

**BOARD OF ESTIMATE & TAXATION MEETING ACTIONS**

**MARCH 3, 2005  
NORWALK, CONNECTICUT SPECIAL MEETING**

PRESENT: Mayor Alex Knopp James Clark  
G. Randall Avery Ron Coley  
Gregory Burnett Tonya Court (7:45 p.m.)  
Timothy Buzzee (7:43 p.m.)

Also present were Mary Roman, Assistant City Clerk; Thomas Hamilton, Finance Director; Ann Twomey, Director of Management of Budgets.

Mayor Knopp called the meeting to order at 7:40 p.m. and thanked everyone who attended last night's public hearing. He said that he asked Mr. Hamilton and Ms. Twomey to list all of the recommendations made last night and to do a brief synopsis.

Mayor Knopp reviewed the procedures for sending the recommended budget to the Common Council.

Mr. Buzzee arrived at 7:43 p.m.

Ms. Court arrived at 7:45 p.m.

The Board reviewed the following issues that were raised last evening:

1. Do not use \$1.5m transfer from fund balance.

Mayor Knopp reviewed this item. Mr. Hamilton said that this is the highest fund balance he has seen in the past few years. The Board discussed the effect this would have on the AAA rating. Mayor Knopp said that he was comfortable with the City's AAA rating. Mr. Avery said that transfers during the previous administration did not jeopardize the City's AAA rating.

2. Assume collection rate of 98.5%

Mr. Hamilton said that he did not recommend this change. Mr. Avery said that this item and the following go hand in hand.

3. Delinquent Tax Collector Position

Mr. Avery said that if this item was funded the assumption on the collection rate could be changed.

Mayor Knopp said that once a full time position is created, it is hard to eliminate it in the future. He said that he is not in favor of changing items two and three.

4. Wage increases of \$15,000 for PT employees at Library

The Board agreed to fund this item.

5. Compliance Officer (Aquifer Protection) position in conservation

Mr. Hamilton explained that the earliest the City will be obligated to enforce this regulation is 2006.

6. Decrease BOE budget by \$900k

Mr. Hamilton explained that this item would push the Board of Education's budget to the lower range as recommended by Mayor Knopp.

7. Budget full year of Youth Service budget

Mr. Hamilton explained that the tentative budget provides counseling budget through December and the last six months are on contingency. Mr. Burnett said that he has total faith that the Blue Ribbon Commission will come back with enhanced services at a lower cost to the City. By funding this item for the full year, shows that this Board and Administration has commitment to youth.

8. Include Environmental Conservation Study in Recreation & Parks Operating Budget (\$35,000)

Mr. Hamilton did not recommend this item.

9. Budget BOE @5% increase and use \$2m transfer from fund balance

Mr. Avery said that he was not concerned that the extra \$500,000 would affect the City's AAA rating, but feels that the City has gone as far as it can go with the Board of Education. The Board suggested that the surplus be used to pay for next year's operating expenses.

Mayor Knopp said that he asked Mr. Hamilton and Ms. Twomey to look at Medicare reimbursement from the State.

10. Young Adult Librarian position

Mr. Hamilton said that the priority is to get the South Norwalk Library up and functioning. He said that there may be an opportunity to work with some outside agencies.

11. Purchase voting machine for Registrar of Voters (\$3,000)

Mr. Hamilton said that this is not a large enough sum to move the tax levy. He noted that in the letter that he received last night, it is not clear that the State is requiring the City to purchase anything. Mayor Knopp said that the letter was presented without prior notice. Mr. Avery suggested that this item is small enough that if it is needed it could be done on a contingency.

Mayor Knopp asked the Board if there was any item not on the list they wanted to talk about. Mr. Avery said that he continues to object to the notion that they should adopt a property conveyance increase.

**\*\* MR. AVERY MOVED TO INCREASE THE TAX COLLECTION RATE TO 98.5% AND TO CREATE AND FUND THE POSITION OF DELINQUENT TAX COLLECTOR**

**\*\* THE MOTION FAILED WITH ONE (1) IN FAVOR (MR. AVERY)**

**\*\* MR. CLARK MOVED TO ADD \$3,000 TO FUND WAGE INCREASES FOR PT EMPLOYEES AT THE LIBRARY**

**\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**\*\* MR. BURNETT MOVED TO BUDGET FULL YEAR OF YOUTH SERVICE BUDGET**

**\*\* MOTION FAILED WITH THREE (3) IN FAVOR (MR. COLEY, MS. COURT AND MR. BURNETT) AND FOUR (4) IN OPPOSITION (MR. CLARK, MR. BUZZEE, MR. AVERY AND MAYOR KNOPP)**

Mayor Knopp said that there is money available for the entire year.

**APPROVE TENTATIVE BUDGET FOR FY 2005-06 TO BE FORWARDED TO THE COMMON COUNCIL TO ADJUST SPENDING CAP**

**\*\* MR. BURNETT MOVED TO APPROVE THE BUDGET AS AMENDED AND SENT IT TO THE COMMON COUNCIL**

**\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

Mayor Knopp said that he believed that sending a unanimously budget to the Common Council is an important signal that they found a common ground and approved that.

Mr. Avery left the meeting at 9:10 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

February 7, 2005 – Regular Meeting

No action was taken.

**SPECIAL APPROPRIATIONS AGENDA (SECTION A)**

Ms. Twomey recommended tabling this item for more information.

**\*\* MR. CLARK MOVED TO TABLE THIS ITEM**

**\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**TRANSFER AGENDA (SECTION B)**

**\*\* MR. BURNETT MOVED TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING TRANSFERS:**

**Information Technology**

**From To Amt**

01-0600-5110 Wages 01-0600-5258 Other Professional Svcs \$7,400

**Police**

**From To Amt**

01-3022-5731 Cars 01-3051-5419 Other \$8,000

**Fire**

**From To Amt**

01-3153-5241 Electricity 01-3153-5421 Bldg Rentals \$2,607

01-3120-5271 Clothing & Uniform 01-3153-5421 Bldg Rentals 3,993

\$6,600

**\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**OTHER BUSINESS (SECTION C)**

Mayor Knopp said that they will need one more meeting in April.

**\*\* MR. CLARK MOVED TO ADJOURN**

**\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemarie Lombardi

Telesco Secretarial Services