

**CITY OF NORWALK
BOARD OF ESTIMATE AND TAXATION
REGULAR MEETING
JUNE 4, 2012**

ATTENDANCE: Fred Wilms, Chair; Leo Mellow, James Feigenbaum, John Frederici, Mayor Richard A. Moccia, Michael Kolman

STAFF: Erin Halsey, City Clerk; Robert Barron, Finance Department

CALL TO ORDER.

Mr. Wilms called the meeting to order at 7:34 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES.

May 7, 2012 – Regular Meeting

The following corrections were noted:

Page 1, under **STAFF** and all references forward: please correct “Robert Baron” to “Robert Barron”

Page 2, paragraph 1, sentence 3: please strike “He said this was the wrong time to do this.”

Page 2, paragraph 2, line 2: please change the following from “the gold pro” to “the golf pro”

**** MAYOR MOCCIA MOVED TO APPROVE THE MAY 7, 2012 MINUTES AS AMENDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED WITH FIVE IN FAVOR (WILMS, MELLOW, FEIGENBAUM, FREDERICI AND MOCCIA) AND ONE ABSTENTION (KOLMAN).**

SPECIAL APPROPRIATIONS - SECTION A

Mr. Wilms moved to vote on the three items with one vote. This was agreeable to all. Erin then read the advertised items: A, B, and C.

Mr. Baron reminded everyone that there is a contingency allocation in the budget when there is a contract that has not been settled yet. The two contracts were settled and now it is time to transfer the funds.

**** MAYOR MOCCIA MOVED TO APPROVE THE THREE ADVERTISED ITEMS.**

He commented that the City had not taken the funds from the reserve fund, it had been planned

for and the fund held until the contracts were settled.

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE THREE ADVERTISTED SPECIAL APPROPRIATION ITEMS PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mr. Wilms acknowledge that Ms. Haynie, Ms. Murray, Mr. Lyons and Mr. Kimmel from the Board of Education were present in the audience.

TRANSFER AGENDA (Section B)

Mr. Barron explained that every year, the Finance Department tries to anticipate any transfers over \$5,000 before the year's end. He indicated that there were two additional transfers that have extensive backup. Mr. Barron then reviewed the details of these items with the Board Members. Mr. Hamilton has recommended that the recruitment advertising request from the Fire Department be funded out of the new budget year.

Mr. Barron then went on to speak about the reorganization of the Youth Service Department.

Mayor Moccia asked Chief McCarthy if he would be able to work with the advertising in the new budget year. Chief McCarthy replied that he would, but he would be appearing before the Council to request a Special Appropriation.

**** MAYOR MOCCIA MOVED TO TABLE THE FIRE DEPARTMENT TRANSFER REQUEST FOR \$15,000 FOR ADVERTISING.**

**** THE MOTION TO TABLE THE FIRE DEPARTMENT TRANSFER REQUEST FOR \$15,000 FOR ADVERTISING PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** MAYOR MOCCIA MOVED TO APPROVE THE REMAINDER OF THE ITEMS ON THE TRANSFER AGENDA.**

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE REMAINING ITEMS ON THE TRANSFER AGENDA PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

OTHER BUSINESS (Section C)

a.) Meet and Confer with Board of Education regarding collective bargaining negotiations (Executive Session).

b.) Designate Board of Estimate and Taxation member to observe Board of Education negotiations.

c.) Discussion with Board of Education regarding status of reconciliation of FY 2012-2013 budget; take any action as necessary.

Mr. Wilms requested that the Executive Session be held until the end of the meeting and that

Item C be considered first.

**** MR. WILMS MOVED TO DISCUSS ITEM C FIRST.**

**** THE MOTION TO DISCUSS ITEM C FIRST PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Discussions regarding the Board of Education 2012/2013 budget.

Mayor Moccia then read a resolution regarding this situation.

Mayor Moccia stated that this resolution was an attempt to help. He said that he wished to clarify that at no time did the BET loan any funds to Oak Hills. Ten years ago, the previous administration had loaned Oak Hills funding for the construction of the restaurant along with a few other projects, which the Authority is paying back. Therefore, the comments about the City caring more about the golf course than the students are unfounded.

Mayor Moccia said that there had been numerous negative comments about Dr. Marks, but he pointed out that Mr. Longo had been investigating this situation under Dr. Marks' supervision and the situation dates back to years before Dr. Marks arrived in Norwalk. Pointing fingers backwards and saying that the District is second rate because the City does not give enough money is not appropriate. He reminded everyone that the teachers work very hard to integrate the children who come into the District who do not speak English as a first language.

He then urged the Board to pass the allocation of 2.2 million dollars.

Mr. Kolman asked if it was known how the funding would be spent. Mayor Moccia said that he believed that this funding would be used for the full day kindergarten program. Dr. Marks confirmed this.

Mr. Wilms said that there had been many budget discussions and this shortfall caught everyone by surprise. There will not be a tax payer bail out. He said that no one asked for a bail out and was grateful that the BOE worked very hard to determine where the problem originated and how to correct it. Mr. Wilms said that he was very impressed with the quality of the financial work done by Mr. Longo and the BOE.

One of the key programs is the full day kindergarten. Sports programs along with the music and band programs and the AP and Honors programs are also critical to the quality of the education. Mr. Wilms complimented Dr. Marks and the BOE for not making the sports, band, music, and the AP programs into bargaining chips. He said that he was very supportive of the motion and intended to vote for it.

Mr. Barron said that it was clear that the City was dealing with a plan that covered three upcoming fiscal years. He then reviewed the details. He said that this was a well structured solution and believed it would be favorably reviewed by the rating agencies.

Mr. Wilms spoke about the insurance trust fund and what the rating agencies expected the City and the Board to do regarding this situation.

**** MR. WILMS MOVED TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION READ BY MAYOR MOCCIA REGARDING THE BOARD OF EDUCATION.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

EXECUTIVE SESSION

a.) Meet and Confer with Board of Education regarding collective bargaining negotiations (Executive Session).

Mr. Wilms announced that the Board was entering executive session at 8:06 p.m. to discuss contract negotiations.

b.) Designate Board of Estimate and Taxation member to observe Board of Education negotiations.

ADJOURNMENT

**** _____ MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at _____

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services