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**CITY OF NORWALK
BOARD OF ESTIMATE AND TAXATION
REGULAR MEETING
APRIL 4, 2022
VIA TELECONFERENCE**

ATTENDANCE: Edwin Camacho, Chair; Ed Abrams; James Frayer; Troy Jellerette; Artie Kassimis

STAFF: Henry Dachowitz, Chief Financial Officer; Irene Dixon, City Clerk; Thomas Ellis, Director Management and Budgets

OTHERS: Joe Andrasko, Oak Hills Park Authority; Garnett Bolella and James Emery, Transportation; Ralph Kolbe, WPCA

Mr. Camacho called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m.

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

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The following corrections were made to the minutes:

**MARCH 3, 2022 – REGULAR MEETING
MARCH 7, 2022 – SPECIAL MEETING
MARCH 7, 2022 – BET BUDGET REVIEW
MARCH 8, 2022 – BET BUDGET REVIEW**

MARCH 14, 2022 – BET BUDGET REVIEW
MARCH 15, 2022 – OPEN ITEMS REVIEW
MARCH 29, 2022 – BET PUBLIC HEARING

March 7, 2022 – Page 9:

Mr. Frayer told Mr. DePalma that the non revenue rounds should be considered the same as revenue rounds and the City should be compensated for those rounds.

March 15, 2022

Mr. Daniels explained the request to fund the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion officer.

March 29, 2022

The two e-mail comments need to be included in the minutes.

**** MR. ABRAMS MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS AMENDED**
**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

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

3. **TRANSFER AGENDA** (Section B) None

4. **OTHER BUSINESS** (Section C)

a. Adoption of the Tentative FT 2022-23 Operating Budget

Mr. Ellis said the summary was included in the meeting packet. He shared his screen and reviewed the budget showing the increase per district. He noted the differences between the districts was due to the value of the homes and the allocation of services.

Mr. Jellerette asked Mr. Dachowitz his opinion on holding the AAA rating. Mr. Dachowitz said that depended on the long term borrowing. He said his big fear is that they have very large capital projects that have to be financed. He said he is confirming the numbers with the departments, but they will almost be at the maximum debt capacity. The debt service cost will probably exceed 10%; it is rare for cities to maintain a AAA rating with that percentage.

**** MR. JELLERETTE MOVED TO ADOPT THE TENTATIVE FT 2022-23**
OPERATING BUDGET AS PRESENTED

Mr. Dachowitz explained how they achieve the core allocation.

Mr. Camacho said the Board of Estimate and Taxation was only approving this as a tentative budget. The Common Council sets the cap no later than April 19th and the Board of Estimate and Taxation sets the final budget on May 2nd. He noted that the Board of Estimate and Taxation is not asking the Common Council to increase the cap.

Mr. Jellerette asked about the \$1.8 million for the Board of Education. Mr. Camacho said he assumes the Mayor is having discussions on this. He said that he assumes that if this was going to be funded, there is going to have to be a creative way to do that. Mr. Frayer said they are being left hanging over the Board of Education. Mr. Camacho said this is a tentative budget and it will come back over the next three weeks, when they will have to determine what they are going to do about the incubator school. Mr. Camacho said the only other available money for the \$1.8 is in the fund balance.

Mr. Jellerette asked about savings from the efficiency study. Mr. Camacho said the numbers they have here have been discussed and the \$1.8 million is not in here.

**** MOTON PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

b. Approval of the FY 2022-23 Parking Authority Budget

**** MR. JELLERETTE MOVED TO APPROVE THE FY 2022-23 PARKING AUTHORITY BUDGET AS PRESENTED**

Mr. Bolella and Mr. Emery shared their screen and reviewed their budget request. Mr. Jellerette noted that violations were up 23%. Mr. Emery explained they researched this and there is a compliance issue coming out of covid. They are seeing poor compliance across the country.

During covid, they put maintenance on the back burner and reduced their staff. They have a fund balance of around \$250,000. Mr. Dachowitz explained that in 2021 the Parking Authority depleted their fund balance and in 2022 there was a forecast of a small increase. He added that they are a separate entity and the City gets a separate audit for the Parking Authority.

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

c. Approval of the FY 2022-23 WPCA Budget

**** MR. FRAYER MOVED TO APPROVE THE FY 2022-23 WPCA BUDGET AS PRESENTED**

Mr. Kolbe explained they are an enterprise find and they oversee the wastewater system. He highlighted their budget along with their achievements. He reviewed their key revenue and expenditures.

Mr. Kolbe said they are in the process of updating their masterplan and are planning a facility update.

Mr. Jellerette asked about capacity. Mr. Kolbe said the treatment plant can handle 18 million gallons per day. The permit requires that if they get to 90% capacity they have to put the State on notice. Since a lot of money has been put into infrastructure, they are removing a lot of infiltrations. In the last five years, they have reduced the daily flow. The collection system evaluated the engineering development to be sure there is sufficient capacity.

Mr. Jellerette asked if there has been any thought into adding sewer lines in areas that do not have sewer capacity. Mr. Kolbe said that would be a long term, City wide plan that the City would have to evaluate.

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

d. Appointment of Auditors to Audit FY 2021-22

**** MR. FRAYER MOVED TO APPROVE THE APPOINTMENT OF AUDITORS TO AUDIT FY 2021-22**

Mr. Dachowitz said this is a request to approve the auditors at a cost of \$99,000. This is the third year of their five year contract. He added that they are very pleased with their services.

They merged with a larger firm, but they are a quality firm and do good work. They had a very smooth audit this year.

**** MOTON PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

5. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION (Section D)

Financial reports

- Oak Hills Financial Status – January

Mr. Andrasko gave an update on their financials. Oak Hills was closed during the months of January and February and opened in mid March. The restaurant opened on March 17th.

Mr. Andrasko said the Oak Hills Park Authority members briefly discussed the revenue/non-revenue rounds at their last meeting. They needed more information. He said he proposed they retroactively pay for all rounds to the beginning of the year. It will be documented.

Mr. Frayer asked if at next month's meeting, they could discuss how Oak Hills does their bookings and how they are paid. He said he has not gotten a good explanation of how the process works. Mr. Camacho said that was relevant when those rounds were not considered revenue rounds and they were bartered. He said that Mr. Andrasko's proposal is that all rounds are revenue rounds. What their relationship is with the booking company is not relevant; they are not giving rounds away.

Mr. Frayer said he cares about the revenue the Authority is bringing in. If they have a barter deal for the booking agency, then the City is not seeing that revenue. Mr. Jellerette said he agreed. He asked Mr. Andrasko to discuss this with Paul and come back with how many rounds are bartered and what they got for that.

Mr. Dachowitz asked how much it costs for the booking agency and how the compensation system was determined.

Mr. Andrasko asked the Board members to document their questions and he will return with answers at the next meeting. He said his proposal was that all rounds will be considered revenue rounds. Mr. Camacho asked the Board members to send their questions to him and he will forward those questions to Mr. Andrasko.

The remainder of the agenda was for informational purposes.

- Year-to-date Capital Budget Report – FY 2021-22
- Year-to-date Operating Expenditure Report – FY 2021-22
- Year-to-date Operating Revenue Report – FY 2021-22
- Police Wages

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Via Teleconference

- Fire Wages
- Public Works Wages
- Year-to-date BOE Operating Expenditure Report – FY 2021-22
- Tax Collector's Narrative – February 2022
- Tax Collector's Report – February 2022

**** MR. ABRAMS MOVED TO ADJOURN**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

There was no further business, and the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemarie Lombardi
Telesco Secretarial Services