

BOARD OF ESTIMATE & TAXATION MEETING ACTIONS

**CITY OF NORWALK
BOARD OF ESTIMATE & TAXATION
JULY 7, 2008**

ATTENDANCE: Fred Wilms, Chairman; Stuart Wells; James Clark; Leo Mellow; Mayor Richard Moccia; Michael Lyons.

STAFF: Thomas Hamilton, Finance Director; Ossie Lewis, Manager of Budgets & Systems; Darlene Young, Assistant City Clerk.

OTHERS: Tim Sheehan & Susan Sweitzer, Redevelopment Agency; Dr. John Pinto & Tony Mobilia, Harbor Management Commission; Mike Griffin, Harbormaster; Geoff Steadman, Consultant to Harbor Management Commission; Hal Alvord, Director of Public Works; Adam Bovilsky, Director of Human Relations & Fair Rent; Chuck Martin, Robinson & Cole.

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by the Chairman.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

JUNE 2, 2008 REGULAR MEETING

**** MR. LYONS MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS DISTRIBUTED.
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

OTHER BUSINESS

RESOLUTION APPROPRIATING \$1,500,000 FOR THE NORWALK HARBOR DREDGING AND CAPPING PROJECT AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF \$500,000 BONDS OF THE CITY TO MEET THE CITY'S PORTION OF SAID APPROPRIATION (ACCOUNT NO. 0909-6410-5777-C0460)

Mr. Hamilton said that \$1,000,000 of the appropriation is a state grant; actual City money is \$500,000. The Harbor dredging project has been ongoing for probably more than a decade. Phase I was completed in 2005-2006; this is Phase II. The work should be done between now and January 30th. State government requires that the dredged material be capped, which will now cost \$1,500,000 rather than the \$1, 00,000 originally anticipated. In order for this to go forward, the City must appropriate the money now. The \$500,000 would be bonded by the City.

Mr. Mobilia, Chairman of the Harbor Management Commission, said this is a project that has been ongoing for 12 years. They would be very pleased if this is approved. There are

two issued: They are rushing to get it done this year because North Cove has been identified as the capping material and if not used, they will lose it. In addition, their permits will expire, which means that the entire project will have to be started over again.

Mayor Moccia said they only found out recently that if the money is not appropriated, they will not go forward. This is an unfunded mandate. They are required to do it and are under the gun from a licensing point of view. Mayor Moccia thanked Mr. Hamilton, the Harbor Commissioners for working with three separate agencies to get the harbor dredged. The good news is that they will get the \$3,000,000 thanked to Congressmen Lieberman and Shays.

Mr. Lyons said he would support this because the alternative is that the entire project will die.

**** MAYOR MOCCIA MOVED TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION APPROPRIATING \$1,500,000 FOR THE NORWALK HARBOR DREDGING AND CAPPING PROJECT AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF \$500,000 BONDS OF THE CITY TO MEET THE CITY'S PORTION OF SAID APPROPRIATION (ACCOUNT #0909-6410-5777-CO460).**

The Chairman said that the time is now.

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

SPECIAL APPROPRIATIONS AGENDA

FISCAL YEAR 2007-08:

1. \$61,270 FROM CONTINGENCY TO THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS TO PAY A DEFICIT IN THE FLEET SERVICES ACCOUNT

Mr. Lewis reviewed his memo and recommended approval.

**** MR. WILMS MOVED RESOLVED, THAT A SUM NOT TO EXCEED \$61,270 BE AND THE SAME IS HEREBY TRANSFERRED FROM CONTINGENCY TO THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS TO PAY A DEFICIT IN THE FLEET SERVICES ACCOUNT (ACCOUNT 01-4045-5461).**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

2. \$11,679 FROM CONTINGENCY TO THE HISTORICAL COMMISSION TO COVER CAM CHARGES FOR THE MUSEUM

Mr. Lewis reviewed his memo and recommended approval.

**** MAYOR MOCCIA MOVED RESOLVED, THAT A SUM NOT TO EXCEED \$11,679 BE AND THE SAME IS HEREBY TRANSFERRED FROM CONTINGENCY**

TO THE HISTORICAL COMMISSION TO COVER CAM CHARGES FOR THE MUSEUM (ACCOUNT NO. 01-6300-5620).

** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

FISCAL YEAR 2008-09:

3. \$410,000 FROM CONTINGENCY TO THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS TO COVER A PROJECTED SHORTFALL IN THE SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL ACCOUNT

Mr. Hamilton said that Public Works had proposed leasing the Meadow Street transfer station. There has been considerable discussion among Council members and it has not been resolved. The backup solution is to put everything into Crescent Street, which will lead to financial implications in terms of being \$410,000 short. His recommendation was to table this until next month because this issue is unresolved.

Mr. Alvord reviewed the history of this issue. Norwalk's tip fee went from \$81 to \$99 per ton. Six other communities have joined their effort. They issued an RFP and received three responsive proposals. City Carting & Recycling was the preferred response. This firm also submitted an alternative proposal which would save additional money. They can save \$1,000,000 vs. 2007-08 costs with CRRA and \$2,000,000 based on 2008-09 costs with CRRA. They would convert Crescent Street to a recycling center and came up with a plan to assure no backups on Meadow Street, which has been in operation for 20 years and has all necessary permits. Public Works passed it on to the Common Council but it was tabled. The Public Works Committee feels they have to make a presentation to the Council on July 22nd. Mayor Moccia asked him to start preparing the next best option, which is the standard case presented by City Carting. The Committee has asked for more information, which he will e-mail to them tomorrow. The Chairman of the Public Works Committee plans to hold a public hearing on Monday, July 14th. There is a budget impact in the second half of the year. If they end up at Meadow Street, they anticipate a \$1,000,000 savings.

Mayor Moccia said that the dynamics are very interesting. Many of the people against this don't live on Meadow Street. Mr. Alvord said whether the City leases Meadow Street or not, garbage will go there in 2008-09. Mayor Moccia said they should not go back to CRRA because it would lead to a law suit from City Carting.

Mr. Wells asked if there is any money in the budget to clean up Meadow Street. Mayor Moccia said that street has Housing Authority property and private properties. They are currently in discussion with LaJoie's and LeBlanc's. They don't have the authority to put money into private property. It is what it is.

Mr. Mellow asked if the shortfall could be larger than \$410,000. Mr. Alvord said it could be bigger or smaller. He does not think it will be any bigger than \$410,000.

** MAYOR MOCCIA MOVED TO TABLE.
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

TRANSFER AGENDA

** MR. WILMS MOVED TO APPROVE THE TRANSFER AGENDA AS PRESENTED.

Discussion took place on diversity training.

** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

OTHER BUSINESS (CONT'D)

FY 2008-09 STATE REVENUE

Mr. Hamilton said they are right on budget in terms of State grants.

PRESENTATION ON WAYPOINTE PROJECT DRAFT MDA

A presentation was made by Mr. Martin, Mr. Sheehan and Mr. Hamilton.

It was noted that the SSD tax would go into a reserve fund controlled by the City. The SSD tax would be locked in through all of the debt service period. After this expires and the City is made whole, the tax will be dropped down to a general maintenance account.

The Chairman asked if numbers could be put together to show the projected impact of the growth of police, fire and the schools; Mr. Sheehan said they have that information. The Chairman suggested this be included in future presentations.

Mr. Clark said that the Redevelopment Agency has done a terrific job – this is smart development. He asked what would happen in a worst case scenario if some property owners decide not to sell. Mr. Sheehan said he has suggested this go into mediation with the States' property rights ombudsman. Ultimately, they would seek authorization from the Common Council to use eminent domain if necessary. If that is denied, they would have to discuss this issue with the developer.

Mr. Wells noted that the Chairman was designated to serve on the committee and commented that the Chairman should be able to appoint a designee.

** MAYOR MOCCIA MOVED TO ADJOURN.
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl Telesco
Telesco Secretarial Services

