

**CITY OF NORWALK
BOARD OF ESTIMATE AND TAXATION
MAY 5, 2014**

ATTENDANCE: James Clark, Chair; Mayor Harry Rilling; Erik Anderson;
Gregory Burnett; Edwin Camacho; James Feigenbaum;
Anne Yang, Dwyer (7:45 p.m.)

STAFF: Thomas Hamilton, Finance Director; Robert Barron, Director
Office of Management and Budgets; Donna King, City Clerk;
Margaret Suib, Fair Housing Officer; Hal Alvord Public
Works
Manager; Director; Kathryn Hebert, Administrative Services
Mary Austin, Early Childhood Program

OTHERS: Bruce Kimmel and Phaedrel Bowman Common Councilmembers;
Patsy Brescia, Chair Board of Directors, Lockwood
Mathews Mansion Museum

Mr. Clark called the meeting to order at 7:38 p.m. and Ms. King called the Roll. There were six (6) Board members present.

APPROVAL OF FY 2014-15 OPERATING BUDGET & TAX RATES

Mr. Hamilton provided the Board members with a summary of the operating budget that was included in the meeting packet. Mr. Barron described the changes and said that there were additional items for consideration. He said that the meeting packet was provided to the Board members on Friday. He explained that the net impact of all of the items, is if they follow the tentative budget they would be below the cap by \$541,000. The technical change will reduce the cap by \$51,000.

Mr. Barron said that as the year progresses, some of the salary and wages will change. He highlighted some of the items that were not salary or wage items.

Ms. Yang Dwyer joined the meeting at 7:45 p.m.

**** MR. ANDERSON MOVED TO ACCEPT THE \$51,177 REDUCTION TO
THE OPERATING EXPENSES
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

Mr. Barron explained that the legislative meeting over the weekend reinstated one-time revenue that the City was shorted on for \$184,181. This will put the City \$231,217 under budget.

**** MR. ANDERSON MOVED TO INCREASE THE INTER
GOVERNMENTAL REVENUE BY \$231,217.
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

Mr. Barron explained that they are \$823,635 under the cap and tonight they will vote on the budget and the mill rates. He said that there were five items identified in an e-mail that was sent on Friday. He gave a brief introduction to the five items.

- 1. \$43,493 request for supplemental funding for the Mayor's Summer Youth and Redevelopment Neighborhood Improvement Coordinator programs. If approved, would allow for the Planning Committee to redirect federal block grants to the boxing initiative proposed by Councilman Travis L. Simms.**

Mr. Hamilton explained that the Mayor's Summer Youth program that is funded from multiple sources, including the City. The request is to increase the City's contribution.

Mr. Kimmel said that the issue is broader than the request for \$43,000. HUD has certain rules and they change every year. He said that the Common Council typically gets 19 – 20 requests from Norwalk non-profits, but the problem is that in using the HUD formula, organizations should only receive funds once. It occurred to the Planning Committee members that the Neighborhood Improvement Coordinator's position has been funded year after year and they have been denying others. If they could free up the \$43,000 they could distribute funding to other organizations. Mr. Clark asked Mr. Kimmel if he has a recipient in mind. Mr. Kimmel said that would be decided by the Common Council; there is no specific organization.

Mr. Anderson told Mr. Kimmel that they were led to believe that it was made clear that the specific goal for this and that specific amount was for the Travis Simms program. Mr. Kimmel said that would be decided on the Council floor.

Ms. Bowman spoke on behalf of the Travis Simms Foundation. She said that they think the City should absorb the cost so that the funding could go to start up their organization. She said that they believe they have the program that will do multiple things and they will work with PAL to improve the Police situation in South Norwalk. Mr. Clark said that these are issues that the Common Council will have to deal with.

Mr. Clark suggested to the Common Councilmembers present to be aware that there is an ad hoc grant committee and that going forward they go before that committee and present detailed information. He said that they can't take action on a good idea.

Mr. Anderson said that at this point it is late in the game. He said that he would be comfortable looking at this next year. Ms. Bowman proposed that with cost could be re-absorbed in the Redevelopment Administrative costs. Mr. Hamilton explained that the Redevelopment Agency is not a City of Norwalk department. It would be unusual for the City to pay administrative fees for a non-city agency.

Mayor Rilling asked about the implications about making the Neighborhood Improvement Coordinator's position a City post. Mr. Hamilton said that is something they can look at. If this position was pulled out of the Redevelopment, they would have to figure out where this position goes and this position would be eligible for City benefits. In addition those benefits would have to compare to the Redevelopment Agency's benefits.

Ms. Yang Dwyer said that this is a process and it has been lengthy. It is time to close the books and if there are new items, they can be address in next year's cycle. Mr. Kimmel said that the process is not finished until the Common Council votes. He said that during the last discussion on the operating budget, no one on the Common Council felt involved. Mr. Clark said that he looks forward to more discussions about the process.

Mayor Rilling said that he would strongly recommend trying to fund a boxing program. He talked about Mr. Harris' program and said that he would support a program like that.

2. \$30,000 request for supplemental funding for the Lockwood Mathews Mansion due to a forecast loss of revenue during construction. Audit and Forecast budget documents are provided for your review.

Mr. Barron explained the request. He said that the numbers submitted demonstrates their need. They have made an attempt to reduce their expenses, but show that their utilities will go up during the period of closure. Mr. Hamilton said that he currently has in the budget a grant for the Lockwood Mathews Mansion Museum for \$45,000 to cover utilities and insurance expenses. He noted that they have been fundraising to offset their deficit.

Ms. Yang Dwyer said that there are a number of worthy non-profit organization. She said that she is sympathetic, but the numbers are set and people should live with those numbers.

Mr. Anderson asked Ms. Brescia about the utility cost increase. Ms. Brescia said that their heating and electrical costs went up. There is the basic premise that the Mansion is

owned by the City of Norwalk and the Museum Board took over a joint venture with the City 50 years ago. She described the improvements they have made to the Museum and said that they raise earned income of about 50% of the budget. Ms. Brescia said that the building belongs to the City of Norwalk and the reason for the shortfall is that they cobbled together funding to put in an elevator in the City's building. They are continually enhancing the City's building.

Ms. Brescia said that the project was supposed to start in January, but due to delays, they are now forced to close for this project during their peak season. She noted that the building is impossible to heat.

Ms. Brescia said that in the 15 years she has been involved in the Mansion, this is the first time they have come to the City to ask for help. Mr. Anderson asked what they were doing to make up the difference. Ms. Brescia described their fundraising efforts. She said that the \$30,000 is an arbitrary number. Mr. Burnett asked if they could be considered under a special appropriation as opposed to the arbitrary guestimate of \$30,000. Mr. Clark said that it is important to note that the City is a partner with the Mansion and if their assumptions are correct, he is comfortable recommending approval. Mr. Anderson said that it is important to know that the money is going to a City building to make it ADA compliant. He said that he feels this request is reasonable. He added that the Lockwood Mathews Mansion board has raised over \$1 million to make improvements to the building.

Mr. Hamilton said that if the Board decides to increase the appropriation, they can have the \$30,000 held in abeyance until they need is demonstrated. Ms. Yang Dwyer said it could be considered a loan or a special appropriation. Mr. Hamilton explained that the loan would fall under the prevue of the Common Council and a special appropriation requires approval by both the Board of Estimate and Taxation and the Common Council. Ms. Brescia said that in all of her years involved with the Mansion, they have always gotten a lump sum.

**** MR. CLARK MOVED TO APPROVE THE \$30,000 REQUEST FOR SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING FOR THE LOCKWOOD MATHEWS MANSION DUE TO A FORECAST LOSS OF REVENUE DURING CONSTRUCTION, WHICH WOULD INCREASE THE BALANCE IN THE ACCOUNT TO \$166,000**

Ms. Yang Dwyer said that the budget has been set. If there is a true cash flow problem, then it should be addressed at that time.

**** MOTION PASSED BY ROLL CALL VOTE WITH FIVE (5) VOTES IN FAVOR (MAYOR RILLING; MR. CLARK; MR. ANDERSON; MR. CAMACHO; AND MR. FEIGENBAUM AND TWO (2) VOTES IN**

OPPOSITION (MR. BURNETT AND MS. YANG DWYER)

3. \$280,274 request for supplemental funding for the Norwalk Housing Authority to run the Childcare Programs at the Ben Franklin and Nathaniel Ely schools.

Mr. Barron reviewed the Head Start and School Readiness summaries and program expense analysis. He said that it is close to a \$5 million program. He said that the Norwalk Housing Authority submitted a budget and the average cost per student is a little over \$11,000 per year. He reviewed the program and said that he believes the numbers are good. Mr. Clark thanked Mr. Barron for bringing a high level of clarity. Mr. Barron said that the Norwalk Housing Authority was a pleasure to work with.

Ms. Yang Dwyer noted that most of the costs are personnel costs. She said that the costs are embedded and the allocation of the overhead should not be incremental to the program. Mr. Barron said that only 17% of the total administrative cost will go to Head Start. Mayor Rilling said that amount seemed high. Mr. Barron said that the City was giving NEON roughly \$1.3 million to run these programs. He said that the Norwalk Housing Authority took over in February and spent 4 – 6 weeks finding out who works for them. He said that they scrambled to make sure people were paid. They requested what NEON was getting, but over the last six weeks they were able to scrub the numbers and are asking for roughly \$1 million less than NEON.

Mayor Rilling said that the Norwalk Housing Authority looked at all of the revenue streams and now have an actual budget. He said that he feels they are on the right track and will know where the money is going. He asked if they received the \$450,000 from CDI. Mr. Barron said that the \$280,000 request is for 2014-2015; the money the Mayor is talking about is money that went to CDI to run the program during this current year.

Mr. Clark said that he was surprised to learn that the Norwalk Housing Authority serves 436 children and this budget is for year round services. Ms. Yang Dwyer said that \$11,000 for pre-K this is a healthy sum. She said that people can do private pre-k in Norwalk for less than \$11,000 per year.

Ms. Yang Dwyer said that if there is a need for a special appropriation, it will stand the test of the Board of Estimate and Taxation and the Common Council. Mr. Anderson said that he would lean toward keeping a smaller amount in the budget and see how it looks next year. Mr. Hamilton said that the Norwalk Housing Authority has been cooperative and they have an additional burden by taking on this \$5 million program. Mayor Rilling said that he had concerns about the administrative costs. Mr. Anderson said that he would

be more comfortable if the money was being allocated to the program or the students. A discussion ensued.

Ms. Yang Dwyer said that if there is a need for additional funding it should be recognized in the 2015 budget.

**** MR. ANDERSON MOVED TO APPROVE \$30,461 FOR SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING FOR THE NORWALK HOUSING AUTHORITY TO RUN THE CHILDCARE PROGRAMS AT THE BEN FRANKLIN AND NATHANIEL ELY SCHOOLS**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

4. **\$11,300 request for the Fair Housing Office's increase of supplies from \$2,500 to \$6,300 and \$7,500 for a new Administrative position.**

Mr. Hamilton explained the request.

Ms. Yang Dwyer left the meeting at 9:35 p.m.

**** MR. ANDERSON MOVED TO APPROVE THE REQUEST FROM THE FAIR HOUSING OFFICE TO INCREASE SUPPLIES FROM \$2,500 AND TO \$6,300 AND REMOVE THE REQUEST FOR \$7,500 FOR A NEW ADMINISTRATIVE POSITION**

Mr. Burnett said that his understanding is that this is a position to get an intern to help with the work load. He said that he would lean toward funding an intern vs. pencils and paper. Mr. Anderson said that he does not feel it should be one over the other, because with an intern, there will be a need for more supplies.

Ms. Suib said that she had requested \$18,000 for a support person; Mr. Burnett suggested requesting an intern. She said that the request for \$6,300 is not only for office supplies, but also to fund Commission events for the year. She explained that her office used to be part of the Redevelopment Agency, so support and supply services were provided at no cost. She said that the \$6,300 is based on real costs. He said that she has to use the Health Department's copier and they send her a bill. Mayor Rilling suggested purchasing a copier.

**** MR. ANDERSON MOVED TO AMEND HIS MOTION TO INCREASE THE FAIR HOUSING OFFICE SUPPLY BUDGET TO \$6,300**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**** MR. BURNETT MOVED TO ALLOCATE \$7,500 FOR A NEW ADMINISTRATIVE POSITION FOR THE FAIR HOUSING OFFICE**

Mayor Rilling asked if there is a job description and requirements for this position. Ms. Suib said that she submitted a job description that the City has for administrative people. She said that she is looking for 10 hours per week. She said that it was suggested getting an intern and that is amenable to them.

**** MOTION FAILED BY ROLL CALL VOTE WITH THREE (3) IN FAVOR (MAYOR RILLING; MR. BURNETT AND MR. CAMACHO) AND THREE (3) VOTES IN OPPOSITION (MR. ANDERSON; MR. FEIGENBAUM AND MR. CLARK)**

Mr. Clark said that he did not feel he had enough specific details.

5. \$680 request for the Norwalk Nagarote Sister Project

Mr. Hamilton explained the request. He said that the \$680 is a membership for this national program. Mayor Rilling said that Norwalk has been involved in this program for 28 years. Mr. Anderson said that this is a wonderful program.

**** MR. ANDERSON MOVED TO APPROVE THE \$680 REQUEST FOR THE NORWALK NAGAROTE SISTER PROJECT**
**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

April 7, 2014 – Regular Meeting

**** MR. ANDERSON MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES AS PRESENTED**

Mr. Clark asked the Board members to e-mail any corrections to him.

**** MOTION PASSED WITH ONE (1) ABSTENTION (MR. CLARK)**

SPECIAL APPROPRIATIONS AGENDA (Section A)

List of Resolutions
Advertised Items -
Report on Special Appropriations
Justification/Back-up material

There were no special appropriations this evening.

TRANSFER AGENDA (Section B)

FISCAL YEAR 2013-14:

**** MAYOR RILLING MOVED TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING TRANSFER**

CORPORATION COUNSEL:

From	To	Amount
01-0300-5110 Wages & Salary – Regular	01-0300-5742 IT Software	\$9,060

This transfer is to the purchase of 10 licenses, first year maintenance and user training for Worldox GX3 document management software for the office.

Mayor Rilling commended Mr. Coppola for his approach to the position of Corporation Counsel. He said that he has developed a style where he runs the Law Department like a law firm and has done a remarkable job.

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**** MAYOR RILLING MOVED TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING TRANSFER**

FIRE DEPARTMENT:

From	To
01-3120-5331 Automotive Fuel & Fluids	01-3120-5269 Other Repair-Maintenance
Amount	
\$15,000	

This transfer is to cover an increase in outside contractual repair and maintenance on fire equipment due to reduced maintenance staff as a result of a vacancy.

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**** MR. ANDERSON MOVED TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING TRANSFER**

DPW:

From 01-3055-5262 Other Machinery-Equip. 01-3055-5298 Amount \$2,195	To Other Contractual Services
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From 01-3055-5329 Other Operating Supplies 01-3055-5298 Amount 2,787	To Other Contractual Services
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From 01-3055-5394 Other Materials 01-3055-5298 Amount 4,645	To Other Contractual Services
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Total Amount
\$9,627

This transfer is to cover the remaining invoices for snow plowing at Police Headquarters due to an active winter season.

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

OTHER BUSINESS (Section C)

**** MR. CLARK MOVED TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTION**

RESOLUTION, MAKING APPROPRIATIONS FOR VARIOUS PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS AGGREGATING \$22,457,000 FOR THE FY 2014-15 CAPITAL BUDGET AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF \$19,878,000 GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS OF THE CITY TO MEET CERTAIN APPROPRIATIONS IN THE FY 2014-15 CAPITAL BUDGET

Mr. Hamilton said that the approval of this resolution allows the issuance of bonds.

Mr. Clark thanked the Planning Commission and the Common Council for crafting the capital budget. Mayor Rilling asked what could be done to add \$1 million to the paving program. Mr. Hamilton explained the procedure.

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**** MAYOR RILLING MOVED TO APPROVE THE FY 2014-15 WPCA OPERATING BUDGET**

Mr. Hamilton explained the item. Mr. Alvord provided a brief overview. Mayor Rilling said that the WPCA has increased their rates a minimal amount.

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**** MR. CLARK MOVED TO APPROVE THE FY 2014-15 PARKING AUTHORITY OPERATING BUDGET**

Mr. Hamilton explained the item. Ms. Hebert reviewed the budget and said that overall the increase is \$84,000. Mr. Alvord said that compliance is up, which means that violations are down.

**** MOTION PASSED WITH ONE (1) ABSTENTION (MR. ANDERSON)**

**APPROVAL OF FY 2014-15 OPERATING BUDGET & TAX RATES -
continued**

6. \$20,800 Early Childhood

Mr. Barron gave an overview of the Graustein Grant. Ms. Austin said that the grant partially funds her salary; however, she hopes to put more into the position for a consultant and would like to do more with home care providers.

**** MR. ANDERSON MOVED TO REMOVE \$20,800 THAT WAS INITIALLY APPROPRIATED TO COVER FUNDS THAT WERE NOT GOING TO BE COVERED BY THE GRAUSTEIN GRANT AND REPLACE THAT AMOUNT WITH THE GRAUSTEIN GRANT**

**** MOTION PASSED WITH ONE (1) ABSTENTION (MR. CAMACHO)**

Mr. Clark thanked the Board for putting in their time and commitment and for taking seriously their charge as stewards of the tax payer's money. Mr. Anderson said that it has been a pleasure to serve with Mr. Clark and appreciates his leadership in his position.

Mr. Barron reviewed the changes made this evening to the budget.

Due to a potential conflict of interest, Mr. Anderson and Mr. Camacho left the meeting.

**** MR. CLARK MOVED TO APPROVE THE HISTORICAL COMMISSION AND GRANT AGENCIES PORTION OF THE OPERATING BUDGET AS REFLECTED ON THE FINAL SHEET.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

Mr. Anderson and Mr. Camacho returned to the meeting.

**** MR. CLARK MOVED TO APPROVE THE 2014/2015 OPERATING BUDGET OF \$317,542,155 AND THE MILL RATE AS FOUND ON THE COMPOSITE TAX RATE**

FIRST DISTRICT	\$25,041
SECOND DISTRICT	\$25,041
THIRD DISTRICT	\$25,041
FOURTH DISTRICT	\$25,100
FIFTH DISTRICT	\$24,328
SIXTH DISTRICT	\$22,425
TENTH DISTRICT (MOTOR VEHICLE)	\$28,241

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

6. Additional Information (Section D)

Summary of Special Appropriations

Status of Contingency

Financial reports

- Oak Hills Financial Status – March 2014
- Year-to-date Capital Budget Report – FY 2013-14
- Year-to-date City Operating Budget Report - FY 2013-14
- Year-to-date BOE Operating Budget Report - FY 2013-14
- Tax Collector's Narrative – March 2014

City of Norwalk

Board of Estimate and Taxation

May 5, 2014

Page 11

- Tax Collector's Report – March 2014
- Key Revenue Report – 2014

Salary accounts

- Police
- Fire
- Public Works

**** MR. FEIGENBAUM MOVED TO ADJOURN**
**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

There was no further business and the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 10:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemarie Lombardi
Telesco Secretarial Services