

**ALL COMMON COUNCIL ACTIONS TAKEN AT THIS MEETING TO APPROVE
EXPENDITURES AND CONTRACTS OR TO ACCEPT BIDS AND OTHER
PROPOSALS REQUIRING THE EXPENDITURE OF CITY FUNDS ARE SUBJECT TO
THE AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS**

Mayor Rilling called the meeting to order at 7:51 p.m. and led the Assembly in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. King read the notice stating that the meeting was being audio recorded and videotaped with subtitles for public broadcast. She asked everyone to speak clearly, one at a time, into the microphone and said that assisted listening devices were available.

I. ROLL CALL

Ms. King called the Roll. The following Common Council members were present:

Council at Large:	Mr. Gregory Burnett	Ms. Dominique Johnson
	Mr. Manny Langella	Mr. Nicholas Sacchinelli
	Ms. Barbara Smyth	

District A:	Mr. David Heuvelman	Mr. Kadeem Roberts
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District B:	Ms. Darlene Young	
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District C:	Mr. George Theodoridis	
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District D:	Mr. George Tsiranides	Mr. Tom Keegan
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District E:	Mr. Thomas Livingston	Ms. Lisa Shanahan
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At Roll Call there were thirteen (13) Common Council members present and two (2) absent (Mr. Dumas and Mr. Kydes)

Also present were Mayor Harry Rilling, City Clerk, Donna King and Corporation Counsel Mario Coppola

II. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

Regular Meeting: January 28, 2020

The following correction was made to page 4, item D1, second line should read – Eversource Electric to install one (1) new street light on

**** MS. JOHNSON MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS AMENDED**
**** MOTION PASSED WITH ONE (1) ABSTENTION (MR. ROBERTS)**

III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No members of the public wished to speak this evening.

IV. MAYOR

A. RESIGNATIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

RESIGNATIONS: There were none this evening.

APPOINTMENTS: There were none this evening.

REAPPOINTMENTS: There were none this evening.

MAYOR'S REMARKS:

Mayor Rilling reported that the Common Council saw a thorough and detailed presentation of the operating budget. He said it is a very challenging year and it is difficult, because he wants to keep the tax levy low. He said that this weekend, Mr. Dachowitz and his team along with Mr. Camacho and Mr. Burnett went over the budget and cut \$2.2 million from the City side, including eight requested positions. He said they created a fair and balanced budget that provides services.

Mayor Rilling thanked Mr. Dachowitz and his team for all the time and energy they put into the budget. He also thanked the department heads for living within their means.

Mayor Rilling announced that City Hall and the Norwalk Public Library will be closed on Monday, February 17, 2020 in observance of President's Day. The Top Lighthouse Rating was presented to Pauli's Deli and Bagels. On February 14, 2020, the Norwalk Health Department will offer free HIV and Hepatitis screening. Part time job opportunities are available for the upcoming 2020 Census. More information is available at [2020Census.gov](https://2020census.gov). A Special Events Public Signing will be held on February 18, 2020 from 4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

February 11, 2020

Common Council – Regular Meeting

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V. COUNCIL PRESIDENT

Ms. Smyth thanked Mr. Dachowitz for giving such a clear, precise presentation.

B. CONSENT CALENDAR:

**** MR. KEEGAN MOVED THE FOLLOWING CONSENT CALENDAR:**

VII.A.1, VII.A.2, VII.B.1

VI. REPORTS: DEPARTMENTS, BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

VII. COMMON COUNCIL COMMITTEES

A. PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

1. AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR, HARRY W. RILLING, TO EXECUTE AN AMENDMENT WITH DEERING CONSTRUCTION, INC. FOR PROJECT PM2019-1 PAVEMENT MANAGEMENT PROGRAM, FOR A SUM NOT TO EXCEED \$3,750,000.00.

ACCOUNT NO.

09 19 4021 5777 C0021

09 19 4021 5777 C0318

09 19 4027 5777 C0302

09 20 4021 5777 C0318

09 20 4027 5777 C0302

09 20 4021 5777 C0021

2. AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR, HARRY W. RILLING, TO EXECUTE AMENDMENTS 1 AND 2 WITH VANASSE HANGEN BRUSTLIN, INC. DATED NOVEMBER 14, 2018 FOR TRAFFIC CONSULTING SERVICES RELATED TO WALK BRIDGE PROGRAM FOR A TOTAL SUM NOT TO EXCEED \$40,000.00.

ACCOUNT NO. 01 37 50 5258

B. LAND USE AND BUILDING MANAGEMENT

1. AUTHORIZE THE PURCHASING AGENT TO ISSUE A PURCHASE ORDER TO CONSTRUCTION SOLUTIONS GROUP, LLC TO PREPARE A SCHOOL BUILDING CONSTRUCTION STANDARD MANUAL FOR AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$24,564.00.

ACCOUNT NO. 0918/195010 5777 C0610

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

A. GENERAL COUNCIL BUSINESS:

**** MS. SHANAHAN MOVED TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION AT 8:04 P.M. FOR THE PRESENTATION OF THE CYBERSECURITY ASSESSMENT CONDUCTED OF THE CITY AND BOARD OF EDUCATION.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

The public was excused and left the Common Council Chambers.

The members of the Common Council came out of Executive Session at 9:03 p.m.

During Executive Session no motions were made and no votes were taken.

X. MOTIONS POSTPONED TO A SPECIFIC DATE

There were none.

X. SUSPENSION OF RULES

There were none.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

**** MS. YOUNG MOVED TO ADJOURN**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

There was no further business and the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 9:04 p.m.

ATTEST: _____
Donna King, City Clerk

ALL COMMON COUNCIL ACTIONS TAKEN AT THIS MEETING TO APPROVE EXPENDITURES AND CONTRACTS OR TO ACCEPT BIDS AND OTHER PROPOSALS REQUIRING THE EXPENDITURE OF CITY FUNDS ARE SUBJECT TO THE AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS

****SPECIAL MEETING****

1. **Roll Call** 13, Ms. Smyth arrived at 6:46 PM, Mr. Tsiranides arrived at 7:00 PM, Mr. Dumas and Mr. Kydes absent.
2. **Presentation of the 2020-21 Operating Budget** **NO ACTION TAKEN**
3. **Adjournment** 7:42 PM

COMMON COUNCIL
2020
NORWALK, CONNECTICUT
CHAMBERS

SPECIAL MEETING

FEBRUARY 11,
COUNCIL

**ALL COMMON COUNCIL ACTIONS TAKEN AT THIS MEETING TO
APPROVE EXPENDITURES AND CONTRACTS OR TO ACCEPT BIDS AND
OTHER PROPOSALS REQUIRING THE EXPENDITURE OF CITY FUNDS
ARE SUBJECT TO THE AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS**

Mayor Rilling called the Special meeting to order at 6:41 p.m. and led the Assembly in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. King read the notice stating that the meeting was being audio recorded and videotaped with subtitles for public broadcast. She asked everyone to speak clearly, one at a time, into the microphone and said that assisted listening devices were available.

I. ROLL CALL

Ms. King called the Roll. The following Common Council members were present:

Council at Large:	Mr. Gregory Burnett	Ms. Dominique Johnson
	Mr. Manny Langella	Mr. Nicholas Sacchinelli (6:45 p.m.)
	Ms. Barbara Smyth	

District A:	Mr. David Heuvelman	Mr. Kadeem Roberts
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District B:	Ms. Darlene Young
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District C:	Mr. George Theodoridis
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District D:	Mr. George Tsiranides (6:59 p.m.)	Mr. Tom Keegan
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District E:	Mr. Thomas Livingston	Ms. Lisa Shanahan
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At Roll Call there were eleven (11) Common Council members present and four (4) absent (Mr. Sacchinelli; Mr. Dumas; Mr. Kydes and Mr. Tsiranides)

Also present were Mayor Harry Rilling, City Clerk, Donna King and Corporation Counsel Mario Coppola

PRESENTATION OF THE FY 2020-21 RECOMMENDED OPERATING BUDGET

Mr. Dachowitz described the budgeting process timetable. He and Ms. Fogel started the process early this year. They did an analysis of the previous budgets and in consultation with the Mayor, created a pro forma.

Mr. Sacchinelli joined the meeting at 6:45 p.m.

Mr. Dachowitz said he held discussions with each department and was pleased to report that at least 90% were candid and straight forward. Another change that was made was that they went to a monthly budgeting system. After going through the requests with the department heads, they and the Mayor came up with the 2021-2021 recommended Operating Budget.

Mr. Dachowitz reviewed a power point presentation outlining the recommended budget. He explained that they reviewed the operating budgets for the last six years plus this projected seventh year. He pointed out that the budget went down in FY 2017/2018.

Mr. Dachowitz reviewed the Norwalk Public School expenditures over the last six years and said they more than doubled the City's expenses. He reviewed in-kind expenditures and said they are run through the City's account system on behalf of the schools. He said there are also debt service payments that have to be paid each year. The City's net expenditures went up for the last three years to the recommended amount of \$108.3 for 2021.

Mr. Dachowitz reviewed the school side of the expenditures. He said they were trying to figure out how much the residents pay for City services. The Norwalk Public Schools get grants from the State that they spend for the children. They also get additional amounts. They went from \$15.9 million to \$26.1 million next year. He said that in 2015 \$207.1 m was spent on the students and in 2021, they will spend \$263.5 million.

Mr. Tsiranides joined the meeting at 6:59 p.m.

Mr. Dachowitz said that the per student expenditure is 15% higher than the amount quoted by the Norwalk Public Schools. The actual amount is \$22,000 which includes state grants and in-kind services. He said that from 2014-2018 enrollment was consistent; however, this current year it is expected there will be an increase of 227 students. It is projected that there will be an increase of an additional 331 students. Mr. Dachowitz said the schools are getting 71% of the budget. He said he understands there was an under investment in the schools, but this is a very disproportionate share of the budget.

Mr. Dachowitz reviewed capital project and described the funding for those projects. He said the City, Common Council and the Mayor have invested a great deal in the schools. He said he is trying to protect the City financially for today, but with an eye for the future. In Connecticut, promises were made, but the funding was below what it should have been.

Mr. Dachowitz reviewed the laws of economics and the law of diminishing returns. He said it was about making choices and how to make allocations with limited resources. He said the City has to allocate among all of the departments and try to accommodate everyone as best they can. The Norwalk Public Schools received about 71% of the budget over the last five – six years. He said they need to cover other programs and with such an over investment in the schools, they have to be sure the City is getting funds for services.

The challenges in establishing budgets for Norwalk Public Schools is that CT State Law prohibits a City Government from reducing a school budget below the prior year total. Mr. Dachowitz noted that the Mayor, Board of Estimate and Taxation and the Common Council are only allowed to set a ceiling on Norwalk Public School expenditures.

Norwalk Public Schools presents information in confusing ways. Mr. Dachowitz said that over the course of this year, the City gave \$4 million to the Norwalk Public Schools, so that means the budget can be no lower than \$202 million. He said the Norwalk Public Schools took \$17.9 million and reduced it by \$8 million to have a 7% increase. He said this is misleading. The increase they asked for was \$18 million which is a 9% increase.

Mr. Dachowitz said the Norwalk Public Schools ignores in-kind services and their share of the debt service. They understate their expenditures and they put out information that can be misunderstood.

Mr. Dachowitz said the Norwalk Public Schools requested 23 new positions, but it is almost impossible to determine head counts. He said he has asked for that information, but did not receive it.

Mr. Dachowitz said the Norwalk Public Schools refused to request the Norwalk High School construction project as part of their budget. They wanted it to be seen as the Mayor's request only. They stated they wanted the school, but they did not put it on their calendar. Mr. Dachowitz said that was disingenuous and political.

Mayor Rilling announced that the 7:30 p.m. regular meeting of the Common Council would start later.

Mr. Dachowitz said they learn about events when they go badly. He said he had grave concerns about the gift cards for teacher appreciation and recruitment. The gift cards that were purchased had an expiration date of one year after purchase. The State of

Connecticut has a law where gift cards cannot have an expiration date. In addition, the gift cards had a face value of \$10.00, but were purchased for \$15.00 each. He said this was discovered when an employee in the schools wanted to use the cards to pay their tax bill. He said he asked the Norwalk Public Schools if they had a record of all the gift cards they gave out and for a list, but said he did not see a list.

Mr. Dachowitz reviewed the City's operational expenditures. He said the Community Services Department is a new department. He said that \$400,000 is for Social Workers to go to the homes of the ELL students.

Mr. Dachowitz explained that the plan is to draw down \$6 million next year and then \$8 million next year from the fund balance. He reviewed how the tax levy translates to mill rates by district. The average tax bill from a resident living in the fourth taxing district would go from \$6,438 to \$6,683 an increase of 3.8%. He said he believed this budget was balanced and fair.

Mr. Dachowitz talked about recruiting trips made by the Norwalk Public Schools to Puerto Rico, Detroit and Las Vegas to recruit minority teachers. He said he asked about costs, who went and how successful these trips were.

Ms. Young thanked Mr. Dachowitz for the detailed report.

**** MS. SMYTH MOVED TO ADJOURN**
**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

There was no further business and the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 7:44 p.m.

ATTEST: _____
Donna King, City Clerk