

Common Council Actions

COMMON COUNCIL

ACTION

MARCH 19, 2002

NORWALK, CONNECTICUT
CHAMBERS

7:00 P.M. DST, COUNCIL

ALL COMMON COUNCIL ACTIONS TAKEN AT THIS MEETING TO APPROVE EXPENDITURES AND CONTRACTS OR TO ACCEPT BIDS AND OTHER PROPOSALS REQUIRING THE EXPENDITURE OF CITY FUNDS ARE SUBJECT TO THE AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS.

A Special Meeting of the Common Council of the City of Norwalk was held on Tuesday, March 19, 2002 in the Common Council Chambers, City Hall, 125 East Avenue, Norwalk, Connecticut. Mayor Knopp called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m. and led the assembly in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

I. ROLL CALL

PRESENT:	Kenneth Baker	Jeanette Olmstead-
	Sawyer	
	Poruban	Kevin
	Barbara Hudgins	Judith Rivas
	William Krummel	Douglas
Sutton	Joseph Mann	Peter Wien
	Matthew Miklave	William
Wrenn		

Eleven (11) members were present at Roll Call.

II. ACCEPTANCE OF THE CALL OF THE MEETING

**** MR. MANN MOVED TO ACCEPT THE CALL OF THE MEETING.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY BY VOICE VOTE.**

Mr. Bondi arrived at 7:18pm and was present for the remainder of the meeting.

III. SET THE CAP ON THE OPERATING BUDGET FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2002-2003

Jack Miller, Finance Director, said that the Charter provides that the Council set a cap on the maximum limit of the expenditures of the City. On January 22nd, the Council set a place-holder cap. The Board of Estimate & Taxation has worked on the budget and has transmitted a recommended Operating budget. If the Council chooses to revise a cap, it requires a 2/3rds vote.

John Lombardi, 2 William Street, asked if the public would be allowed to speak. Mayor Knopp pointed out that at Special Meetings, there is generally no public comment period, but if Mr. Lombardi would like to speak, it would be permitted.

Mr. Lombardi said he was disturbed because he keeps hearing that the education budget has been under funded in the past. The Board of Education budget has been increased by \$27,000,000 since 1998, not including grant funds. With a small increase in student population, they will increase certified and non-certified employees by approximately 30 people. Mr. Lombardi also said that there are part-time City employees being paid \$20 an hour. Part-time employees used to be people working less than 19 hours per week. There is an employee who, for 2001-02, averaged a little over \$1,300 per week. This current year, from July 1st this same person has averaged \$1,397 per week as a part-time employee. The accounts being used to fund this position are Calf Pasture, the sports program, the boat show, etc. It is also being charged to the Heritage Park account, which is a maintenance account. Mr. Lombardi said he hopes someone looks into this. On a different topic, Mr. Lombardi said that 2.11 mills would be taken out of the taxes through the change to the water fee. The homeowner will still pay this amount, which is part of the tax on the homeowner's home.

Mr. Mann noted that Councilmen Kimmel and Perone were not present because of Metro North delays.

**** MR. MANN MOVED TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION (ATTACHED) SETTING THE CAP ON THE OPERATING BUDGET FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2002-03 AT \$188,048,993.**

Mr. Wrenn asked about the \$310,000 for the Master Plan. He asked why that was in Contingency. Mayor Knopp said it remains in the contingency account until it is released. He wants to see more serious work done.

Mr. Krummel said he was concerned about funding for the master plan being in the contingency account and about the status of the pension plans. The City will most likely be required to contribute the City's pension plans in the amount of \$1,649,410. Mayor

Knopp said that had been based on a preliminary estimate. Mr. Miller said they had a preliminary indication from the actuaries but after they reviewed it again, the actuaries have indicated no need to make a pension plan contribution next year.

Mr. Bondi thanked the department heads for coming in with a budget that they can work with. They did a very good job in keeping the budget down and keeping taxes down.

Mr. Wrenn said it was a great budget and he agreed that the department heads should be thanked. He said that this budget covers all essential needs. He asked, since the money for the master plan is in contingency, who would decide when it would be released. Mayor Knopp said that decision would be made by him, the Board of Estimate & Taxation and the Council.

Mayor Knopp said that CCM had a legislative meeting this morning, which he attended, and the overall sense was that this is a very tight budget year. The recession has had a significant negative effect on the budgets of municipalities. Given these difficult fiscal times, we have done a remarkable job in developing a responsible budget that:

1. Holds the property tax increase to a minimum (increasing property taxes by approximately 1.6%).
2. Holds spending down in the City.
3. Implements their priority of increasing investment in the Board of Education.
4. Increases property tax relief for senior citizens.
5. Accomplishes this not through gimmicks, but through solid, substantial reform in the local property tax system by creating a new municipal utility for a water control plan.

Mayor Knopp stated that this is the third year of a revaluation put into effect by the previous administration. This is a solid, substantial budget that funds their priorities and keeps the mill rate down.

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY BY ROLL CALL VOTE. (Twelve for, none opposed, no abstentions)**

IV. ANNOUNCEMENT OF APPOINTMENTS

Mayor Knopp announced the following appointments to the Parking Authority:

Urban Mulvehill, Chairman – 5 year term.

Mayor Knopp said that Mr. Mulvehill is an attorney and past president of the Norwalk Seaport Association, including the past eight years as chairman of the Oyster Festival Parking, Security and Public Safety Committee.

**** MR. MANN MOVED TO APPROVE THE APPOINTMENT OF URBAN MULVEHILL AS CHAIRMAN OF THE PARKING AUTHORITY.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY BY VOICE VOTE.**

Troy Jellerette – 4 year term.

Mayor Knopp said that Mr. Jellerette is a commercial portfolio and corporate finance manager for JP Morgan Chase and a member of the Board of Directors of the Norwalk Education Foundation.

**** MR. BONDI MOVED TO APPROVE THE APPOINTMENT OF TROY JELLERETTE TO A FOUR-YEAR TERM ON THE PARKING AUTHORITY.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY BY VOICE VOTE.**

Larry L. Bentley – 3 year term.

Mayor Knopp said that Mr. Bentley is the Community Development Officer for Fleet Bank, former Vice Chairman of the Greater Norwalk Chamber of Commerce and a former Norwalk Police Commissioner.

**** MS. RIVAS MOVED TO APPROVE THE APPOINTMENT OF LARRY L. BENTLEY TO A THREE YEAR TERM ON THE PARKING AUTHORITY.**

Ms. Rivas said that Mr. Bentley was a great choice. She has served with him on the Norwalk Housing Partnership.

At 7:30 p.m., Mr. Kimmel arrived at the meeting.

Mr. Krummel noted that Mr. Bentley has a Westport address. Mayor Knopp said that Mr. Bentley lives in Norwalk but has a Westport mailing address.

**** MOTION PASSED BY VOICE VOTE WITH ONE ABSTENTION (MR. KIMMEL).**

Amy K. Jimenez – 2 year term.

Mayor Knopp said that Mrs. Jimenez is a business comptroller, a former Vice President of Kerschner Companies, a residential real estate development and general contracting company. She is also a past member of the Norwalk Board of Education, from 1992 to 2001.

**** MR. PORUBAN MOVED TO APPROVE THE APPOINTMENT OF AMY K. JIMENEZ TO A TWO-YEAR TERM ON THE PARKING AUTHORITY.**

Mrs. Olmstead Sawyer said that Mrs. Jimenez was a wonderful choice.

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY BY VOICE VOTE.**

Stephen K. Bentkover – 1 year term.

Mayor Knopp said that Mr. Bentkover is a financial services and insurance benefits planner and is the current President of the Kiwanis Club of Norwalk.

**** MR. MANN MOVED TO APPROVE THE APPOINTMENT OF STEPHEN K. BENTKOVER TO A ONE-YEAR TERM ON THE PARKING AUTHORITY.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY BY VOICE VOTE.**

Mayor Knopp announced that the first meeting of the Parking Authority would take place on March 27th at 8 p.m. in Room 231 and that this Authority would probably meet on the 4th Wednesday of each month.

**** MR. BONDI MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

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