

**CITY OF NORWALK  
JOINT SERVICES STUDY GROUP  
BOARD OF ESTIMATE AND TAXATION/BOARD OF EDUCATION  
FEBRUARY 25, 2010**

ATTENDANCE: Fredrich Wilms, Chairman; Jody Bishop-Pullan,  
Glenn Iannaccone

STAFF:

City of Norwalk: Thomas Hamilton, Director of Finance;  
Fred Gilden, Comptroller; Gerald Foley, Purchasing  
Norwalk Public Schools: Dr. Dan Cook, Interim Chief of Operations;  
George Giannitti, Financial Services/Operations/Purchasing  
Michael Nast, Interim Superintendent

OTHERS:

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Wilms called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Iannaccone requested to table the approval of minutes from the meeting of January 28, 2010 until next month's meeting

Old Business Update

a. Mail Operations

Dr. Cook stated that things were on track with Corporate Mailing Services where a 9 cent reduction of first class postage is achieved and 4.5% goes to Norwalk Public Schools. In addition there is a decrease of the Pitney Bowes postage machines, one from Brien McMahon and one is still at Norwalk High as a pilot consolidation to be upgraded with the City's machine. Mr. Iannaccone asked if we are still paying the lease, and Dr. Cook responded no, there is a savings of \$300 per month on lease reductions.

Mr. Gianitti added that when Pitney Bowes heard of the consolidation, they responded with concern and are working on offering a renegotiation package, and they are working on additional lease savings of \$300/quarter for each machine in the district plus other City departments. He added that next they will add the Police Department, which will bring the total savings district and city-wide to add up to \$1,200 per month.

## b. Recycling

Mr. Wilms requested to provide an overview and update of the program for Mr. Nast's benefit. Mr. Giannitti stated that he, Mr. Wilms and Dr. Cook had reported last month that they attended the "start-up" day at Rowayton Elementary School and were very impressed with how well the pilot has gone. He described the program, and he stated that there are levels of recycling that start with cafeteria cans/bottles, then trays, then office paper, followed by full classroom recycling. Mr. Giannitti reported that Rowayton, Fox Run and Wolfpit schools are up and running, and next will be Marvin, then middle schools, followed by the high schools, which are doing cafeteria cans/bottles. He reported that there has already been an 80% reduction in general trash and an increase in recyclables that should amount to a large savings for the District, as well as the City.

Dr. Cook added that there is a savings of \$47.50 for each less dumpster pull, multiplied for each week, times all schools amounts to thousands of dollars in garbage pick up savings, and in addition the recyclables are sold at \$17.50 per ton, which is another City budget savings.

Mr. Hamilton asked about the high schools, and Mr. Giannitti explained that each school varies with their procedures and he works with the Principals to accommodate what works best for their cafeteria layout. He added that the Principals and Environmental Clubs have been very cooperative and the program is well on track.

Mr. Wilms added from the DPW perspective, that it has been a well-organized cooperative effort, and they have worked closely with Mr. Alvord and all is working well with the consolidation efforts by the schools and the City. Mr. Giannitti added that the blue bins have been made available and can upgrade the outside containers to the larger barrel type if needed, with eventually large dumpster -type of bins that are becoming available on the West Coast. Mr. Wilms commented that there was a tremendous educational value for students to take home the benefits of recycling and added that he has been impressed with the school resources that have been focused to the program, and Mr. Nast added that this is a lesson students will keep with them for life.

## c. Printing Services

Mr. Wilms asked Dr. Cook to update the group on the status of the printing services consolidation efforts, and Dr. stated that they have been in negotiations with Corporation Counsel regarding the Xerox contract. He added that he is not in a position to release the numbers, but that would be in effect at the time of April vacation, announced at the next BOE meeting, but it is in six figures. He said Corporation Counsel is reviewing the contracts carefully to make sure all details are worked out, as it is very technical.

Dr. Cook stated that it looks to be a very favorable position for the city with negotiating a more economic service agreement, and in addition, they are looking at relocating the Copy Center back to City Hall where efforts of consolidating copying needs with the schools and City departments can take place. Mr. Hamilton asked Mr. Foley to discuss the aspect of location, and he stated that they should work with Alan Lo of Facilities Management. Mr. Foley responded that they are looking at expanding a closet area formerly used by Gilbane annexed to the Weights and Measures area, possibly knocking down an adjacent wall near the loading dock.

Mr. Hamilton commented that Mr. Foley's plate is rather full with current City projects, and Mr. Giannitti agreed to work on this, as they continue to work on the copier situation. Dr. Cook added that Mr. Foley has been very helpful with issuing the RFPs and assisting Mr. Giannitti with outsourcing information. He added that it will be a homerun for everyone with ultimately a more efficient system of consolidation of copying and printing services at City Hall, and at the same time freeing up Mr. Giannitti to be able to serve more in an operations capacity.

Mr. Wilms asked if courier routes have been consolidated, and Mr. Hamilton responded that it is just too large of a route for one person, but they are working on ways to combine routes with the vendor.

#### d. Payroll

Mr. Wilms asked Mr. Hamilton for an update on the payroll improvements and Mr. Hamilton said that the City has a signed contract that is being processed through the Law Department with a new Time and Attendance system. He said that while MUNIS has its flaws, the payroll portion does work, and the new time and attendance portion is being tested first before automation can be implemented. Mr. Hamilton pointed out that one thing for municipalities is that the maintenance of the various tables and pay scales when union clauses are renegotiated and changed. He added that Mr. Gildea had been loading data and has been running pilot test systems that should be available to roll out in May.

Mr. Gildea said this is a rather involved program that has been added to his staff in addition to all other budget and taxation reports, but they are well under way. He added that it would give the City a benchmark for comparison, and a determination on how to incorporate the Board of Education into this new system using MUNIS. Ms. Bishop-Pullan asked what company is being used, and Mr. Hamilton responded Nova-Time is being used and hopefully can be rolled out in May, with training to begin in March-April.

Mr. Iannacone asked what the status was with the Board of Ed being added into this system, and Dr. Cook responded that they are at 98% of finishing the verification of accruals of computer data of attendance and vacation records.

Mr. Hamilton added that it is a combination swipe and log-in system that eliminates the manual record paperwork system, which is a huge improvement. Mr. Nast asked what the staff implications were, and Dr. Cook responded there would be no increase to staff, and cost savings to an upwards level of maybe further staff consolidations. Mr. Hamilton added that the City I.T. Department has developed a prototype system as a temporary solution and they are ready to input the data into the computer memory bank and are close to running dual systems. Mr. Hamilton added that it is premature to have further payroll consolidation, but the seeds have been planted and could be harvested once the beginning phases are implemented, based on the positive communications that has occurred so far.

Mr. Wilms stated that these are all very good questions and so far there is recycling savings, copier savings, that are adding up to near \$100,000 and creeping upwards. He added that he is very encouraged with the level of cooperation with the City, Finance Department, and the Purchasing Department in working together to save money for the City, working smarter and more efficient and reducing the City's carbon footprint.

#### New Business

Mr. Wilms said that he would like to keep the momentum going to further address areas of consolidation and duplication avoidance with City and Board of Education services. Mr. Hamilton commented that areas of Workmen's Compensation and Safety Compensation, Life Insurance, and Custodial and Mechanics have been consolidated. He would like to look at benefit administration consolidation, but there is just not enough City staff to handle this. He added that a benefits audit should be done which could identify misuse of benefits by verifying marriage and divorce certificates. Ms. Bishop-Pullan stated that with the HSA switch, verification has been picked up with re-enrollment process. He added that it may be time to look toward the next challenge and suggested that the group review the list of joint services and select the next area to address for consolidation efforts.

Mr. Iannacone suggested the area of Human Relations Director be looked into, and Mr. Hamilton responded with an overview of how the Human Relations Commission is set up based on the City Ordinance, and the creation of the state CHRO which was established in the 70's. Ms. Bishop-Pullan stated that depending on the area, there could be union issues or other limitations and that education-specific areas would have to be established. Mr. Hamilton added that he doubted if the City's Human Relations Director, who also handles the Fair Rent Department, would have time or staff to handle education cases.

Mr. Nast commented that in the six districts he has been involved with the area of Human Relations has been a City rather than a Board of Education function.

Mr. Iannacone stated the other area is legal fees consolidation, and Ms. Bishop-Pullan stated that so much is based on special education it would be difficult to combine efforts. Mr. Iannacone suggested that a staff lawyer with an education specialty and knowledge of special education statutes be hired. Mr. Wilms asked how much is spent on legal fees and Dr. Cook responded \$500 plus overages upwards to \$50,000 based on reports for cases, etc. Mr. Wilms asked that this be put on the agenda for next month's meeting to have further discussion and evaluation.

Mr. Wilms asked about areas of accounts payable, and Mr. Giannitti responded that this has already been done with one person handling all the accounts payable, doing the purchase verification process that has been consolidated in MUNIS. Mr. Giannitti commented that there is really no accounts receivable except for the lunch program, and that has been turned around. Dr. Cook stated that what was a losing Food Services Department, has been turned around to a profit center, which is a huge accomplishment.

Dr. Cook added that once copiers and printing services was tackled, he would like to address fuel oil, and transportation, and legal fees to the list of joint services analysis for them to review and bring to the next meeting their thoughts on what should be next on the "to be addressed" list.

Adjournment

Mr. Wilms adjourned the meeting at 6:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn Knox  
Telesco Secretarial Services