

**CITY OF NORWALK
JOINT MEETING OF THE BOARD OF ESTIMATE AND TAXATION
AND THE BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETING
JANUARY 5, 2009**

ATTENDANCE: **BET :** Friedrich Wilms, Chair, Mayor Richard A. Moccia, Leo Mellow, Jim Feigenbaum, Stuart Wells

BOE : Bruce Kimmel, Chair; Jack Chiaramonte, Rosa Murray, Glenn Iannaccone

STAFF: Mary Roman, City Clerk; Thomas Hamilton, Director of Finance, Ossie Lewis, Finance; Dr. Salvatore Corda, Superintendent of Schools, Dan Cook, BOE Finance COO

OTHERS: Bruce Mellon, NFT President, Council Member Amanda Brown, Council Member Nicholas Kydes; David Davidoff, Atty. Peter Nolan, Jody Bishop-Pullan; BOE Member; Migdalia Rivas, BOE Member; Shirley Mosby, BOE Member; Susan Hamilton, BOE Member

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Mellon called the meeting to order at 8:14 p.m. He then indicated the members of the BOE who were members, along with other members of the Board who were present.

**** MR. WILMS MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 3, 2009 JOINT BET/BOE MEETING AS SUBMITTED.**

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 3, 2009 JOINT BET/BOE MEETING PASSED WITH EIGHT IN FAVOR (WILMS, MOCCIA, MELLOW, FEIGENBAUM, WELLS, KIMMEL, CHIARAMONTE, AND MURRAY) AND ONE ABSTENTION (IANNACCONE).**

UPDATE ON F THE CITY OPERATING BUDGET PERFORMANCE AND MID-YEAR BUDGET REDUCTION.

Mr. Wilms then reviewed the recent financial update, which included the 2.6 million deficit figures. Mr. Hamilton expressed concerns about snow removal costs and real estate conveyance activity. To date the health benefit costs have been reasonable as have the energy related accounts. Heating fuel and gasoline have been negotiated at reasonable rates. Electrical rate negotiations will be occurring soon.

Mr. Wilms said that at the last joint meeting, the Mayor had announced a reduction in the budget. He said that at the last meeting, the deficit had been 2 million, but was now 2.6 million.

Mr. Kimmel said that discussions had been started on various BOE accounts and that there may be some savings in the health insurance. The State has also given the Board some funding that may be encumbered and possibly turned over to City for the fund balance. Dr. Corda said that he felt that Mr. Kimmel had given an accurate summary. Mr. Cook said that he had been working with Mr. Hamilton on this issue and that he was making a major effort to work closely with the City on these finances.

Mr. Hamilton said that the Finance Department had assumed that natural gas prices were going to be higher than they currently are and that when the contract is negotiated, there should be some savings. This should also be true for gasoline and diesel fuel. Dr. Corda said that the bids had come in recently and the figures were favorable. He added that tomorrow's BOE budget presentation would have firm figures.

Mr. Cook said that he had been considering dual fuel in terms of buying fuel in conjunction with the City, which may result in some savings. Dr. Corda said that the BOE fuel costs may increase a few cents, but could potentially reduce the costs of fuel for the entire City. Mr. Wilms said that it would help to consider solutions like this.

Mr. Kimmel said that the next Finance Committee meeting would be in February. He then asked if there could be an analysis of fuel costs. Dr. Corda said that with more data, there would be a greater capacity to analyze and project the figures. Discussion followed about the timeframe and budget schedules.

**DISCUSSION CONCERNING DUPLICATE CITY/BOARD OF EDUCATION
FUNCTIONS & FORMATION OF WORKING GROUP TO STUDY POSSIBLE
CONSOLIDATION.**

Mayor Moccia said that he was in favor of creating a Working Group to analyze the benefits of working together to eliminate duplicate tasks and save money. He then gave a quick summary of having Mr. Cook, Mr. Hamilton, Dr. Corda, himself and a representative from the BOE Finance Committee and the BET. Mr. Kimmel said that it would have go be discussed by the entire BOE. He added that he had no problem with the concept.

Mayor Moccia said that he had pointed out to the Hartford Legislature that Norwalk could not wait for the Legislature to argue the budget issues out, particularly in regard to

the next fiscal year. He mentioned that he had requested that the Legislature reconsider some of the unfunded mandates.

Ms. Murray said that she believed that it would be important to have the people who are closer to the actual work to have input to the Work Groups. Mr. Wilms and the Mayor both agreed that the Work Group reaches out to the various departments. Dr. Corda said that Ms. Murray had a valid point and went on to give an example about how the municipal systems on the computer might not be designed for school use. Discussion then followed.

Ms. Murray then suggested that the meetings include the Common Council Finance Committee be included. She said that this would provide a better balance. The Mayor said that he would issue an invitation to the Committee to attend.

TAKE ACTION AS APPROPRIATE ON ANY AGENDA ITEM.

There was no action required for any agenda item at this time.

ADJOURNMENT

**** MR. WILMS MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services