

**CITY OF NORWALK
FINANCE/CLAIMS COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
VIA TELECONFERENCE
MAY 11, 2023**

ATTENDANCE: Greg Burnett, Chair; Nora Niedzielski-Eichner, John Kydes,
Diana Revolus

STAFF: Lisa Biagiarelli, Tax Collector, Chitsamay Lam, Comptroller;
Paul Gorman, Deputy Tax Assessor; Henry Dachowitz, Chief Financial Officer;
Tom Ellis, Budget Director; Joyce Liu, IT; Vanessa Valadares, Dept. Public Works;
Robert Stowers, Recreation & Parks; Alan Lo, Building Facilities Mgmt;

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Burnett called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m., and called the roll. He acknowledged the above members in attendance, and stated that a full quorum was present.

Mr. Burnett noted a change in the order of the agenda to move item 8 to after #4 in the order.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mr. Burnett reported there were no emails or correspondence for requests for participation.

There were no public comments.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

April 13, 2023 – Regular Meeting

The following corrections were noted throughout the minutes: Spelling of Valadares, Replace the name of the auditor Blum Shapiro to Clifton Larson Allen.

**** MS. REVOLUS MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES OF MEETING OF
APRIL 13, 2023 AS AMENDED WITH CORRECTIONS NOTED.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Claims Committee: Receive the Monthly Claims Report

Review and approve claims as required for Claims Report dated April 14, 2023.

Ms. Biagiarelli presented the report and highlighted there were no special requests, all items were beneath the threshold, and nothing outstanding that required approvals.

** MS. REVOLUS MOVED TO ACCEPT THE CLAIMS REPORT AS SUBMITTED.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

Narrative on Tax Collections dated April 14, 2023 – Receive Report and discuss.

Ms. Biagiarelli presented the report and referred to the Narrative as contained in the agenda packet. As of the end of April 2023, with ten out of twelve months of the fiscal year completed, we had collected in excess of \$358 million against our \$365 million adjusted levy, or 98.16%.

She reported all was going well operationally with enforcement activities on target including other delinquent initiatives with business personal property taxes, wage garnishment initiative targeting City and Board of Education employees who may owe past due taxes to the City. Our tax sale that was scheduled to be held in July 2023 has been pushed off until Monday, July 22, 2024. We anticipate beginning work on that sale in November, 2023.

We continue to work on our software conversion that moved our tax assessment and tax collection administrative systems off Munis and onto Quality Data Services LLC (QDS) software. The city's financials, budgeting, accounting and other systems are still operating on Munis; only the assessment and tax collection modules have moved away. This conversion has been discussed in greater detail in prior months' reports since we went live on the QDS system on March 1, 2023. We are continuing to learn the system's features and how best to use it, and continue to appreciate our taxpayers' patience as we navigate the changes.

Mr. Burnett asked about the update on the new software integration, and Ms. Biagiarelli provided examples of the major issues of not having a manual and outdated data not consistent with state codes and regulations. It was noted that the department has been diligent with creating a manual and in particular, the Assistant Tax Collector, Al Palumbo is credited with extensive efforts with the integration. They are working through new software issues and are in communication with the vendor and the department appreciates the Board's patience as they work through this process.

Two new hires began work the first week of this month, and the division is now fully staffed, with eight employees, for the first time since early 2022.

Monthly Tax Collector's Reports dated March 2023– Receive Report and discuss.

Ms. Biagiarelli referred to the report as contained in the agenda packet. There were no further questions.

Tax Assessor update on the Revaluation process

Mr. Paul Gorman, Deputy Tax Assessor provided an update on the revaluation process with 30% of properties visited which is 8,100 properties that is tracking well in line with expectations.

He gave explained the revaluation process and reviewed historical trends of past revaluations and the impact on the City's grand list. Letters will go out next week to homeowners to set up appointments for those properties where cards were left.

Mr. Gorman noted they plan to use ROBO calls from the Mayor's office to alert homeowners of the upcoming visit to property owners from the Tax Assessor's office. It was suggested to reach out to Customer Service for other communication methods to notify homeowners of the visits.

Mr. Burnett thanked Mr. Gorman for a thorough and comprehensive report.

9. Receive Oak Hills Authority Monthly Financial Statements for March 2023.

Mr. Burnett stated this item is postponed until next month, and at that time, a complete March/April report will be presented.

10. Authorize the Mayor, Harry W. Rilling to enter into a professional services contract addendum with Cavanaugh Macdonald Consulting, LLC

Ms. Fogel presented the item and explained the firm will be used for pension application submission and benefit calculations for employees, estimated at \$60,000.

**** MS. REVOLUS MOVED TO APPROVE THE ITEM AND FORWARD TO THE
COMMON COUNCIL MEETING OF MAY 23 FOR AUTHORIZATION:
AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR, HARRY W. RILLING TO ENTER INTO A
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES CONTRACT ADDENDUM WITH CAVANAUGH
MACDONALD CONSULTING, LLC.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

11. Authorize the Mayor, Harry W. Rilling to enter into a three -year contract with 3SG Plus LLC for Hyland Onbase EDMS (Electronic Document Management System) annual amount not to exceed \$30,000, for a total not to exceed \$90,000 Account # 011370-5742.

Ms. Liu presented the item and explained the firm will be used for integration of City systems including Planning & Zoning mapping, Dept. of Public Works infrastructure mapping at construction site, code enforcement, along with document storage and security.

**** MS. REVOLUS MOVED TO APPROVE THE ITEM AND FORWARD TO THE COMMON COUNCIL MEETING OF MAY 23 FOR AUTHORIZATION. AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR, HARRY W. RILLING TO ENTER INTO A THREE - YEAR CONTRACT WITH 3SG PLUS LLC FOR HYLAND ONBASE EDMS (ELECTRONIC DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM) ANNUAL AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$30,000, FOR A TOTAL NOT TO EXCEED \$90,000 ACCOUNT # 011370-5742.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

12. RESOLUTION: Making appropriations for various public improvements aggregating \$48,440,692 for the fiscal year 2023-2024 Capital Budget and Authorizing the issuance of \$48,440,692 General Obligation Bonds of the City to meet certain appropriations in the fiscal year 2023-2024 Capital Budget.

Mr. Dachowitz presented the item and outlined the report from Bill Lindsay that represented an analysis on unfunded liabilities. There was discussion on the ratio of debt service and impact to the City's AAA bond rating. Mr. Dachowitz provided a financial opinion and explanation on how this becomes an important part of the evaluation and approval process of capital projects and financial priorities.

**** MS. REVOLUS MOVED TO APPROVE THE ITEM AND FORWARD TO THE COMMON COUNCIL MEETING OF MAY 23 FOR AUTHORIZATION. RESOLUTION: MAKING APPROPRIATIONS FOR VARIOUS PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS AGGREGATING \$48,440,692 FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2023-2024 CAPITAL BUDGET AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF \$48,440,692 GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS OF THE CITY TO MEET CERTAIN APPROPRIATIONS IN THE FISCAL YEAR 2023-2024 CAPITAL BUDGET.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

13. RESOLUTION: requesting for Building Department project in the amount of \$5,374,000 from the ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) fund. Account: 134030-5796-ABL01 Norwalk Community Recreation Center Renovation

Mr. Alan Lo, Director of Building Management presented the item on this project at 98 South Main Street. He provided the background that culminated over the past several years following the closing of the Norwalk YMCA. He asked Robert Stowers, Director of Recreation & Parks to present the highlights of the planning and development stages of this \$10 million capital project.

There was discussion on how using ARPA funds provides the source of funding needed for the gymnasium. There is a joint meeting of Building and Land Use Management that Common Council members are invited to attend on June 7 for a full presentation of the Master Plan for the Community Recreation Center renovation project.

**** MS. REVOLUS MOVED TO APPROVE THE ITEM AND FORWARD TO THE COMMON COUNCIL MEETING OF MAY 23 FOR AUTHORIZATION: RESOLUTION: REQUESTING FOR BUILDING DEPARTMENT PROJECT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$5,374,000 FROM THE ARPA (AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT) FUND. ACCOUNT: 134030-5796-ABL01 NORWALK COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER RENOVATION**
**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

14. RESOLUTION: requesting for various Department of Public works public improvements projects aggregating in the amount of \$1,400,000 from the ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) fund. Accounts: 134010-5796-APW10 Pavement Management Program \$1,150,000 and 134010-5796-APW11 Municipal Solid Waste Disposal Service \$250,000.

Ms. Valadares, Director of Public Works presented the item and outlined the report of paving projects and the rationale for allocating ARPA funds for municipal services.

**** MS. REVOLUS MOVED TO APPROVE THE ITEM AND FORWARD TO THE COMMON COUNCIL MEETING OF MAY 23 FOR AUTHORIZATION. RESOLUTION: REQUESTING FOR VARIOUS DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS PROJECTS AGGREGATING IN THE AMOUNT OF \$1,400,000 FROM THE ARPA (AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT) FUND. ACCOUNTS: 134010-5796-APW10 PAVEMENT MANAGEMENT PROGRAM \$1,150,000 AND 134010-5796-APW11 MUNICIPAL SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL SERVICE \$250,000.**
**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

15. RESOLUTION: requesting for Parks and Recreations Department project in the amount of \$160,000 from the ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) fund. Account: 134010-5796-ARP04.

Mr. Stowers, Recreation & Parks presented the item and outlined the request for ARPA funds of one-time projects for park services.

**** MS. REVOLUS MOVED TO APPROVE THE ITEM AND FORWARD TO THE COMMON COUNCIL MEETING OF MAY 23 FOR AUTHORIZATION. RESOLUTION: REQUESTING FOR PARKS AND RECREATIONS DEPARTMENT PROJECT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$160,000 FROM THE ARPA (AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT) FUND. ACCOUNT: 134010-5796-ARP04**
**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**16. RESOLUTION: requesting for Norwalk Public School projects aggregating in the amount of \$2,500,000 from the ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) fund.
Account: 135050-5796-APS01 BOE ARPA Expenses.**

Mr. Lunda Asmani, Norwalk Public Schools Finance Director, presented the item and outlined the proposed list of items for funding by ARPA. He provided the rationale for these one-time occurring expenses for the school district.

**** MS. REVOLUS MOVED TO APPROVE THE ITEM AND FORWARD TO THE COMMON COUNCIL MEETING OF MAY 23 FOR AUTHORIZATION:
RESOLUTION: REQUESTING FOR NORWALK PUBLIC SCHOOL PROJECTS AGGREGATING IN THE AMOUNT OF \$2,500,000 FROM THE ARPA (AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT) FUND. ACCT: 135050-5796-APS01 BOE ARPA EXPENSES.
** THE MOTION PASSED WITH THREE VOTES IN FAVOR, NONE OPPOSED AND ONE ABSENTION (REVOLUS)**

ADJOURNMENT

**** MS. REVOLUS MOVED TO ADJOURN.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
M. Knox
Telesco Secretarial Services