatement. He noted that the last time the school had been renovated was 10 years ago but that there were items that had not been done such as air conditioning. He described the asbestos conditions at the school which were safe for now, but should be addressed. He noted that work had to be done in the summer so they would like to do it in the summer of 2019. The next item was for furniture and equipment which could not be spent under the Operating Budget. Mr. Hamilton said that some of this equipment was for life saving systems, special education, district wide furniture throughout the schools, and furniture for Montessori primary years at Brookside school. There was a discussion where in the school the classroom would be, how it would develop, what were the requirements, etc. The next item was Brien McMahon Indoor Air Quality. Mr. Barbis said that they started having concerns about air quality when several teachers had health issues which they attributed to the air quality in the buildings. Although inspections had been done, they could not determine a single cause. They did remove old TVs and VCRs which were dusty and not being used anymore. A lot of clean-up had been done but still they had a report done to hone in on the issues. He said that several suggestions had been made in the report which they would like to have done. Mr. Holdel explained what the Capital Budget funds would be used for. He said that the situation is manageable at the moment. Connecticut OSHA has been to five schools to check the air quality and there have been no problems reported. Mr. Hamilton explained how working with OSHA in this manner would save them in fines later on. He explained that they had started with schools where

there had been sickness of teachers. Connecticut OSHA would go through all of the schools over the next year. There was a discussion about the timeline for the work completion which they expected to be done by the end of the summer. The next item was for the Kendall Media Center. The library needed to be upgraded to the 21st century. Mr. Barbis noted that some schools had a PTA that could help with funding but that Kendall was not one of those schools. Mr. _____ said that many of the libraries would switch over to learning centers. He showed them plans for the new media center at Kendall. Many could include maker spaces and television production and 3D printers. There was a discussion about the certified media specialists who are now staffing these new media centers. The next item was for paving. Mr. Barbis said that they had asked for funding last year but it was not put into the budget. They had started paving at the Tracey School and Silvermine but they had not been finished and could not be left the way they were. Other schools needed to be paved as well. Nathan Hale needed to be paved as well. There was a discussion about working collaboratively with DPW and they do piggyback on their contracts. It has worked well especially if there is a road near one of the schools. The next item was the energy conservation program. Mr. Holdel explained the program with EverSource which found them savings in their energy costs at Norwalk High School and Brien McMahon. It is a 3 year program which included motion sensors for lighting, etc. EverSource did the evaluation at no cost to the city. Mr. Barbis explained LEED certification for the new schools being built which would include solar. There was a discussion about the cut-off lighting for the parking lots. There was a discussion about other projects for the later years, one of which would be 6 years from now, the Middle Years Programme for the IB program. There was a discussion about the Silvermine Dual Language Expansion in later years through 8th grade.

At 8:24, the commissioners took a 10 minute break.

4. Transportation, Mobility and Parking – Kathryn Hebert introduced herself as the Director of Transportation, Mobility and Parking along with Mike Yeosock, the Assistant Director. She said that she was waiting for Vanessa Valadares. Mr. Yeosock began the presentation with the first Capital Budget request for traffic signal replacement which was an ongoing program. Some signals are 30 years old. There was a discussion about moving the accounts out from under DPW which Ms. Hebert said could not be done at this time. Mr. Yeosock said there were no grant opportunities for some signals. There was a discussion about unencumbered balances. Ms. Hebert said they could find out and get back to the commissioners the next day. The next item was the East Avenue – Green Pedestrian Crosswalk Signal which Mr. Yeosock said was a request from the neighborhood to provide access to the park from East Avenue. There was a discussion about the type of light and whether they should put in less expensive lights to see if it works before spending \$175,000. The next item was for traffic signal enhancements which Mr. Yeosock said were for extras at a traffic signal. There was a discussion about how many lights would be enhanced as well as using money that was in other accounts not being used. He noted that some money would be spent in the next few months. The next item was for the RRFB Crosswalk Signs. Mr. Yeosock said there was money that was unspent last year due to a lawsuit, not with the city. The company was back working again and they would now be able to start installing around schools. There was a discussion about where these signs would go. The next item was Artistic Crosswalk Signs which Mr. Yeosock said was a new program. He explained how it started on Wall Street. Ms. Hebert explained that they had gotten a request to put a rainbow on Wall St. near Knight Street. They were confirming the placement of that since there are several construction projects in the area. She said that the program would help give an identity to the neighborhoods, if they requested such a crosswalk. These would cost more because of paint, special

designs, etc. The discussion about how it was also a traffic calming device. _____, the city's chief of Economic and Community Development spoke further about the program. She explained that after this first one was completed, they would have a better idea of how they could partner with the business community. They would also look to Denver and Austin which already had programs for this. They did not have an exact cost until this one is off the ground. There was a concern about how the artistic crosswalks would be decided. The crosswalks would still look like a crosswalk. Ms. King asked to see a draft of the approval process. Ms. _____ said that businesses were buying into improving the neighborhood. The next item was the Transportation Management Plan which needed to be updated to include parking. Because there are projects being constructed in many areas of the city, residents cannot park. There was a discussion about unencumbered Capital Budget funds of \$900,000 which Mr. Yeosock said was a project going out to bid in 2 months. Mr. Davidson said that the amount he was reviewing had been sitting in the accounts since 2013. Mr. Yeosock said that some of these projects used both federal and/or state money first, which they tried to spend. According to him, then the city's funds were left unused. The commissioners asked him to send an explanation to Mr. Kleppin about these unused funds. The next item was the Norwalk River Valley Trail's capital budget request for benches, signs, etc. There was a discussion about the next part of the project which was near Riverside. There was also a discussion about money that is still in the accounts which are for the state matching grants. The next item was Safe Routes to School which he said they had spent all of the money from last year. There was also a discussion about the traffic calming on Highland Avenue. Mr. Yeosock noted that they had received a grant for Hunters Lane and sharrows on Rt. 136. The next item was for new sidewalk construction. Ms. Valadares explained that when road construction is done, they repair sidewalks. This fund is for constructing new sidewalks. There was a discussion about adding a sidewalk on one side of Rowayton Avenue. There was also a discussion to clarify organization of the new department Transportation, Mobility & Parking as well as the Parking Authority. _____ said that she would have been sitting at the table had she arrived to her department sooner as well as explaining what her responsibilities are and the departments that she works with. There was a discussion about what could be done with the amount of money that they were requesting for New Sidewalk Construction. There was a discussion about Patty Brescia who supported footpaths 40 years ago in Norwalk so that children could walk to school. Unfortunately many have not been fixed since then. The next item they discussed was the Hunt Street/Witch Lane Sidewalks. The Capital Fund request was for design work. Mr. Davidson then asked to review some of the requests that were in the later years. The first one they reviewed was the West/Belden Mott Intersection to help connectivity from Wall St. to Mott. It was part of the POKO design. There was a discussion about the Hamilton St. Staircase which would be similar to the one on Clay Street. The next item was the Pedestrian Crosswalk – 40 Cross Street Trail which was also in the out years. Another item in the out years was a traffic signal at Scribner Ave. There was some discussion as to other options because some commissioners thought a traffic signal would not work. The next item was pavement markings which were in an out year because they still had money in this year's Capital Budget funds. The next one was for pavement markings for bikes. There was a discussion about how the amount of lines, signs and sharrows there were for the bike lanes. The next item was for Fleet Equipment. Mr. Yeosock said that the request was for funding a new bucket truck since it is 30 years old and they cannot get parts for it anymore.

Ms. Hebert continued the presentation with an explanation that the Parking Authority is set up as an enterprise fund. The first and only request is for city parking assets. Ms. Valadares continued with a detailed explanation of the Capital Fund request. She clarified that the Yankee Doodle Parking

Lot needed guard rails but they did not get funding last year. There was a discussion about a gang of thieves that had broken into the city's pay stations. Ms. Hebert noted that, although they had insurance, it took a few months to get new pay stations. Ms. Valadares said they were not seeking funding for new pay stations. There was a discussion about the Profit & Losses for the various parking garages which would affect the rates paid by taxpayers. Ms. Hebert said that the Parking Authority followed the same process as all other processes for the Operating Budget. There was then a discussion about re-paving the Main Street parking lot. There was also a lengthy discussion about the Webster lot.

5. Library – Christine Bradley, Director of the Library, began the presentation with the Capital Budget fund request for the Norwalk Newspaper Digitization. She said that several papers have been completed and they are starting with the Norwalk Hour. She explained how they could go to the library's website to search for newspapers digitally well as handed out an article from the Hour about the original funding of the Main Library. The next item was for the GNLV Abatement/Renovation Capital Budget request. She explained that the renovation would not be in the part of the library that would be expanded but rather, downstairs in the original part of the library. Sherelle Harris explained that there was quite a bit of asbestos. A suggestion was made to use the same contractor as the Board of Education. The next item was the SONO Branch Repurposing. Ms. Harris explained that it was a continuation of last year's Capital Budget funding. The last time the SONO branch had been renovated was over 10 years ago. They were updating the technology, seating, etc. in this branch. There was a discussion about when the previous year's money would be spent and Ms. Harris said that work was starting in February. The next item was for a Book Drop which would now be curbside, rather than getting out of the car. There was talking about putting something on the drop box, such as hours, the website address, etc. It would be for both branches. There was a discussion about using unencumbered funds which might be used for some of these smaller projects. There was a discussion about the library's truck which would bring books to people. The original company that was supposed to make the truck went out of business. They were now getting it from a company in Westchester County. Ms. Bradley thought it might end up being for less money. The commissioners asked Ms. Bradley to send an explanation about the unencumbered funds to Mr. Kleppin. The next item was for the Main Library Parking and Expansion which Alex Knopp, the President of the Board of Directors for the Library, discussed. He gave a brief overview of the previous years for this project. He said that CPTV would be a part of the library's expansion project. The first part of the project would be the feasibility and how the deal would be structured. Mr. Knopp said that they were working with Alan Lo as well. They would hire an architect and an engineer to see what was feasible. He showed them a rendering of what an active Belden Avenue would look like. CPTV wanted a patio out front to do similar TV shows like the outdoor patio on the TODAY show. There would be a restoration of the Carnegie steps. The library would be renovated and there would be a 24,000 sq. ft. expansion. Mr. Knopp said that they were trying to get an accurate cost for the project but they don't have that yet. He said the city would have to set up a building committee like it does for schools. He said that he had spoken with State Senator Bob Duff and CPTV about grant money. He also said that they may be able to get grant money from the state library system. It could be the first public library in the state with a public TV station within it. The only other library with a TV station in it is the Boston library with WGBH within it. Mr. Knopp said he would work with Mr. Lo to draft an RFP. He also explained that this was the oldest public building in Norwalk serving the most people. He said that the ultimate decision for the library would be made by the city. They would have to decide to buy the Milligan property. There was a discussion about the parking in the area. There was a discussion about the

possibility of moving the library to the Riverview plaza which Mr. Knopp said would not be possible. Patsy Brescia, the Vice President of the Board of Directors, also noted that the 1st Taxing District had given the library to the city and it was to remain a library. If not, it reverts back to the 1st Taxing District. There was another discussion about the parking as well as a walkway through the Post Office property. There was a discussion about the multi-purpose room at the Library. If they expand the library, there could be a larger concerts and more meeting spaces. They hoped to have a more modern library similar to libraries around the county. There was a further discussion about the CPTV interest. The cost could be about \$20 million. Mr. Knopp said that they would also need a plan about the types and numbers of meeting rooms they would need in the new facilities. There was a discussion about the difference in how Norwalk could raise funds as opposed to how other towns raised funds.

6. Historical Commission – David Westmoreland introduced the new Chair of the Historical Commission, Suzanne Betts but said that he would continue to help out until the Capital Budget process is done. Mr. Mushak said he would not recuse himself from the discussion because he did not feel there were any lines being crossed. Mr. Westmoreland then introduced the Board for the Lockwood-Mathews Museum. The first item was for ADA Access Mill Hill and the Master Plan they have been implementing since 2011. He explained the history of the townhouse and how the bricks were exploding. They had hired the best building conservationist in the business to do the work but they were short \$80,000. This was their request this year. There was a discussion about the parking at Mill Hill which Mr. Westmoreland explained that would be striped. He explained that it had to be redesigned for buses, etc. Mr. Mushak said that the Little Red House program is the only one that Norwalk students get about the Norwalk history. The next item was the Lockwood-Mathews Mansion roof which he noted the repairs are complete. However, the roof on the veranda was not installed incorrectly and it is now moldy and leaking. He said that they had unspent funds which they could use for that work. Mr. Westmoreland discussed the projects that had been done in the recent past. Much of the money spent on these projects was raised through grants. He also noted that a Master Plan had been done for the Mansion to upgrade all of the mechanical systems in the building. They have done smaller projects over the last 10 years but the state preservation office said that opening up walls to upgrade systems has to be done at the same time. They invited State Senator Bob Duff and Governor Malloy to see the mansion and asked for \$10 million minimum. They were awarded a \$5 million grant and able to get the project list down to \$7.5 million so they were asking for \$2.5 million as their Capital Fund request for Lockwood-Mathews Mansion Code & Repairs. There was a discussion on the timeline which included closing the mansion for 1 year. They have 5 years to use the state funds. Ms. Brescia spoke about the meeting with Governor Malloy last August about why the state should give the Mansion the money. They discussed the significance of the Mansion to Norwalk and the state. She noted that they have a wonderful architect on this project. This project would allow the Mansion to be open year round which mean more rental fees, etc. It would be difficult to raise funds for this since it is not beautifying a room but rather, wiring a room. There was a discussion about how some rooms cannot be opened to the public because of the lack of safety features, including sprinklers. There was a discussion about obtaining mitigation money from the Walk Bridge but that funding went to the Maritime Aquarium. There was a discussion about meetings with the Department of Transportation and whether there had been misrepresentations to the public on what was happening. Ms. DiMeglio said that she believed that Mr. Westmoreland spent every dollar that was given to the Historical Commission in the best possible way. Mr. Westmoreland prioritized the first 3 Capital Budget requests as “must haves.” He said that he always asks for funding for Cemetery Site

Work but has some money that he has not used yet. He explained that the LWPA Murals was not urgent. He gave an update on the Lockwood House ADA Access. There was a discussion about what a National Historic Landmark is and the Lockwood Mathews Mansion is one. There was a discussion about how a new sprinkler system would work with the decorative ceilings. The original home was very modern for its time, both in decoration and engineering. Mr. Westmoreland noted that the Historical Commission can take a project and break it down into smaller projects but with Code and Repairs project they have done all they can do. Now the rest of it must be done at the same time. Some of the commissioners noted that they all appreciated the work that Mr. Westmoreland had done in completing projects frugally. Mr. Mushak noted that cultural tourism was growing at a faster rate than other types of tourism. Mr. Ferguson asked if there could be some African-American history at the Mansion. Again, Mr. Westmoreland noted that the first 3 requests were the critical ones. There was a discussion about having all of the money for the Lockwood – Mathews project.

7. Human Relations & Fair Rent - Anna Keegan, the acting Director of Human Relations and Fair Rent, began the presentation and noted that they had not been sure which POCD codes to use. She indicated that much of the work would be done at the public schools. There was a discussion about funds that had not been spent. Ms. Keegan said she had prepared a list of what had not been spent and what they were hoping to spend. There was a discussion about how this department handled the ADA compliance in the schools. Ms. Keegan noted that they had waited for the Education Plan so that they could determine which schools to work with first. They are also looking to get an assessment of 10 schools and find out what the inaccessible areas are. There was a discussion as to why the department needed an assessment. There was also a discussion as to why the department was requesting such a large amount. Ms. Keegan explained that some of the money would be held in reserve for a larger project in later years which was an ADA accessible route to City Hall and the Health Department. There was a discussion about having city buses come into the City Hall parking lot. Ms. Keegan said that many times they have issues with contractors not completing work. Another delay was sending out an RFP and getting no bids. There was a discussion about a shower and bathroom at Veteran's Park at the boat slip. There was also a discussion as to how the requests were determined. Ms. Keegan said that many times the estimates came for the departments that were doing the actual work.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Langalis made a Motion to Adjourn.

Mr. Davidson seconded.

Frances DiMeglio; David Davidson; Brian Baxendale; Mike Mushak; Tammy Langalis; Nora King; Steve Ferguson voted in favor.

No one opposed.

No one abstained.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Diana Palmentiero