

**CITY OF NORWALK
BOARD OF ESTIMATE AND TAXATION
VIA TELECONFERENCE
OCTOBER 2, 2023**

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ATTENDANCE: Ed Abrams, Chair; Mayor Harry Rilling; Kendrick Constant; Troy Jellerette; Anne Yang

STAFF: Thomas Ellis, Director of Management and Budgets; Henry Dachowitz, Chief Financial Officer; Irene Dixon, City Clerk; Mario Coppola, Corporation Counsel; Stuart Wells, Registrar of Voters; Melissa Lepore; Mickey Docimo and Chief James Walsh, Norwalk Police Department; Robert Stowers, Director of Recreation and Parks; Ken Hughes, Superintendent of Parks and Public Property; Vanessa Valadares, Chief of Operations and Public Works; Deanna D'Amore, Health Director; Lamond Daniels; Chief of Community Services; Jessica Vonashek; Chief of Economic and Community Services; Fire Chief Gino Gatto

OTHERS: Lunda Asmani, Board of Education, CFO; Denise Brown and Alan Dutton, Oak Hills Park Authority

Mr. Abrams called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.

Ms. Dixon called the Roll as indicated above. A Quorum was present.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

September 11, 2023 – Regular Meeting

**** MR. CONSTANT MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES AS PRESENTED**
**** MOTION PASSED WITH ONE (1) ABSTENTION (MAYOR RILLING)**

2. **SPECIAL APPROPRIATIONS AGENDA** (Section A) None

3. Transfer Agenda (Section B)

SECTION B

**CITY OF NORWALK TRANSFERS 2023-24
BOARD OF ESTIMATE AND TAXATION**

FISCAL YEAR 2023-24:

RECREATION & PARKS DEPT.:

<u>From</u>		<u>To</u>		<u>Amount</u>
01-4106-5258	Other Professional Services	01-4103-5258	Other Professional Services	\$1,982
01-4109-5325	Recreation Supplies	01-4103-5258	Other Professional Services	9,117
01-4115-5298	Other Contractual Services	01-4103-5258	Other Professional Services	9,996
				\$21,095

This transfer is to cover additional Concerts at various parks in the city.

Finance recommends approval.

VARIOUS DEPARTMENTS ROLLOVER & LINE ITEMS:

<u>From</u>		<u>To</u>		<u>Amount</u>
Various Depts.	Rollovers	Various Depts.		4,195,961

See attached Departmental and Line Item details.

Finance recommends approval.

**** MAYOR RILLING MOVED TO APPROVE THE ROLL OVER REQUEST
PRESENTED BY THE RECREATION AND PARKS DEPARTMENT FOR \$21,095**

Mr. Hughes reviewed the request to cover the cost of summer concerts.

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**** MAYOR RILLING MOVED TO APPROVE THE ROLL OVER REQUESTS
MADE BY VARIOUS DEPARTMENTS FOR A TOTAL OF \$4,195,961**

Representatives from various departments were present and described their requests as outlined in the meeting packet.

Mr. Coppola requested a roll over of \$50,000 for the Law Department. He noted there is a lot going on, including the acquisition of numerous properties. They also anticipate a substantial number of appeals from the Citywide revaluation. Mr. Abrams asked if \$50,000 would sufficiently cover the expenses. Mr. Coppola said it was hard to predict when it comes to legal matters, especially litigation.

Mr. Wells requested a roll over of \$8,600 for the Registrar of Voters office for a folding machine for the ballots.

Mr. Daniels reviewed the rollover request for the Community Services department. Most of the request is for mental health services. He said that the City engaged in a robust logo initiative and they need support for that.

Ms. D'Amore asked for rollover support for the WIC program. She added that the clinics are up and running and asked for rollover funds to support those clinics.

Ms. Vonashek asked for rollover funds for Code Enforcement, Traffic, Mobility and Parking. She also asked for support for safety uniforms. Planning and Zoning is seeking rollover funds for the Zoning regulations re-write.

Mr. Ellis requested funding for implementation of QDS and for the P.O. Box services.

Mr. Docimo's rollover request was to use the funding for retirement payouts. He added that they are dealing with supply chain delays.

Chief Gatto explained that the rollover request was to fund anticipated overtime expenses.

Ms. Valadares reviewed the Operations rollover requests.

Mr. Stowers reviewed the Recreation and Parks rollover requests.

Mr. Asmani reviewed the rollover request from the Board of Education. He explained they are experiencing supply chain issues. He also stated that by State Statute the Board of Education is allowed to carryover funds.

Mayor Rilling commended all department heads and the Norwalk Public Schools. He explained that the City requested a limited amount of increased year over year and that the departments operated on a needs vs. wants. As a result, when the rollover requests were reviewed they were now able to reconsider those requests.

Mayor Rilling said he supported the rollover requests and hoped the Board of Estimate and Taxation would consider the requests favorably.

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

4. OTHER BUSINESS (Section C)

Ms. Dixon read the following:

The Economic and Community Development division is requesting authorization of a new appropriation to expend State of Connecticut issued rebates from the “nip” bottle program. Current amount received to date is \$111,003.17.

**** MAYOR RILLING MOVED TO AUTHORIZE A NEW APPROPRIATION TO EXPEND STATE OF CONNECTICUT ISSUED REBATES FROM THE NIP BOTTLE PROGRAM. THE CURRENT AMOUNT TO DATE IS \$111,003.17**

Mr. Ellis reviewed the item and said that so far, they have gotten three rebates.

Ms. Vonashek explained that they do not have a set proposal at this time. They have been making landscaping efforts throughout the City along with climate efforts. She said they would like to marry these funds with other capital funds and asked that \$111,003.17 be taken out of the general fund and put into a separate fund. The State is asking them to fill out a on line form to determine what the funds will be used for.

Mayor Rilling explained that the nip bottles fall into storm drains. He wants to start a storm drain filter pilot program.

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**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

5. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION (Section D)

Financial reports

- Oak Hills Park Financials – August 2023

Mr. Dutton reviewed his report as follows:

Oak Hills Park Authority
August 2023 Financial Commentary

Operations Updates:

- Golf revenue rounds, cart rounds and Discount ID cards are slightly over budget for the first two months of FY24.
- OHPA plans on making substantial capital improvements throughout the course of this new fiscal year and has already spent over \$34k to date.
- We are at the end of our third year (of five) in our cart fleet lease and are seeing some expected wear and tear. However, the lithium batteries are holding up better than the standard batteries in previous leases.

YTD Financial Highlights:

- FY24 YTD net operating income was over budget by \$47k and we ended August with a \$909k cash balance which includes \$33k in the capital reserve bank account.
 - Revenue was over-budget by 63k thanks to strong golf and Outings rounds.
 - Expenses were \$16k over-budget due to wages and the timing of property tax on our cart fleet.
- OHPA made \$31k in repayments to the City for the first two months of the new fiscal year. The annual 1% of gross golf revenue additional debt payment will be made once the Audit Report is received.

Other:

- We are in the process of investing and diversifying excess cash.
- The year-end financial audit fieldwork took place in July. The Audit Report is in progress.

The remainder of the agenda is for informational purposes:

- Tax Collector's Narrative – August 2023
- Tax Collector's Report – August, 2023
- Year-to-date Capital Budget Report – FY 2023-24
- Year-to-date Operating Expenditure Report – FY 2023-24
- Year-to-date Operating Revenue Report – FY 2023-24
- Police Wages FY 2023-24
- Fire Wages FY 2023-24
- Public Works Wages FY 2023-24
- Year-to-date BOE Operating Expenditure Report FY 2023-24

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

There was no further business, and the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 7:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemarie Lombardi
Telesco Secretarial Services