

**BOARD OF ESTIMATE & TAXATION MEETING ACTIONS**

**APRIL 2, 2007**

ATTENDANCE: Fred Wilms, Chairman; Stuart Wells; James Clark; Mayor Richard Moccia; Michael Lyons; Leo Mellow (via conference call); James Feigenbaum (via conference call).

STAFF: Tom Hamilton, Finance Director; Ossie Lewis, Manager of Budgets & Systems.

The meeting was called to order at 12:00 by the Chairman.

AUTHORIZE THE BOARD OF ESTIMATE & TAXATION MEMBERS TO PARTICIPATE IN BOARD OF ESTIMATE & TAXATION MEETINGS VIA TELEPHONE CONFERENCE CALL

Mr. Lyons reviewed his proposed amendment to Masons' Rules:

Amendment to Rules of Procedure - Board of Estimate and Taxation

Resolved, that the Board of Estimate and Taxation hereby amends its rules of procedure to provide that members of the Board will be considered "present" for purposes of meetings under Mason's Manual of Legislative Procedure if they are either (i) physically present in the meeting room designated in the official notice and agenda for the meeting or (ii) participating by means of electronic communication devices.

For purposes of compliance with the State Freedom of Information Act, the following requirements will apply to any meetings in which members are participating by electron means:

1. Arrangements must be made for that portion of the public that wishes to attend the meeting to be present at a place where the greatest number of participating Board of Estimate members are located. At least a quorum of the Board must be physically present at said place.
2. If any Board of Estimate member or other participant in the meeting utilizes physical or demonstrable material in the course of the proceedings, that material, or a copy or facsimile of same, must be present in the place where the public is located. That material also must be available for public observation an inspection, unless otherwise exempt from disclosure under the FOI Act.

3. All those in attendance at the meeting, at whatever location, must be able to hear and identify adequately all participants in the proceedings, including their individual remarks and votes.

\*\* MR. LYONS MOVED TO APPROVE THE AMENDMENT.  
\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY BY THOSE PRESENT.

APPROVE THE TENTATIVE OPERATING BUDGET FOR FY2007-08 TO BE FORWARDED TO THE COMMON COUNCIL

\*\* MR. LYONS MOVED TO SPLIT THE VOTE ON THE BUDGET AND CONSIDER SEPARATELY JUST THE SECTION ON APPROVAL OF CURRENT AGENCY APPROPRIATIONS.

Mr. Lyons said that the Chairman serves on a number of the grant agencies and wants to remove himself from a conflict of interest.

\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

The Chairman recused himself from discussion and vote and left the room. Mayor Moccia chaired this portion of the meeting.

\*\* MR. LYONS MOVED THAT THE GRANTS BE APPROVED AS SET FORTH IN THE PRELIMINARY TENTATIVE OPERATING BUDGET.

Mr. Lyons pointed out that the appropriation for the Emergency Shelter is actually a \$24,000 reduction. In fact, they have increased the total spent by \$1,000 by shifting \$2,500 into the budget from the CDBG account. If the CDBG funds are not available next year, it is their intention to replace these funds with City funds.

\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY THROUGH ROLL CALL VOTE.

The Chairman returned to the meeting and reviewed the preliminary tentative operating budget.

\*\* MR. LYONS MOVED TO APPROVE THE REMAINDER OF THE TENTATIVE PRELIMINARY BUDGET.

Mr. Lyons said that the Board of Estimate had to stay within the cap set by the Common Council. He commended Board members, Mr. Hamilton and Mr. Lewis on doing a thorough job on the budget.

Mr. Wells said that the cap should be raised with more money for education, but he is pleased with what they have.

Mr. Clark said he was grateful for the public participation they had received.

Mr. Hamilton said some of the articles in the newspaper had not picked up the adjusted mill rate. The 4th District homeowner impact is \$224, or a 4.3% increase, which includes the impact of revaluation. Without revaluation, the impact would be 3.7%.

The Chairman said he supports this tentative budget. It is hard to put a budget together, but a 4.3% tax increase including revaluation is reasonable. There are spending pressures such as contingency, lower economic Grand List growth, flooding, the Board of Education, etc. This budget is responsible and balanced.

The Mayor said that the public hearing was very interesting. Ultimately, the budget goes to the Common Council and he will have to live with it, which he accepts. He said he appreciates the efforts of the Board of Estimate, Mr. Hamilton and Mr. Lewis. Departments will have to scrub their budgets from this year to try to find left-over money, which Public Works is doing. He said that the Board of Estimate has tried to maintain reasonable taxes and insure that the educational system receives \$5,200,000 additional dollars. They have to get money from Hartford as soon as possible.

\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY BY ROLL CALL VOTE.

\*\* MR. WELLS MOVED TO ADJOURN.

\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl Telesco  
Telesco Secretarial Services