

**CITY OF NORWALK
BOARD OF ESTIMATE & TAXATION
REGULAR MEETING
October 7, 2019**

ATTENDANCE: Edwin Camacho, Chair; Troy Jellerette, Jim Feigenbaum, James Frayer, Artie Kassimis

STAFF: Henry Dachowitz, CFO; Angela Fogel, Director of Management and Budgets, Donna King, City Clerk, Paul Friia, Assessor.

Mr. Camacho called the meeting to order at 6:34pm. Ms. King called the Roll and a quorum was present

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

September 3, 2019 – Regular Meeting

**** MR. KASSIMIS MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES AS PRESENTED**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

2. SPECIAL OPERATING APPROPRIATIONS Agenda (Section A)

There were none this evening.

3. TRANSFER AGENDA (Section B)

Mr. Kassimis suggested the Board move to the Transfer Agenda. He first mentioned that the Assessor and Deputy Assessor were retiring and Mr. Paul Friia took over as Part Time Assessor until a Full Time Assessor could be found, on the recommendation of the City Attorney. Mr. Paul Friia, Westport's Assessor for the last 16 years, reported on three areas of focus for the Assessor's Office: 1) Progress on making a new Grand List, 2) Revaluation appeals to last Fiscal Year's Grand List, and 3) the Valuation and Permitting of the New Mall. Mr. Friia will be joined in 2019 by Mark Kenny, who has specialized expertise in Mall Valuation, Permitting and Tax Assessment. Mr. Friia and Mr. Kenny and Former Assessor Mike Stewart

have committed to help out a number of days per week, until a Full-Time Assessor and Deputy Assessor can be chosen. Mr. Dachowitz said that Mr. Friia will work “as the Quarterback” in assessing the backlog of work to be done. Raymond Burney, HR Director, is currently conducting a Nationwide Search for a new Tax Assessor, and Deputy Assessor. Mr. Friia said Norwalk may need to consider one to two additional Tax Inspectors (Residential, Commercial, Personal) to keep on top of any 2018 Grand List revaluation complaints, and to facilitate Permit and Valuation and Tax Assessment Inspections.

Mr. Friia noted that part of the allocation of \$250,000 from the Contingency Fund to the Assessment Department will be to cover severance monies for retiring Tax Assessors Michael Stewart and Assistant Tax Assessor Bill O’Brien. Citizens challenging the 2018 valuation and tax assessment can first approach the Board of Assessment and ultimately the courts. Of the current 400 appeals, about 290 are commercial with the rest being some mix of residential and commercial. Mr. Friia said more permits needed to be issued, which may justify hiring two new inspectors versus one. This is particularly true when the Board of Estimate considers the new Mall going in. Although the Mall has not opened yet, it was in a state of completion that will generate annual tax revenues of about \$2MM, under a 7 year abatement that starts off with 50% off of the annual assessed real estate taxes.

**** MR. JELLERETTE MOVED FOR THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTION TO BE ADOPTED:**

RESOLVED THAT \$250,000 WILL BE TRANSFERRED FROM THE CONTINGENCY FUND TO FUND THE INTERIM ASSESSOR AND CONSULTING SERVICES FOR AT LEAST THE NEXT 6 MONTHS.

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

3. OTHER BUSINESS Agenda (Section C)

There was no other business this evening.

5. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION (Section D)

Special Appropriation

Status of Contingency

Financial report

Oak Hills Financial Status – July 2019

Angela Fogel, Director of Management and Budgets commented that the Oak Hill's revenues were up \$3,000-4,000 for the Fiscal Year to date.

Year-to-date Capital Budget Report – FY 2019-20

Year-to-date Operating Expenditure Report – FY 2019-20

Year-to-date Operating Revenue Report – FY 2019-20

Year-to-date BOE Operating Expenditure Report – FY 2019-20

Tax Collector's Narrative – July 2019

Tax Collector's Report – July 2019 (Advance Collections)

Tax Collector's Report – July 2019 (Tax Collection)

Salary accounts - Police–Fire–Public Works – ALL - FY 2019-20

ADJOURNMENT

**** MOTION TO ADJOURN WAS MADE BY MR. JAMES FRAYER**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

There was no further business to discuss so the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michael GS Kondracki, Telesco Secretarial Services