CITY OF NORWALK
BOARD OF ESTIMATE AND TAXATION
REGULAR MEETING
APRIL 4, 2016

ATTENDANCE: Gregory Burnett, Chair; James Feigenbaum, Laoise King, James Page, Mayor Harry Rilling, Edwin Camacho (7:04 p.m.); Anne Yang-Dwyer (7:05 p.m.)

STAFF: Donna King, City Clerk; Bob Barron, Finance Director; Donna Castracane, Finance Department

OTHERS: Shelly Guyer, Oak Hills Authority Interim Director: Clyde Mount, Oak Hills Authority; Patsy Brescia, Lockwood Mathews Mansion Board of Directors Chair

CALL TO ORDER.

Mr. Burnett called the meeting to order at. 7:03 p.m.

ROLL CALL

City Clerk King called the roll. A quorum was present.

Mr. Burnett said that the next BET meeting was scheduled for raising the cap. He said that since the cap was not being raised, he would cancel the meeting.

Mr. Camacho joined the meeting at 7:04 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

March 7, 2016 – Regular Meeting

The following corrections were noted:

Page 1, under **FISCAL YEAR 2015-16**, paragraph 1, line 1 and forward: please correct the spelling of "Mr. Baron" to "Mr. Barron".

Page 2, **Heading**, Please remove the heading "**Transfer Agenda**"

**** MS. KING MOVED THE MINUTES OF THE MARCH 7, 2016 REGULAR MEETING AS CORRECTED.**
**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MARCH 7, 2016 REGULAR MEETING AS CORRECTED PASSED WITH FOUR (BURNETT,**

FEIGENBAUM, KING AND PAGE) IN FAVOR AND ONE ABSTENTION (CAMACHO).

Ms. Yang-Dwyer joined the meeting at 7:05 p.m.

March 23, 2016 – Special Meeting

Page 1 under **ATTENDANCE**: please change "Edward Camacho" to "Edwin Camacho"
Page 1, paragraph 4, line 1, please change "1.8 million" to "$1.8 million"
Page 1, paragraph 4, line 4, please change "1.8 million" to "$1.8 million"
Page 1, paragraph 5, line 1, please change "the 3 million" to "the $3 million"

**** MR. PAGE MOVED THE MINUTES OF THE MARCH 23, 2015 SPECIAL MEETING AS CORRECTED.**
**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MARCH 23, 2015 SPECIAL MEETING AS CORRECTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**.

March 23, 2016 Public Hearing:

The following corrections were noted:

Page 1 under **ATTENDANCE**: please change "Edward Camacho" to "Edwin Camacho"
Page 2, paragraph 1, line 1: please change "2.3 million" to "$2.3 million"
Page 2, paragraph 2, line 3: please change "25 million" to "$25 million"
Page 2, paragraph 4, line 13: please change "this will hurt" to "This will hurt"
Page 3, paragraph 2, line 1: please change "Yvonne Zucro from the Sexual Assault Center and said that" to "Yvonne Zucco from the Sexual Assault Center said that"
Page 3, paragraph 6, line 1: please change "wants to recommend" to "wants to commend"
Page 4, paragraph 3. line 1 and forward: please correct "Sparh" to "Spahr"
Page 4, paragraph 4, line 1: please change "forward and aid that" to "forward and said that"
Page 4, paragraph 4, line 8: please change "the 2.3 million" to "the $2.3 million"

**** MR. CAMACHO MOVED THE MINUTES OF THE MARCH 23 PUBLIC HEARING AS CORRECTED.**
**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MARCH 23 PUBLIC HEARING AS CORRECTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**.

<u>SPECIAL APPROPRIATIONS AGENDA</u>
(Section A)

List of Resolutions – There were none at this time.
Advertised Items – There were none at this time.
Report on Special Appropriations - No report.

Justification/Back Up Material.

<u>TRANSFER AGENDA</u>
(Section B)

There were no items to consider at this time.

<u>OTHER BUSINESS</u>.
(Section C)

Appointment of Auditors to audit Fiscal Year 2015-16

Mr. Barron reviewed the details of the current auditing contract with the auditing firm RSM McGladry. He noted that the company's name had changed from RSM McGladry to RSM US LLP. Mr. Barron requested that the Board Members formally approve the item.

**** MAYOR RILLING MOVED TO APPOINT RSM US LLP AS THE AUDITORS FOR THE CITY OF NORWALK FOR FY 2015-16.**
**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**.

• Discussion on Fair Housing Office Budget.

Mr. Barron stated that he had all the materials that pertained to the matter available and noted that Mr. Sheehan was not present to discuss the various issues. Mr. Barron suggested that the Board could discuss the details when they considered the open budget items.

• Discussion on Oak Hills Park Authority Financial Performance

Mr. Shelly Guyer, the Interim Director of the Oak Hills Authority Golf Course, and Mr. Clyde Mount, an Oak Hills Board Member, were present to answer questions and concerns. Mr. Barron noted that the administrative fees had increased. Mr. Guyer explained that he had started as Executive Director in 2012. Before his appointment as the Interim Director, there had been Employee Appreciation Days. However, due to the financial situation, after 2012, the practice was discontinued. Since 2012, the Park Authority has increased the revenue and the number of rounds. Because the number of rounds had significantly increased from 32,000 rounds to 40,000, the Authority decided to hold an Employee Appreciation Party. Mr. Mount said part of the reasoning was to retain the staff, who work hard to improve the course.

A discussion followed about the various details of the finances, including the expiration of a lease, the replacement of a pick up truck and an increase in the advertising budget.

Mr. Guyer stated that the Authority did not have to borrow any money this past winter and added that the course was open for rounds in March.

Ms. Yang-Dwyer asked what the financial position of the course would be if there had not been any of the re-structuring of the debt. A discussion followed about the details. Mr. Barron said that he believed he previously had sent out an email that gave all the details of the restructuring changes. Ms. Yang-Dwyer stated that her concern was not the issue of the Employee Party or the advertising budget, but the fact that the City had restructured the loan and there was some debt forgiveness. She said that it was important to make sure that the taxpayer’s money was being handled responsibly. A discussion followed about the details of the third restructuring which involved an interest reduction.

Ms. King said that when she saw the 600% increase in Employee Appreciation, she was originally concerned. She had no idea that the increase was from zero. After hearing the explanation, she was very comfortable with the expenses.

Adoption of Tentative FY 2016-17 Operating Budget.

Mr. Barron then indicated where the open item list was in the information packet and the proposed tentative budget. He indicated where the increase in the tax levy was found, along with the increase in the mill rate. He then reviewed the process he used for the various calculations on that spreadsheet. Mr. Barron explained that as the Board makes their decision on the open items, he will adjust the line item in real time and the spreadsheet will automatically update the figures.

Mr. Barron then reviewed the salary information from CCM for the Mayor's Assistant position from Hartford, Stamford, and Darien. Mr. Camacho asked if the figures included any of the ancillary items such as a cell phone or insurance. Mr. Barron said that the figure was strictly salary.

The discussion then moved to the cost of overtime involved in recording the Council meetings. Mr. Barron said that the staff member that normally did the recording of the Council meetings was not available for a particular meeting and someone from IT had covered the meeting. Rather than having an amount in the Overtime line, Mr. Barron said that he would recommend that it remain at zero since it was not something that occurred regularly.

Next the Board considered the three interns currently assigned to IT and the request from Ms. Del Vecchio for a fourth intern. Mr. Barron said that Ms. Del Vecchio was able to utilize the three interns very effectively. Discussion followed about the details of the positions.

Mr. Barron then reviewed the issues involved with having the Council meetings translated into Spanish. Currently, the videos are posted with English subtitles. Originally the cost for translation was quoted as $50,000 because first the meetings have to be translated in Spanish and then the Spanish close captioning has to be added to the recording. Discussion followed about the details of the proposal.

The issue of a new Youth Services Bureau position for evening counseling was the next line item considered. A lengthy discussion followed about the need for the evening counseling and the impact this would have on the current program.

Mr. Camacho left the meeting at 8:26 p.m.

A question was raised regarding whether the Youth Service Bureau figures were for the third quarter or before them. Mr. Barron said that he would check into this.

Mr. Barron then reviewed the proposed changes for the Registrar of Voters, the Tax Assessor, and Purchasing with the Board.

Mr. Barron then gave an overview of the request from the Health Department to transfer for an Project Coordinator who was a part time employee paid by grants over to a regular full time City staff.

Mr. Camacho rejoined the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

Discussion followed about the details of the potential Project Coordinator position and the reliability of the current and future grant funding.

Mayor Rilling then explained that the Fire Department's request for Self Contained Breathing Apparatus was because the original request did not include the masks.

Mr. Barron said that he had questions about the cost for doing the 10 year plan. Mayor Rilling said that he had scheduled a meeting with the chairs of the Redevelopment Agency, the Planning Commission and Zoning Commission to discuss the cost of the 10 year plan.

Mr. Barron then updated the Board members on a number of smaller changes in the budget due to the reductions in the cost of fuel.

Mr. Burnett asked if the current adjusted request for the Board of Education fully funds the District for this coming year. He was told that it did.

The Historical Commission has requested some funding for an additional part time staff member to maintain the 16 different historical buildings. Mr. Barron reviewed the past budgets and why he was recommending an increase that was less than the requested amount.

Ms. Brescia, the Chairman of the Lockwood Mathews Mansion, said that Mr. Westmoreland was not able to attend the meeting. She explained that Mr. Westmoreland wanted to have two maintenance people to take care of the buildings, so that someone would be available when needed. The Board members came to consensus on the amount of the increase.

The discussion then moved to an additional request for the Lockwood Mathews Mansion for the utilities. Ms. Brescia said that when they have to have the work done, it impacts the revenue because either the building has to be closed or staff has to come in early to let the work crews in the building.

The Board then considered a request from Americares for financial help with the utilities.

Mr. Barnett then asked about the Fair Housing Officer and the testing program. Mr. Barron then reviewed the various emails that had been exchanged regarding the salary. Discussion followed about the details.

Mr. Barron then addressed the issue of testing. He said that he had requested Mr. Sheehan had done some research on other municipalities that had run testing programs. Discussion about the details followed. It was agreed that some funding would be allocated in order to start the testing process.

Mr. Barron then summarized the final changes that will be reflected in the tentative budget, which will be posted on the City website.

**** MAYOR RILLING THEN MOVED TO FORWARD THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTION TO THE COMMON COUNCIL**:

> **BE IT RESOLVED**
>
> **THAT THE TENTATIVE 2016-2017 OPERATING BUDGET FOR THE CITY OF NORWALK IS $337,134,733. THE TENTATIVE BUDGET IS AN INCREASE OF $10,145,124 OR 3.1% OVER THE APPROVE FY 2015-16 ADOPTED BUDGET. THE TOTAL TAX LEVY UNDER THE BUDGET INCREASES BY 1.9%. THIS IS DRIVEN BY A 1.5% INCREASE IN THE GRAND LIST AND A 0.3% INCREASE IN THE MILL RATE.**
>
> **ON FEBRUARY 23, 2016, THE COMMON COUNCIL ESTABLISHED THE FY 2016-17 EXPENDITURE CAP AT $316,639,469. THE TENTATIVE 2016-2017 OPERATING BUDGET IS $234,704 LESS THAN THE CAP ESTABLISHED BY THE COMMON COUNCIL.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
(Section D)

Financial Reports

- **Year-to-date Capital Budget Report - FY 2015-16**
- **Year-to-date City Operating Budget Report - FY 2015-16**
- **Year-to-date BOE Operating Budget Report - FY 2015-16**
- **Tax Collector's Narrative – February 2016**
- **Tax Collector's Report – February 2016**
- **Key Revenue Report - 2016**

Copies of a spreadsheet containing information on the Key Revenue Drivers was then distributed to the Board Members.

Salary accounts

- **Fire**
- **Dispatch**
- **All Other Departments**

ADJOURNMENT.

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

The meeting adjourned at 9:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

S. L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services