

**CITY OF NORWALK
BOARD OF ESTIMATE AND TAXATION
REGULAR MEETING
NOVEMBER 12, 2019**

ATTENDANCE: Edwin Camacho, Chair; Mayor Harry Rilling; James Feigenbaum;
James Frayer; James Page; Troy Jellerette

STAFF: Henry Dachowitz, CFO; Angela Fogel, Director of Management and
Budgets; Donna King, City Clerk; Mario Coppola, Corporation Counsel;
Lamond Daniels, Chief of Community Services

OTHERS: Thomas Hamilton, Board of Education CFO; Helene Becker, ELL
Specialist; Deputy Chief Susan Zecca; Bob McDowell, YMCA

Mr. Camacho called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.

Ms. King called the Roll and a Quorum was present.

Approval of Minutes October 7, 2019 – Regular Meeting

The following corrections were made to the minutes:

Page 3: Mr. Feigenbaum made the motion to adjourn

**** MR. FEIGENBAUM MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES AS AMENDED
** MOTION PASSED WITH TWO (2) ABSTENTIONS (MAYOR RILLING AND
MR. PAIGE)**

Special Operating Appropriations Agenda (Section A)

**** MR. PAIGE MOVED THE FOLLOWING ITEM**

**1. RESOLVED, THAT A SUM NOT TO EXCEED \$5,063 BE AND THE SAME IS
HEREBY TRANSFERRED FROM INCREASED REVENUES (ACCT#01-30-10-
4181) FROM THE TOWN OF SCARBOROUGH TO THE POLICE
DEPARTMENT TO COVER POLICE OVERTIME WORK. (ACCOUNT #01-30-
35-5120).**

Deputy Chief Zecca explained the item.

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**** MR. FRAYER MOVED THE FOLLOWING ITEM:**

2. RESOLVED, THAT A SUM NOT TO EXCEED \$1,000,000 BE AND THE SAME IS HEREBY TRANSFERRED FROM FUND BALANCE TO FUND MATCHING FUNDS FOR THE YMCA BUILD-OUT OF THE CITY OWNED PROPERTY LOCATED AT 98 SOUTH MAIN STREET. (ACCOUNT #01-70-29-5A-0620).

Mayor Rilling explained that the funds for this project were received from General Growth Properties (Brookfield Properties). Mr. Coppola explained the project. Over time, the City was able to purchase back the property with money that was allocated by General Growth Properties (Brookfield Properties) for the benefit of the South Norwalk community. No money came out of the City budget. He said that as part of their mission, the YMCA wants to provide social services to the Norwalk Community.

Mr. McDowell gave an overview of the proposed project and presented renderings of the building and interior spaces.

The YMCA has been partnering with other South Norwalk organizations. This building will not outfit a gymnasium or pool.

Mr. Coppola said the City will maintain ownership of the building and will have a long-term lease. The YMCA will be investing a substantial amount for improvements to the building. They will work with Mr. Lo and City staff.

Mayor Rilling said that this building was a community resource and he wanted it to remain a community resource. The YMCA made a long-term commitment to make it a community center. He thanked Mr. Coppola who suggested having a YMCA in the building. Americares will remain in the building.

Mr. McDowell reviewed the various programs they will offer. He noted the Housing Authority needs space and will have space in the building. He added that they hope to provide programs at Ryan Park.

Mr. Coppola said they were very fortunate to have a partner to provide all of these programs at no cost to the City. The YMCA will be able to offset their deficit by partnerships and fundraising. All maintenance costs will be the responsibility of the YMCA. They will be responsible for the capital improvement program; the City is capped out at \$1.2 million. If all goes well, Mr. McDowell said they expect to occupy the building by February.

Mr. Jellerette asked if there will be fees for the community. Mr. McDowell said there will be fees for programs, but they raise money for assistance for people who are unable to afford the program fees. Mr. Coppola added that because of the anticipated need in South Norwalk the fees will be lower.

Mr. Page said that as the Treasurer of the South Norwalk Community Center, they are very excited about this.

Due to a potential conflict of interest, Mr. Page rescued himself from the vote.

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**** MAYOR RILLING MOVED THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:**

3. RESOLVED, THAT A SUM NOT TO EXCEED \$1,000,000 BE AND THE SAME IS HEREBY TRANSFERRED FROM FUND BALANCE TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO FUND ADDITIONAL ACADEMIC RESOURCES RELATED TO THE RECENT INFLOW OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS. (ACCT. #01-50-50-5050).

4. RESOLVED, THAT A SUM NOT TO EXCEED \$400,000 BE AND THE SAME IS HEREBY TRANSFERRED FROM FUND BALANCE TO THE COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT FOR ADDITIONAL MENTAL HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES FOR CITY STUDENTS. (ACCT. #01-20-10-5298).

Mr. Hamilton explained that the Board of Education has not historically asked for a special appropriation; however, these circumstances were unpredictable and they are not able to provide services to students without additional resources. Mr. Hamilton expressed his application for Mayor Rilling's support.

Ms. Becker reviewed information she distributed to the Board. She said the students come from countries with horrendous conditions and the students are academically needy. A lot of the students come here with severe trauma. In addition, a lot of horrible things happened to them on their journey here. That is why they are asking for Social Workers.

Currently the students are sitting in study halls because there is no place for them. Mr. Hamilton said that the District's ELL operation is the best in the State of Connecticut. Norwalk is doing it right because our students are doing pretty well. He said that is a tribute to Ms. Becker and her team.

Mayor Rilling said he met with the Superintendent and his staff. This is nothing unique to Norwalk. He said he firmly supports this; it is morally right to educate the students.

Mr. Camacho asked if there was a reason why the surplus could not be rolled into this. Mr. Hamilton explained that there was a surplus built into the 2019/2020 budget, but those funds were used. Mayor Rilling said when they met with Dr. Adamowski they committed that what ever surplus was available would be used to augment this appropriation.

Mr. Frayer asked if all of the students were Norwalk residents. Mr. Hamilton said the District goes through an extensive process to document residency.

Mr. Daniels provided further information on providing social services to the students.

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

Due to the Common Council meeting, Mayor Rilling excused himself and left the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

Transfer Agenda (Section B)

POLICE DEPT

FROM	TO	AMOUNT
01-9600-5900 CONTINGENCY	01-4071-5561 BLDGS/RENOVATIONS	\$79,700
01-9600-5900 CONTINGENCY	01-3023-5258 OTHER PROF SVCS	\$30,000
TOTAL		\$109,700

Deputy Chief Zecca was present to address the Police Department's request for two budget transfers within the Police Department. The first request would fund a new HVAC system at the Dog Shelter. The second for a Feasibility Study to relocate the Police Marine Unit.

Deputy Chief Zecca explained that the Animal Shelter building does not have air conditioning. The available fans are not effective. The transfer will fund a new HVAC system and new guillotine doors for the kennels. The HVAC system is old and the current guillotine doors are poorly insulated.

Mr. Jellerette asked how many animals are housed at the animal shelter. Deputy Chief Zecca responded that the shelter has 22 dog runs available. The shelter generally has a 6-12 animal occupancy.

Mr. Camacho asked for a definition of guillotine doors. Deputy Chief Zecca explained that it is a door that rises up from the floor by remote so animals can move to outdoor space without a safety risk to animal handlers.

Mr. Jellerette asked how the animals get to the shelter. Deputy Chief Zecca said that they are lose, strays and some are vicious animals. Some may take months to process but most are housed

for a few days to a few weeks. Animals are generally retrieved by their owners within a few days or are adopted within three weeks.

Dr. James Page asked if this is historically the City's animal shelter. Deputy Chief Zecca answered, yes.

CFO, Henry Dachowitz said that the transfer was urgent so that the HVAC system can be replaced before the cold weather season.

Deputy Chief Zecca added that in past years the animals have been moved to another location on cold days due to the old ineffective heating system.

The discussion then moved to the police transfer to fund the marine unit relocation study.

Deputy Chief Zecca explained that the marine unit building is a long-term lease. It is subject to frequent flooding and the owner is not incentivized to improve the building. This has prompted the department to consider an outside consultant for a site search.

Mr. Frayer asked why the Police department needed to use a consultant to find an alternative building and dock space to house the marine unit.

Deputy Chief Zecca responded that the Police Department is looking at Veterans Park but they need a professional to determine the best site.

Mr. Frayer commented that he did not see the value of a consultant.

Mr. Camacho asked if other communities have used this type of consultant for their marine units.

Deputy Chief Zecca responded, yes.

Mr. Frayer commented that the Police Department has the knowledge of the waters and locations in Norwalk. They would be instructing the consultant on those details.

Mr. Jellerette commented that the Memo from Deputy Chief Zecca stated that the Police Department has plans to combine efforts with the Fire Department.

Deputy Chief Zecca said that combining space with the Fire Department is the objective.

Dr. James Page asked if the Police Department will apply for grants.

Deputy Chief Zecca said that the Department did apply for a grant but State funding is on hold. Out of that grant application process came the decision to do a site study first.

Dr. James Page asked what Mr. Dachowitz thought.

CFO, Mr. Henry Dachowitz said that it was nice to have independent input. He recommended that Mr. Frayer look over the bids since he has professional experience in this area.

**** MR. FEIGENBAUM MOVED TO APPROVE THE TRANSFERS**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

CORPORATION COUNSEL

FROM	TO	AMOUNT
01-0300-5258 OTHER PROF SVCS	01-0200-5741 IT HARDWARE	\$7,500

Ms. Fogel explained that the transfer was to fund the purchase of fifteen iPads. One for each Common Council member.

Mr. Camacho asked what would be the use of the iPads.

Ms. Fogel explained that Corporation Counsel recommended that Council members use only City technology for communication.

**** MR. FRAYER MOVED TO APPROVE THE CORPORATION COUNSEL TRANSFER REQUEST.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

Other Business (Section C) None

Additional Information (Section D)

Special Appropriation

Status of Contingency

- Financial report • Oak Hills Financial Status – August 2019
- 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 – August 2019
- Tax Collector’s Narrative – September, 2019
- Salary accounts
- Police – FY 2019-20
- Fire – FY 2019-20
- Public Works – FY 2019-20

**** MR. FEIGENBAUM MOVED TO ADJOURN
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

There was no further business and the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemarie Lombardi
Telesco Secretarial Services