CITY OF NORWALK
BOARD OF ESTIMATE AND TAXATION
SPECIAL MEETING
MARCH 18, 2015

ATTENDANCE: James Clark, Chair; Mayor Harry Rilling (7:04 p.m.)
Erik Anderson; Gregory Burnett; Edwin Camacho;
James Feigenbaum

STAFF: Thomas Hamilton, Finance Director; Robert Barron, Director Management and Budgets; Erin Herring, Assistant City Clerk

Mr. Clark called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. and Ms. Herring called the Roll. A quorum was present.

Mayor Rilling joined the meeting at 7:04 p.m.

SET THE CAPITAL BUDGET CAP FOR FISCAL YEAR 2015-2016

Mr. Hamilton explained that the Planning Commission made their capital budget recommendation in February and last week Mayor Rilling provided his recommendations.

Mayor Rilling recommended eliminating $60,000 from the drainage mapping project and increasing the Board of Education's paving and concrete budget by $60,000. He also recommended eliminating $250,000 from the City Hall parking project and returning that amount to the City's paving project.

Mr. Hamilton said that the gross capital budget is $2 million higher than the amount recommended by the Planning Commission for a total of $23,822,000. Mr. Hamilton said that from the standpoint of rating, he is comfortable with the recommended plan.

Mayor Rilling said that the capital budget serves the City well. He wants to focus a lot on the paving programs and that is one of the reasons for putting $250,000 back into the paving program and taking that amount out of the City Hall paving project.

Mr. Clark thanked the Planning Commission.

**** MR. ANDERSON MOVED TO SET THE GROSS CAPITAL BUDGET AT $23,822,000 AND A CAP OF $17,193,000 NET TO BE BONDED FOR THE CAPITAL BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2015-2016**
**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

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

There was no further business and the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemarie Lombardi
Telesco Secretarial Services

CITY OF NORWALK
BOARD OF ESTIMATE AND TAXATION
PUBLIC HEARING
MARCH 18, 2015

ATTENDANCE: James Clark, Chair; Mayor Harry Rilling; Erik Anderson; Gregory Burnett; Edwin Camacho; James Feigenbaum

STAFF: Thomas Hamilton, Finance Director; Robert Barron, Director Management and Budgets; Erin Herring, Assistant City Clerk

PUBLIC HEARING ON THE BOARD OF ESTIMATE AND TAXATION'S PROPOSED TENTATIVE OPERATING BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2015-2016

Mr. Clark opened the public hearing at 7:15 p.m.

Ms. Diane Lauricella, Blue Mountain Ridge Road. Ms. Lauricella said that this is becoming an annual ritual . She said that she was happy that the increase is below what the previous administration did, but in those eight years, increases were being layered. She said that she had hoped there would be a zero increase, but knows that there are union and pension obligations.

Ms. Lauricella said that this budget is a tool to help organize City government and hopes that members of the Board of Estimate and Taxation will look at whether they are getting the best bang for the buck regarding staff. She suggested re-organizing staff and thinking outside the box. She suggested creating a new paradigm.

Ms. Lauricella said that she was sorry there were no more people here this evening; she said that the activists did not know about the meeting. She asked that the process be slowed down. She asked that this body allow for public comment at the meetings.

Ms. Lauricella said that she would like to see a consolidation of departments and suggested looking at re-organizing Parks and Recreation and Public Works. She said that as an example, Land Use and Redevelopment need to be re-organized; she does not see that all of the tools in the box are being used. Mr. Clark asked Ms. Lauricella to keep her comments relative to the Operating Budget.

Ms. Lauricella said that senior staff salaries should be cut by at least one third, if not by one half. She said that if they re-organize the department and merge with Redevelopment she believes the

City will get more bang for the buck. Ms. Lauricella reiterated that senior staff salaries should be cut by one half.

Ms. Lauricella suggested looking at utility costs and said that the City is paying too much in fuel and electricity. She said that Public Works has to take a serious look at their solid waste handling and sewage treatment plant odors.

Ms. Lauricella said that the Public Works department needs to have their salary held in abeyance as to why the odor is still a problem. She said that she would like to consider this as a way to control the behavior of senior staff. Regarding IT; she questioned giving that department more money unless and until she sees a plan for updating the City website to be user friendly.

Ms. Lauricella spoke about the revenue side of the budget and said that she would like to see a review of enforcement; she said that she did not see that they will be looking at enforcing odor or sediment control. She said that she hopes this body will not increase the capital budget. She suggested finding new ways so the public could get more bang for the buck.

Ms. Lissette Andino, Manager of Community Relations and Economic Development with Eversource Energy

Mr. Al Dias, Regional Manager of Gas Operations in the Southern Region Eversource Energy

Ms. Andino read the following statement in support of funding an additional permit engineer for the Department of Public Works.

> Good evening, my name is Lisette Andino, Manager of Community Relations and Economic Development with Eversource energy Connecticut. I am responsible for managing relationships with local government and community business leaders. Eversource Energy services over 153 communities in the State of Connecticut. My business address is 9 Tindall Avenue, Norwalk CT. Accompanying me today is Al Dias, Southern Division manager of Gas Operations for Eversource Energy. Al's responsibilities include oversight of gas operations in southwest CT. His business address is 11 Harbor Avenue, Norwalk, CT.
>
> We are here tonight to support the request for an additional permit engineer for the Department of Public Works. We have met on several occasions with Mayor Rilling and the Department of Public Works director and personnel to discuss our concerns regarding the bottleneck with permits specific to Eversource Gas work, such as, leak surveys, permitting issues and discuss Eversource's Gas Expansion strategy in the City of Norwalk.
>
> Eversouce plans to make significant investments in the gas distribution system that serves Norwalk. This work falls into three categories: 1. The replacement of aged, leak-prone

gas mains and services (Accelerated Replacement Plan. 2. System. 3. Opportunities to provide gas serviced to new customers (gas expansion) and 4. Responding and repairing leaks. This work comprises several million dollars of investment in the Town. While the investment creates property tax revenues for the Town, it also creates an influx of permit applications. We would like to share some information that can provide a better picture on what work we have in the queue in 2015 and beyond in the City of Norwalk.

ARP – Accelerated Replacement Plan

- The City of Norwalk has a approximately 36 miles of main that needs to be replaced. This cast iron and bare steel replacement program is tentatively scheduled to be completed in the year 2032. That's main replacement work in the City of Norwalk for the next 17 years.

System Upgrades

- In 2015, Eversource Gas has identified six areas in the City for ARP or main replacement, or DOT project on Connecticut Avenue, 2 projects specific to new business and 4 projects specific to system reliability.

Leaks

- In the City of Norwalk, Eversource Gas has addressed approximately 25 leakes in 2015.

Gas Expansion

- Norwalk is among our top communities with a high concentration of prospective customers. The ten year strategy Eversource Gas has in the State of CT is near 80,000 customers. We estimate over 6,000 prospective customers in the City of Norwalk during the next 10 years.
- We are already processing active interests with over 600 residents as of March 2015
- Based on these active interests alone, we anticipate investing over $1.2 million in new gas delivery infrastructure for these customers in 2015.

We have an excellent rapport with Mayor Rilling, Department of Public works and the Norwalk Energy Task Force. We value the relationship we continue to build with the City of Norwalk. In addition, we meet monthly with Public Works staff, have increased the amount of communication between Eversource and the City, we are very active in identifying energy efficient opportunities in municipal facilities and engaged during the development stages with future growth and economic development projects in Norwalk. We believe additional resources in the Department of Public works will provide us the

ability to maintain the current schedule of capital projects, mandated leak surveys required to assist Norwalk residents interested in converting to gas. We are a 365/24/7 operation with the focus and ultimate goal in providing a safe and reliable system through coordinate and cost effective work. We support the recommend that the board fund the additional resource requested by the Department of Public Works. Thank you.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Ms. Lissette Andino, Manager of Community Relations and Economic Development with Eversource Energy

Mr. Al Dias, Regional Manager of Gas Operations in the Southern Region Eversource Energy

Mr. Hal Alvord, Director, Public Works said that at this time of year, they are loaded up with emergency permits. It has been 3 – 4 weeks since they issued an actual permit, because they are responding to emergency permits. He said that emergency permits happen throughout the year, but more during the winter. Mr. Alvord said that even without any emergencies, they would still have a back up.

Mayor Rilling thanked everyone for coming out. He thanked the Board of Estimate and Taxation and the department heads. He thanked Mr. Hamilton and Mr. Barron.

Mayor Rilling said that no one likes to levy taxes or raise taxes, but taxes are necessary to fun the City. He noted that in the past, this room was filled with people upset with the budget. He thanked the Board of Education for working very well with the City. Mayor Rilling said that he looks forward to keeping taxes at a minimum while providing services.

Mr. Feigenbaum said that Mr. Hamilton and Mr. Barron are real treasures and it is a pleasure to work with them. He thanked the members of the Board of Estimate and Taxation and Mayor Rilling.

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

The public hearing was unanimously adjourned at 7:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemarie Lombardi
Telesco Secretarial Services