

**CITY OF NORWALK  
FINANCE/CLAIMS COMMITTEE  
REGULAR MEETING  
DECEMBER 10, 2015**

**ATTENDANCE:** Bruce Kimmel, Chair; John Igneri, John Kydes, Shannon O'Toole-Giandurco; Nick Sacchinelli, Travis Simms (7:43 p.m.)

**STAFF:** Fred Gilden, Comptroller; Robert Barron, Finance Director; Lisa Biagiarelli, Tax Collector; Michael Stewart, Tax Assessor

**CALL TO ORDER.**

Mr. Kimmel called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. A quorum was present. He introduced the members of the Committee present.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was no one present from the public who wished to address the Committee at this time.

**APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING FINANCE COMMITTEE  
MEETING:**

**August 13, 2015**

**\*\* MR. IGNERI MOVED THE AUGUST 13, 2015 MINUTES.  
\*\* THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE AUGUST 13, 2015 MINUTES AS  
SUBMITTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**Claims Committee: Receive the monthly Claim Report; review and approve claims as required for Claims Report dated:**

**November 12, 2015**

**December 10, 2015**

**Monthly Tax Collector's Reports - Receive Reports and Discuss:**

**November 30, 2015**

Ms. Biagiarelli came forward and introduced herself. She explained that she presents several different reports each month. The Council Members are responsible for oversight of the high dollar tax refunds, which are the "Claims" portion of the Committee. The Claims list is issued to the Council Members in advance and if there are any individuals on the list that the Committee have a relationship with, they should recuse themselves.

**Narrative on Tax Collections dated December 10, 2015 - Receive Report and discuss.**

Ms. Biagiarelli gave a brief overview of her role as Tax Collector and the reason the narratives were created. This information was contained in her written memo dated December 10, 2015.

She then spoke about the recent conversion that the Department of Motor Vehicles had undergone. A large number of residents have had difficulty getting their registration even after all the delinquent taxes have been paid.

Mr. Kimmel said that he was confused by the IPP fee, which is Industrial Pre-treatment Program for the WPCA. Ms. Biagiarelli explained that this was charge for customers who put more oil, fat and grease into the sewer system. This charge was instituted over five years ago.

**Review of how we are doing on Senior Tax Relief.**

Mr. Michael Stewart came forward and greeted the Committee. Mr. Kimmel said that he would like to have this item included on the agenda next month.

Mr. Stewart then gave a brief overview of the information in the packet. The State Office of Policy and Management sets the levels for qualification. The Committee has control over the local tax relief. He then gave a detailed presentation of the adjusted 2014 and 2015 Grand List Local Elderly Tax Relief Program.

Discussion followed about the verification process, the forecasting model, and the residents are added to the list.

Mr. Kimmel said that last year, the Committee wanted to increase the enrollment in the programs by mailing out flyers and other efforts to publicize the tax relief program. Mr. Kimmel said that he was surprised by the results. Mr. Stewart said that he thought that it might have to do with the costs of living in this area. He went on to explain the calculations he used.

Mr. Barron said that he did not think last years effort was for naught because about \$160,000 more in relief was issued to the seniors and it helped more people in Tier 1.

*Mr. Simms joined the meeting at 7:43 p.m.*

Mr. Kimmel then spoke about continuing the discussion with various scenarios and possibly making some decisions in February. Mr. Kimmel said that there was no COLAs issued this month but that Medicare costs would be increasing by approximately \$23.00 a month.

## **Preliminary Observation for Fiscal 2016-17 Operating Budget**

Mr. Barron came forward to present his report. He directed the Committee members' attention to the report in the information packet. He then gave an overview of the various steps and timelines for the budget process. Mr. Barron then said that the goal was half of a mill and that the two drivers of the increase was education and intergovernmental revenue changes. He reviewed the figures from the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities on the FY 16 Deficit and how this would impact the budget.

He added that all the contracts were expiring at the end of this year.

Mr. Barron then gave an overview of the surplus in the insurance fund and how it may reduce the insurance contribution in the coming year. Mr. Kimmel asked about how the BOE insurance projections were calculated. Mr. Barron explained that a number of years ago when the BOE moved from the traditional insurance plan to an HSA. That resulted in major savings. He also explained how the projections were calculated in the past.

A discussion followed about the details of the budget including how often the insurance risks are assessed. Mr. Barron said that the City receives estimates from the brokerages on the worker's comp.; liability on property and other estimates. However, he cautioned the Committee members that there is no way to anticipate something like a hurricane or a group of workers' comp cases.

Mr. Barron said that the State had cut the budget funding this year. The one anticipated cut that would affect Norwalk would be a one million cut to the school transportation allocation.

Mr. Kimmel directed everyone's attention to the 2016-17 Operating Budget Review.

Mr. Kimmel said that he would like to schedule a public hearing on February 18th on the operating budget. He added that he would also like to have a joint meeting with the Board of Education on the budget. The BOE had been considering a meeting with the Council about the Facilities Study. Mr. Kimmel said he had requested that the BOE hold off on that until March after the budget meeting is done. He requested Mr. Gilden contact the BOE about having a Joint Budget meeting in the latter part of February. Mr. Gilden made a note of this.

## **Receive Oak Hills Authority Monthly Financial Statements for September 30, 2015 and October 31, 2015.**

Mr. Barron directed everyone's attention to the Oak Hills Authority P&L for July through September 2015. He pointed out that there was a 32 % increase in income. He said that there was an increase in rounds and a decrease in expenses. Mr. Barron said that last

year, the Authority did not need to ask for a cash loan to tide them through the winter and he did not expect them to need a loan this year other.

Mr. Kimmel spoke about the driving range and reminded everyone that it was a capital project. The Committee will be considering this in a few months with the capital budget. Mr. Barron said that the Authority would engage the vendor, but the report would go to Mr. Barron first. The report has been received by Mr. Barron and was sent to Mr. Kimmel and the Mayor. Mr. Barron said that the Capital budget requests were due, but he had not received the capital request from the Authority yet.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

**\*\* MR. IGNERI MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

S. L. Soltes  
Telesco Secretarial Services