

**CITY OF NORWALK  
FINANCE CLAIMS COMMITTEE  
REGULAR MEETING  
AUGUST 8, 2019**

**ATTENDANCE:** Greg Burnett, Chair; Ernest Dumas, John Igneri, John Kydes, Nicholas Sacchinelli

**OTHERS:** Lisa Biagiarelli, Tax Collector; Chisamay Lam, Comptroller; Michael Stewart, Tax Assessor; Craig Schmidt, Risk Manager; Deputy Fire Chief Michael McCallum; Nick Roberts, Recreation and Parks Director; Mark Gartner, Oak Hills Authority Controller

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Burnett called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

Mr. Burnett called the roll. A quorum was present.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was no one present from the public who wished to address the Committee at this time.

**\*\* MR. IGNERI MOVED TO SUSPEND THE RULES TO ADD AN ITEM TO THE AGENDA.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**\*\* MR. SACCHINELLI MOVED TO ADD AN ITEM REGARDING THE OPERATIONS AND PUBLIC WORKS SPECIAL CAPITAL APPROPRIATION FOR THE RECREATION AND PARKS MASTER PLAN.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETINGS:**

**June 13, 2019 -- Regular Meeting**

**\*\* MR. KYDES MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JUNE 13, 2019.**

**\*\* THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JUNE 13, 2019 AS SUBMITTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**CLAIMS COMMITTEE:**

**Receive the month Claims Report; review and approve claims as required  
for Claims Report dated: August 8, 2019**

Ms. Biagiarelli came forward and reviewed the details involved with a court adjudication and settlement for one taxpayer and a duplicate payment for another taxpayer.

**\*\* MR. IGNERI MOVED TO APPROVE THE REFUNDS FOR THE CLAIMS AS PRESENTED BY THE TAX COLLECTOR.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**NARRATIVE ON TAX COLLECTIONS DATED AUGUST 8, 2019 –**  
**Receive Report and discuss.**

**MONTHLY TAX COLLECTOR'S REPORTS DATED JULY 31, 2019 –**  
**Receive Report and discuss.**

Ms. Biagiarelli said that they were still posting the tax payments from the last few days of July and August 1st. Currently, the collection rate is at 98.95%.

The demand letters are being prepared for mailing. There is an allowance for uncollected taxes built into the budget. Next year will be a tax sale. The higher that the tax collection rate is, the lower the mill rate can be.

Mr. Burnett thanked Ms. Biagiarelli and her staff for their hard work. It benefits all the residents of the City. Ms. Biagiarelli said that the high collection rate also helps to keep the bond rating high.

**UPDATE ON SENIOR TAX RELIEF**

Mr. Michael Stewart, the Tax Assessor, came forward and distributed copies a summary on the Local Elderly Tax Relief Program. He directed everyone's attention to the 2018 - 2019 financial break out. He then gave the Committee an overview of the process and the projection for 2020-2021. The chart is designed to illustrate what the maximum of benefits could be for the elderly residents.

Mr. Stewart pointed out that by raising the income amount, more home owners can apply. He also noted that a letter had been sent out to the veterans who qualified informing them that the benefits had been increased.

Mr. Burnett said that the current ordinance would have to be changed and it would require a public hearing. Mr. Stewart said that he had spoken with Atty. Candela and that the item was included on the August 20th Ordinance Committee Agenda.

Mr. Stewart said that there had been some concern about a potential ordinance that would require any family member over the age of 25 living in a senior's household to report their income. This could potentially disqualify a number of seniors from receiving benefits.

*Mr. Kydes left the meeting at 7:50 p.m.*

**\*\* MR. IGNERI MOVED TO APPROVE THE TAX ASSESSOR'S RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING THE CHANGES TO THE LOCAL ELDERLY TAX RELIEF BE FORWARDED TO THE ORDINANCE COMMITTEE.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**A. Authorize the Mayor, Harry W. Rilling, to execute an agreement with First Response Health and Wellness LLC to provide the injury prevention program for the Norwalk Fire Department for 5 years at a cost of \$187,500 with the potential for the 5-year extension at a cost of \$193,125. Account 161343-5258.**

**B. Authorize the establish a contingency for additional services as may be required for set up and testing year one and year six to establish baseline and progress of participants and generating statistics not to exceed \$25,000 for the initial 5 year program and \$35,000 for the second 5 year program.**

**\*\* MR. SACCHINELLI MOVED THE ITEMS.**

*Mr. Kydes rejoined the meeting at 7:52 p.m.*

Mr. Craig Schmidt, the Risk Manager for the City of Norwalk and Deputy Fire Chief Michael McCallum came forward to present the item. Mr. Schmidt said that shoulder injuries often lead to early retirements for firefighters. An injury prevention program would focus on improving firefighter mobility and stability. Mr. Schmidt and Deputy Chief McCallum spoke about the survey of other Fire Departments using a injury prevention program was done and the details of the RFP for an injury prevention program. The program involves both fitness and exercise that is focused on injury prevention. There will be a 2 hour program for five days a week. It will be mandatory that the firefighters attend the nutrition and exercise instruction portion. However, the firefighters will not be mandated to participate in the exercise portion. Discussion followed.

Mr. Kydes asked if this was included in the budget. Deputy Chief McCallum said that the Department was requesting approve this so it could go before the Common Council. This approval would be for a five year program with the possibility of an additional five year extension. Mr. Sacchinelli asked if the Department would come back with an update

report. Ms. Lam pointed out that from the Risk Management viewpoint, it would be an operational cost and come from the insurance fund.

Mr. Burnett asked if there was a similar program for the Police Department or other departments. Mr. Schmidt said that it was a cultural shift for the department. Mr. Kydes had a number of questions about the topics included along with the nutrition. Deputy Chief McCallum said that the vendor has had other outside groups come in to offer yoga, and acupuncture.

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

### **SPECIAL CAPITAL APPROPRIATIONS**

**A. Resolution: Approve Special Capital appropriations totaling \$250,000 to fund a new capital projects to complete an updated Recreation and Parks Master Plan.**

**B. Resolution: authorize the closing of the following projects:**

**09-16-6030-6777-C0568 -- Brien McMahon turf field with a balance of \$12,976**

**09-17-6030-5777-C0568 -- Brien McMahon turf field with a balance of \$101,372**

**09-19-6030-5777-C0623 -- Testa Field Turf Replacement with available balance of \$133,150.**

**\*\* MR. IGNERI MOVED THE ITEM.**

Mr. Nick Roberts, the Recreation and Parks Director, came forward and said that the last Master Plan for the Parks was done 26 years ago. this would update the Plan. Mr. Roberts reviewed the details of the turf projects that will be closed out and the cost savings involved.

Mr. Igneri said that the City had been working on the Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD). Mr. Roberts said that the POCD was very vague in terms of open spaces. This would be more in detail and more in depth. Mr. Roberts said that the new plan would be incorporated all the other Master Plans, such as the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) Plan, and other Plans such as the Conservation Plan.

Mr. Sacchinelli asked about the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) Accreditation. Mr. Roberts reviewed benefits with the Committee.

Mr. Burnett asked Mr. Roberts if it had been presented to the Planning Commission. Mr. Roberts said that the item had been to the Planning Commission and the BET.

**\*\* MR. KYDES MOVED TO TABLE THIS ITEM TO THE SEPTEMBER FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING.**

**\*\* THE MOTION TO TABLE PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**Receive Oak Hills Authority monthly Financial Statement for May 31, 2019.  
Receive Oak Hill Authority monthly financial Statement for June 30, 2019.**

Mr. Mark Gartner, Oak Hills Authority Controller came forward and presented a financial overview of past year. He said that while weather was a factor, the Authority is looking at the various factors, such as price increases and changes in the golf industry and culture. The Authority is working on improving their marketing and the course conditions.

The restaurant and tennis court leases are improving. There have been numerous on the facility have generated a number of positive comments from golfers. The books have been closed and the basic audit has been completed within 24 days of the end of the fiscal year.

Mr. Igneri thanked Mr. Gartner for his concise report.

Mr. Sacchinelli asked if there was a membership model. Mr. Gartner said that there was and reviewed the details.

Mr. Burnett asked if the new members have generated any new ideas. Mr. Gartner said that the new members had just started last month. However, the Authority members are well-versed in marketing and finance.

Mr. Kydes thanked Mr. Gartner for his presentation.

Mr. Burnett said that he was in the restaurant in early June. He asked about the restaurant remodeling proceeds. Mr. Gartner said that they were in the middle of an RFP process for a new restaurant operator. Discussion followed.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

**\*\* MR. SACCHINELLI MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

S. L. Soltes  
Telesco Secretarial Services

City of Norwalk  
Finance Claims Committee  
Regular Meeting  
August 8, 2019