

BOARD OF ESTIMATE & TAXATION MEETING ACTIONS

**SPECIAL MEETING
SEPTEMBER 20, 2004**

ATTENDANCE: Mayor Alex Knopp; Ron Coley; Tanya Court; James Clark; Randall Avery; Gregory Burnett; Tim Buzzee.

STAFF: Pam Stark, City Clerk; Thomas Hamilton, Finance Director; Ann Twomey, Director of Management & Budgets.

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

CONSIDER AND APPROVE SPECIAL CAPITAL APPROPRIATION FOR SOUTH NORWALK LIBRARY CONSTRUCTION

John Hawley, Program Manager from Gilbane, reviewed the rebid situation. In August, the first round of bids came in much over budget with little bidder participation in certain packages. The NFCC rejected seven of the twenty-one bid packages that were received last Thursday, September 16. They were favorable in that over \$300,000 was saved from the previous bids but they are still over the budget set four years ago. The total targeted budget now is \$4,230,000.

Mayor Knopp said approximately \$500,000 will be reimbursed through the State grant and hopefully half of the remaining amount will come from the Second District. The City is required to approve the entire amount of the project and then take the reimbursements received as revenue.

**** MR. CLARK MOVED TO APPROVE A SPECIAL CAPITAL APPROPRIATION IN THE AMOUNT OF \$931,446 FOR THE SOUTH NORWALK LIBRARY RENOVATION PROJECT.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

DISCUSS THE UNEXPENDED BALANCE OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION BUDGET & TO CONSIDER AND APPROVE RESERVE FOR ENCUMBRANCE ITEMS

Mayor Knopp said that they had received two communications from Dr. Corda, one dated September 15th and the second dated September 20th. Mayor Knopp pointed out that he had just seen these communications a few moments ago.

Mr. Hamilton reviewed his recommendations, noting that his recommendation deviates from that of Superintendent Corda regarding textbook reserve and the transfer to health insurance reserve. He noted that the Board of Estimate & Taxation is being asked to segregate a portion of the Board of Education's fund balance into a reserve fund.

**** MR. COLEY MOVED TO APPROVE THE RECOMMENDED RESERVE FUND ENCUMBRANCES FOR THE BOARD OF EDUCATION AS FOLLOWS:**

CUSTODIAL SETTLEMENT \$ 189,000
JUNE PAYMENT – HEALTH INS. 1,071,758
FINAL TRANSP. PAYMENT – CFS 15,521
TEXTBOOK RESERVE 1,200,000
TRANSF. TO HEALTH INS. RES. 400,000
[PRELIMINARY SURPLUS \$2,876,931

Ms. Court asked how they will know that the line items remain line items. Mayor Knopp said that textbook reserve is a Capital reserve account that is disbursed at the request at the Board of Education to the City. Mr. Hamilton said, in terms of the remainder of the items, that the City Controller exercises control over the reserve encumbrance items and would approve any distribution of those funds.

Mayor Knopp said that Superintendent Corda's "Friday memo" indicates that he does not contest these allocations.

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

NOTICE OF ANTICIPATED SPECIAL MEETING FOR WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2004

Mayor Knopp said that the Board of Estimate & Taxation, at its July meeting, supported having ongoing discussions with the Board of Education on budget matters at which prominent State budget individuals participate. There will be a Special Meeting on October 13th of the Board of Estimate & Taxation at which the General Counsel & Vice President of the Connecticut Association of the Boards of Education, Patrice McCarthy, and Jim Finley, Associate Director of CCM, will be invited to discuss relations between the City and the Board of Education. They also hope to invite someone from a nearby town and hope that the Board of Education will do so as well. The Council will be invited as well.

Mr. Avery said that it had been discouraging that the Board of Education didn't feel it could trust the Board of Estimate & Taxation with the contract extension. However, tonight's vote was intended to demonstrate that the Board of Estimate & Taxation is reaching out. He hopes that in the future, this will put to bed the notion that they both can't work together. He voted tonight in favor of disbursement of the surplus to acknowledge that the Board of Education had worked to create the surplus in the hope that they can work together in mutual respect.

Mayor Knopp, re Youth Services, said that he has asked David Kennedy, the Director of the United Way of Norwalk/Wilton, to head a group comprised primarily of mental health professionals and representatives of the Common Council, the Board of Estimate & Taxation and the Board of Education (recommended by Mrs. Bishop-Pullan) to look into this issue in a dispassionate manner. Mr. Burnett has agreed to serve on this group. Mayor Knopp will ask Jeanette Olmstead-Sawyer to act as the Council representative. The question is whether services to youth at risk should continue to be provided by Youth Services or if these services should be contracted out to non-profit counseling groups and be reimbursed by Medicaid. At the next Board of Estimate & Taxation meeting, Mayor Knopp will present a resolution to provide funding to Youth Services through the end of this school year with the understanding that they are not satisfied with the status quo and want to see improvement in how the City provides services, stretches limited funding and engages in a broader prevention effort for at risk youth in the community. He will meet with the Health & Public Welfare Committee on Thursday and hopes that this approach will put an end to the irrational discussion and scare tactics that have occurred, which has greatly surprised him.

CONSIDER AND APPROVE RESERVE FOR ENCUMBRANCE ITEMS (CONT'D)

Mr. Hamilton said there are items that are not related to wage items. The total reserve is \$1,627,447.

** MS. COURT MOVED TO APPROVE THE RESERVE FOR ENCUMBRANCE FOR YEAR END FY2004 AS REQUESTED IN THE AMOUNT OF \$1,627,447.
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS RESERVES FOR UNSETTLED CONTRACTS

** MR. BUZZEE MOVED TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS RESERVE FOR UNSETTLED CONTRACTS.
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

The Board went into Executive Session at 8:15 p.m. and reconvened into Public Session at 8:35 p.m.

** MR. BURNETT MOVED TO APPROVE THE FISCAL YEAR 04 WAGE RESERVE.
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

** MS. COURT MOVED TO ADJOURN.
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:36 p.m.

Attest: _____
Pam Stark, City Clerk

