

Common Council Actions

APRIL 12, 2005

NORWALK, CONNECTICUT 8:00 PM EST, COUNCIL CHAMBERS

ALL COMMON COUNCIL ACTIONS TAKEN AT THIS MEETING TO APPROVE EXPENDITURES AND CONTRACTS OR TO ACCEPT BIDS AND OTHER PROPOSALS REQUIRING THE EXPENDITURE OF CITY FUNDS ARE SUBJECT TO THE AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS.

The regular meeting of the Common Council of the City of Norwalk was held on Tuesday, April 12, 2005, in the Common Council Chambers, City Hall, 125 East Avenue, Norwalk, Connecticut. The Mayor Alex A. Knopp called the meeting to order at 8:20 pm and lead the assembly into the Pledge of Allegiance.

I. ROLL CALL

Betsy Bain Bruce Kimmel
Kenneth Baker Richard McQuaid
Fred Bondi Matthew Miklave
Michael Coffey Jeanette Olmstead-Sawyer (absent)
Carvin Hilliard Kevin Poruban
Douglas Hempstead Douglas Sutton
William Krummel (absent) Peter Wien
Leona Williams

There were thirteen (13) members present at Roll Call.

The Mayor noted that Rev. Olmstead-Sawyer was at home resting after a car accident and wished her well.

Mayor Knopp welcomed Mr. Hempstead back.

II. ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES

A. Regular Meeting – March 22, 2005

**** MR. COFFEY MOVED APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF MARCH 22, 2005 AS PRESENTED.**

Mr. Hempstead thanked the Mayor and Council members for their kinds words and thoughts regarding his mother.

** MOTION PASSED TWELVE VOTES IN FAVOR, ONE ABSTENTION (MS. WILLIAMS) BY VOICE VOTE.

III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Barbara Smith passed around photographs of the current condition of Norwalk High School indicating that she is the vice president for the parents. She stated that her concerns were with regard to the renovations of the school and after attending a meeting it is now apparent that there are not enough dollars to fund the needed repairs. She mentioned the condition of the science labs, the patchwork effect of the floors and ceilings and the temperature of classrooms. Ms. Smith questioned the design process itself stating that additional funding is required.

Sharon Cadden thanked the Council and the Mayor of the work regarding the renovation of school buildings; she indicated that it needs to be done right. She referred to the budget restrictions noting that the city needs to find the money for the renovations at Norwalk High School. Ms. Cadden referred to the connection between the quality of the building and the performance of students; she added that the city needs to offer the same resources to all students. Finally she said that the parents are willing to help and urged Council members to work with parents to get the job done.

Shari Ulman stated that her concerns were also regarding the renovations at Norwalk High School and the needs are far greater than anticipated. She referred to the noise level in the classrooms and the need for an upgrade of computer wiring. Ms. Ulman asked that the basic needs of the students be met and asked Council members for ways to help find funding.

Tony Coscia indicated that he has lived in Norwalk for fifty years and said the problem today is the building of luxury apartments. He said that there is a critical need for affordable housing and suggested that Norwalk look at some of the Stamford policies. He urged Council members to vote for the funds to support affordable housing.

Amanda Scheffer a student at Norwalk High School indicated that she was there on behalf of the student body. She spoke of the required needs of the school including ventilation, boilers, the acoustics, the lockers and the science labs. She stated that the renovation plan should support student learning.

Bill Wrenn stated that he was in favor of increasing the funding for open space. He noted the importance of funding the most worthy programs saying that open space should be a lot higher.

Diane Lauricella urged the Council to support items VII D 2a, 2b, 3a, 3b, 5a and 5b, as they are all important regarding an emergency response. She also referred to the capital budget noted that she had reviewed this and urged Council members to find the

mechanism to get more money into open space. Ms. Lauricella said she was glad the Council allowed members of the public to speak about Norwalk High School and suggested that design process be slowed down, as the city deserves excellent schools.

Robert Griffith stated that he was here to speak about the quality of life in Norwalk in light of people being shot. He indicated that the crime and violence occurs in South Norwalk and there is little control by the police in that area. He said the city departments are not working together on this and hoped that more police officers would be hired.

Kelly Straniti urged the Council to put \$10,000 more into the open space fund, as she is concerned about the number of development projects in the city.

Mayor Knopp indicated that silence by Council members does not represent a lack of caring; he stated that this is a courtesy to allow members of the public to speak.

IV. MAYOR

A. RESIGNATIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

Mayor Knopp said in light of Mr. Cole resigning from the Board of Education he would also be resigning from the NFCC. As a replacement he put forth the name of Jody Bishop-Pullan to replace Mr. Cole. He added that this is a decision of the Board of Education and comes before the Common Council to act on.

**** MS. BAIN MOVED TO APPOINT JODY BISHOP-PULLAN TO COMPLETE THE TERM OF DAVID COLE ON THE NFCC.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY BY VOICE VOTE.**

Mayor Knopp stated that Denis McCarthy would begin his position as Chief of the Norwalk Fire Department on May 2, 2005 and would come before the Council at that time. He said in the meantime Mr. McCarthy becomes a member of the Public Safety Commission.

B. REMARKS

In light of the long agenda, Mayor Knopp withheld any remarks this evening.

V. COUNCIL PRESIDENT

A. CONSENT AGENDA

**** MR. BONDI MOVED APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT CALENDAR AS PRESENTED.**

VI. REPORTS: DEPARTMENTS, BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

A. BOARD OF ESTIMATE & TAXATION

2. RESOLVED, that a sum not to exceed \$50,000 be and the same is hereby transferred from Contingency to the Fire Department to pay for an expected shortfall due to a severance payment. Acct. # 01-3110-5110

4. Attached please find the FY 2005-06 Proposed Parking Authority Budget for your approval.

B. NORWALK FACILITIES CONSTRUCTION COMMISSION

1a. Authorize the Mayor, Alex A. Knopp, to execute a contract with West End Moving & Storage of Bridgeport Ct. for moving services at Kendall Elementary School for a total not-to-exceed \$27,287.79.

Acct. # 0904-5010-5777-B0313

1b. Authorize the NFCC to issue change order(s) on contract for a total not to exceed \$3,000.

2a. Authorize the Mayor, Alex A. Knopp, to execute a contract with Bojan Developments, LLC of Belleville, New Jersey for the Asbestos Abatement Services at Kendall Elementary School for a total not-to-exceed \$288,000.00.

Acct. #0904-5010-5777-B0313

2b. Authorize the NFCC to issue change order(s) on contract for a total not to exceed \$50,000.

3a. Authorize the Mayor, Alex A. Knopp, to execute a contract with DJ Contracting Inc. of Pine Brook, New Jersey for asbestos abatement services at Brien McMahon High School for a total not-to-exceed \$99,781.00.

Acct. # 0902/03/04-5010-5777-C0237

3b. Authorize the NFCC to issue change order(s) on contract for a total not to exceed \$10,000.

VII. COMMON COUNCIL COMMITTEES

B. PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

1a. Authorize the Mayor, Alex A. Knopp, to execute an Agreement with the Nagy Brothers Construction Co., Inc., for Project No. DPW 2004-1, Silvermine River Fisheries Enhancement and Stream and DPW 2004-1a, Restoration Project and Silvermine River Pedestrian Bridge Rehabilitation, for a sum not to exceed, \$175,955.75.

1b. Authorize the Director of Public Works to issue Orders on Contract to the Nagy Brothers Construction Co., Inc., for Project No. DPW 2004-1, Silvermine River Fisheries Enhancement and Stream and DPW 2004-1a, Restoration Project and Silvermine River Pedestrian Bridge Rehabilitation, for a sum not to exceed \$17,595.58. Acct. # 09 00/01 4021 5777 C0109 Plus Grant Funding from DEP 0905 4021 5777 C0109.

2a. Authorize the Mayor, Alex A. Knopp, to execute an Agreement with the M. Rondano, Inc., for Project No. SS 2005-1, Proposed Sanitary Sewers to be Constructed on Old Field Road, Old Field Place and a Portion of Witch Lane, for a sum not to exceed \$389,427.40.

2b. Authorize the Director of Public Works to issue Orders on Contract to M. Rondano, Inc., for Project No. SS 2005-1. Proposed Sanitary Sewers to be constructed on Old Field Road, Old Field Place and a Portion of Witch Lane, for a sum not to exceed \$38,942. Acct. # 0901/02 4060 5777 C0045 & 0900 4060 5777 C0043

3. Authorize the Mayor, Alex A. Knopp, to execute an Agreement with the State of Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection and any and all documents in connection with the Silvermine River Trail Project (grant amount is \$25,000).

4. Authorize the Purchasing Agent to purchase a hydroseeding machine from Butler Power Equipment, for a sum not to exceed \$6,000. Acct. # 0904 4031 5777 C0289.

5. Authorize the Purchasing Agent to purchase a curbing machine from Madison Supply Company, for a sum not to exceed \$8,500. Acct. # 0904 4021 5777 C0289

6. Authorize the Mayor, Alex A. Knopp, to execute an Agreement with Malcolm Pirnie, for engineering, construction oversight and application preparation for Construction/Site work at Heritage Park (Oystershell Park – Norwalk Landfill) for a sum not to exceed \$59,000. Acct #. Redevelopment Account No. 0902 0910 5777 C0241

C. PUBLIC HEALTH AND WELFARE COMMITTEE

1a. Authorize the Mayor, Alex A. Knopp to execute any and all documents necessary to apply for and accept grant funds from the Connecticut Department of Education under the Youth Service Bureau Grant Program for 2005-2006.

1b. Authorize the Mayor, Alex A. Knopp, to execute any and all agreements, documents, instruments and amendments thereto as may be necessary to implement a Youth Service Bureau Program, pursuant to such grant funding.

2a. Authorize the Mayor, Alex A. Knopp, to execute any and all documents necessary to apply for and accept grant funds from the Connecticut State Department of Education and State Department of Education and State Department of Social Services under the School Readiness and Child Day Care Grant program for 2005-2007.

2b. Authorize the Mayor, Alex A. Knopp, to execute any and all agreements, documents, instruments and amendments thereto as may be necessary to implement a School Readiness and Child Day Care Grant program, pursuant to such grant funding.

3a. Authorize the Mayor, Alex A. Knopp, to execute any and all documents necessary to apply for and accept grant funds from the State Department of Education and the State Department of Social Services for the 2005-2007 Quality Enhancement Grant Program.

3b. Authorize the Mayor, Alex A. Knopp, to execute any and all agreements, documents, instruments and amendments thereto as may be necessary to implement the Quality Enhancement Grant Program.

4a. Authorize the Mayor, Alex A. Knopp, to execute any and all documents necessary to apply for and accept \$7,500 in grant funds from the Connecticut Breast Health Initiative, Inc. for the period January 1, 2005 to December 31, 2005.

4b. Authorize the Mayor, Alex A. Knopp, to execute any and all agreements, documents, instruments or amendments as may be necessary to implement the Norwalk Breast Health Initiative for the period January 1, 2005 to December 31, 2005.

D. PUBLIC SAFETY & EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS COMMITTEE

1. Authorize the Mayor, Alex A. Knopp, to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with The Board of Education to acquire, facilitate and implement the Safe Schools/Healthy Children grant program funded by the Department of Education.

2a. Authorize the Mayor, Alex A. Knopp, to execute any and all documents necessary to apply for and accept grant funds from the U. S. Department of Justice for the 2005/06 Community Based Problem Solving Initiative.

2b. Authorize the Mayor, Alex A. Knopp, to execute any and all documents necessary to implement the 2005/06 Community Based Problem Solving Initiative.

3a. Authorize the Mayor, Alex A. Knopp, to execute any and all documents necessary to apply for and accept grant funds from the U. S. Department of Homeland Security and the State of Ct for the Buffer Zone Protection Program.

3b. Authorize the Mayor, Alex A. Knopp, to execute any and all documents necessary to implement the Buffer Zone protection program.

5a. Authorize the Mayor, Alex A. Knopp, to execute any and all documents necessary to apply for and accept grant funds from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and the State of Ct in support of the 2005-2006 Homeland Security Grant programs.

5b. Authorize the Mayor, Alex A. Knopp, to exceed any and all documents necessary to implement the 2005-2006 Homeland Security Grant programs.

E. PLANNING COMMITTEE

2. Approve the Proposed Amendment to the City of Norwalk contract with Tighe & Bond Consulting Engineers for the design and engineering of a traffic signal at West Avenue and Butler Street as set forth in the attached proposal dated January 17, 2005, and authorization of funds in an amount not to exceed \$20,400 from the State DECD Grant for Reed Putnam for the additional services.
3. Approve the 2005-2009 Consolidated Plan for Housing and Community Development (Plan).
4. Authorize the Mayor, Alex A. Knopp, to execute any and all documents required to submit the Plan to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development.
5. Approve the PY31 (2005-2006) Annual Plan.
6. Approve the use of the optional income eligibility limits for the 2005-2006 program year.
7. Authorize the Mayor, Alex A. Knopp, to execute any and all documents required to apply for, accept, and implement the PY31 (2005-2006) CDBG Program.

** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY BY VOICE VOTE.

B. OTHER GENERAL COUNCIL BUSINESS

There was no other general council business this evening.

VI. REPORTS: DEPARTMENTS, BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

A. BOARD OF ESTIMATE & TAXATION

1. RESOLUTION, Appropriating \$200,000 for Improvements to the Webster Parking lot (Project Account No. 09054095-5777-CO3030).

** MR. KIMMEL MOVED APPROVAL OF THE ITEM.

Mr. Kimmel stated that after the reconfiguration of the parking lot it would solve many of the current problems there also noting that the merchants in the area endorse this. Mr. Kimmel added that many of these items were in the original plans and for a variety of reasons they were not done.

Mr. Hempstead stated that he would be voting against this item, as these important issues should have been done initially. He said that this has inconvenienced many people.

**** MOTION PASSED ELEVEN VOTES IN FAVOR, TWO VOTES OPPOSED (MR. HEMPSTEAD, MR. MCQUAID) BY VOICE VOTE.**

Mayor Knopp added for the record that the money for this comes out of the parking authority budget.

3. RESOLVED, that a sum not to exceed \$15,000 be and the same is hereby transferred from Contingency to the Fire Department to pay for other operating supplies and motor vehicle parts. Account No. Various

Mr. McQuaid referred to the back-up material regarding this item noting that there may be surplus equipment from the school projects that would be appropriate; he asked Mr. Hamilton to explain about this.

Mr. Hamilton (Finance Director) indicated that his department is still looking into this but from the information they have received it is likely that there will be surplus equipment available; they are now in the process to see if the equipment will fit.

Mr. McQuaid asked where this surplus equipment is adding that there should be an inventory of it.

Mr. Hamilton replied that as far as he knows there is surplus equipment that has been left over after a recently completed school project.

Ms. Bain said based on Mr. Hamilton's comments there needs to be further investigation on behalf of the finance department she noted that it is prudent to reduce the item pending this investigation.

Mr. McQuaid said that he was not in disagreement with Ms. Bain's statement his concern is regarding the surplus equipment and why there is no inventory.

Mayor Knopp stated that this item was submitted as a special item and there was not a lot of time to complete extensive research.

Mr. Bondi referred to an item regarding parts for vehicles that had occurred during the Matrix study noting poor control of inventory by the fire department; he asked if this has been rectified so they know what is on hand.

Mr. Hamilton responded by saying generally the Matrix were impressed with the quality of mechanical service in the fire department and they were favorably impressed with that department; overall the tenor was positive. They recommended that the fire department work with the Department of Public Work who currently has a computerized in place.

**** MOTION PASSED TWELVE VOTES IN FAVOR, ONE ABSTENTION (MR. MCQUAID) BY VOICE VOTE.**

5. Attached please find the FY 2005-06 Proposed WPCA Operating Budget for your approval.

**** MR. BONDI MOVED APPROVAL OF THE ITEM.**

Mr. Hempstead stated that it is his understanding that this budget still depends on the fee schedule that it is unbalanced since it is a flat fee for homeowners. He noted that this was difficult to support because it is unfair and unbalanced; the right way to do it is to base it on usage.

Mr. Kimmel asked about the issues of moving from a flat fee schedule to one based on consumption.

Mr. Alvord (DPW) said there are a couple of approaches, the most accurate way to bill for sewage usage is metering the sewage outflow from each structure. That would mean installing a sewage meter from the sewage coming out of the building and in a mature community such as Norwalk that is cost prohibited because it means digging up each street to install the meter. The next most accurate way to do this is to bill based on water consumption because every building does have a water meter and the water companies are measuring this.

Mr. Kimmel said to implement that kind of system they would have to relationship with all of the water companies and without this information there would be no way to implement this. He asked if they had decided a few years ago to move rapidly toward a more accurate system, would this have been possible and what would have been the cost to the city.

Mr. Alvord replied that he can't answer that question from a year ago. Now they have reached a co-operative approach with the First and Second Taxing Districts.

Mr. Kimmel said the flat fee vs. a consumption-based system has been an issue since they began and they all realized that this required co-operation of all the water companies and he hoped that this would be a goal of the board.

Mr. Hamilton gave examples of surrounding towns that use both the flat rate system and the consumption based system concluding by saying that there are reasons to look at both sides.

Mr. Wien asked if the City intends to use a user-based system.

Mr. Ciccarello (Corporation Counsel) replied that under the most recent FOI case they were not able to get the water consumption rates for individual consumers, just the businesses. Without this information they cannot go to a user-based system.

Mr. Bondi asked if it would be possible to out-source the billing for example by the water company so they would give up that consumption amount.

Mr. Alvord clarified that the city is on a user-based system right now. There are any number of billing systems that could be applied but at some point the staff have to develop some recommendations for the Authority on what would be the most cost effective means. Both Districts have promised to provide all of the consumption data on the basis that they can do cost projections etc. He added that it is more complicated in Norwalk because there are two water companies; he said they have not done the analysis at this point to make a recommendation at this point.

Mr. Hempstead said in the beginning this was not set up properly and should have been done right the first time.

Mr. Kimmel respectfully disagreed saying this was done right the first time as it produced great savings each year. He asked Mr. Hamilton what the savings for taxpayers are each year.

Mr. Hamilton replied the most important point that every year they go back and calculate that if the city had not created the WPCA the average tax bill would be \$328 per household; the sewer fee proposed for next year is \$195 per household so the savings to residents is clear and significant.

**** MOTION PASSED ELEVEN VOTES IN FAVOR, TWO VOTES OPPOSED (MR. HEMPSTEAD, MR. MCQUAID) BY VOICE VOTE.**

4. Authorize the Mayor, Alex A. Knopp, to execute an agreement with Dumitru T. Petrescu, P. E. for HVAC mechanical engineering design services at West Rocks School (\$6,250.00), Marvin School (\$4,950.00) and Nathan Hale School (\$4,450.00) for a total amount not to exceed \$18,650.00, which includes \$3,000.00 allowance for reimbursable expenses and miscellaneous additional services as may be required. Acct. # 09045010 5777 B0291

**** MS. BAIN MOVED APPROVAL OF THE ITEM.**

Mayor Knopp noted that John Hawley (Gilbane) was available for questions.

Ms. Bain said this is to move up some needed work at the schools as part of the renovation projects in order to operate the buildings safely and effectively.

Mr. McQuaid asked if Mr. Hawley had done business with Dumitru T. Petrescu before.

Mr. Hawley replied that he had not, but the Board of Education has.

Mr. McQuaid said at the committee meeting this was described as a rather large project and there is a concern about time lines, he noted his concern was with Mr. Hawley not being familiar with this company. Mr. McQuaid suggested that the item be tabled until Mr. Opdahl or a representative of the Board of Education be present to answer any questions.

Mayor Knopp requested that Mr. McQuaid withhold his motion to allow him time to ask Mr. Hawley a question. Mr. McQuaid agreed.

Mayor Knopp said in terms of delaying the project how would this effect the work being done during the summer.

Mr. Hawley responded by saying that the design needs to start immediately.

Ms. Bain noted that Mr. Opdahl was present during the NFCC meeting and it was approved at that time.

Mr. McQuaid said he wanted to feel more comfortable knowing that this company is going to be able to complete the work on time.

Mr. Hempstead commented that he did not feel that Mr. McQuaid's motion is out of line. A department head decided not to show up tonight and there are questions that need to be answered.

**** MR. MCQUAID MOVED TO TABLE THE ITEM TO THE NEXT MEETING.**

**** MOTION PASSED NINE VOTES IN FAVOR (MR. HEMPSTEAD, MR. MCQUAID, MR. WIEN, MR. PORUBAN, MR. HILLIARD, MR. BAKER, MR. KIMMEL, MR. BONDI, MS. WILLIAMS) FOUR VOTES OPPOSED (MR. MIKLAVE, MS. BAIN, MR. SUTTON, MR. COFFEY) BY A SHOW OF HANDS.**

VII. COMMON COUNCIL COMMITTEES

A. PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

1. Approve new position (Dispatch Supervisor, NASA Grade 4, description attached).

**** MR. SUTTON MOVED APPROVAL OF THE ITEM.**

Mr. Sutton said this represents an attempt to re-organize the dispatch system; there will be a working supervisor on the job. It is also an attempt to restore police officers to the street and to enhance the emergency preparedness level.

Mr. Hempstead asked in the initial planning of the entire project was there a plan to have four supervisors.

Mr. Dolhancryk (Emergency Planning) replied that four were planned for in the budget.

Mr. Hempstead asked if the working supervisor would actually be answering calls.

Mr. Dolhancryk replied that they would, they would also be operating dispatch if necessary. He added that they would be looking at staffing over the year possibly asking for another supervisor as five people are required to man a position 24/7.

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY BY VOICE VOTE.**

2. Approve proposed reorganization of Information Technology Department (see attached).

**** MR. SUTTON MOVED APPROVAL OF THE ITEM.**

Mr. Hempstead said he had a question regarding the list; he said that all of the individuals worked underneath the old job description will have a job and he asked why one name is singled out and is not on the list.

Mr. Miklave said he wanted to sensitive to any rights an employee might have under state law regarding confidentiality and asked if this should be discussed during executive session.

Ms. LeTourneau (Personnel) stated that the re-organization that is being proposed calls for the elimination of job descriptions, there is no discussion of employees.

Mr. Hempstead asked if the other individuals were working under the old job descriptions.

Ms. LeTourneau said the re-organization calls for the elimination of one position in the department and it re-classifies four positions and it establishes two new positions.

Mr. Hempstead noted that one person who is being re-classified is not being moved over.

Ms. LeTourneau said what was apparent is that most of the job descriptions are woefully out of date when referring to functions and operations that have not existed in the IT department for years.

Ms. Bain said they should decide if the job descriptions and the re-organization of the department make sense and that is the issue on the table.

Mr. Hempstead noted in the back-up material there are names attached to those positions.

Ms. Bain responded by saying that they are not to approve those people in those positions. They are being asked to approve the re-organization of the department.

Mr. McQuaid commented that names should not have been attached at this stage.

**** MOTION PASSED ELEVEN VOTES IN FAVOR, TWO VOTES OPPOSED (MR. HEMPSTEAD, MR. MCQUAID) BY VOICE VOTE.**

D. PUBLIC SAFETY AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS COMMITTEE

4. Authorize the Purchasing Agent to issue a purchase order to Tom Ashmore incorporated as a sole source supplier for the purchase of 27 Model x26 Taser devices

and supplies of 21' and 15" range air cartridges. This purchase not to exceed \$26,100.00. Funds to be drawn from the Federal Asset Forfeiture Funds Acct. 03000-2660.

**** MS. BAIN MOVED APPROVAL OF THE ITEM.**

Mr. Kimmel referred to recent comments made regarding tasers and the problems incurred when moving individuals into custody; he asked Chief Rilling to comment.

Chief Rilling (Police) replied that the purpose of these tasers is most effective when taking people into custody. He said they had taken on a pilot project about a year ago and taken tasers onto the street to determine the effectiveness of them. The evaluation showed that fewer officers were injured while using them. He explained how the tasers are used.

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

E. PLANNING COMMITTEE

1. Approval of the 2005-2006 Capital Budget.

**** MR. MIKLAVE MOVED APPROVAL OF THE ITEM.**

Mr. Miklave stated that he was pleased to present the capital budget for the coming fiscal year. It is at slightly over \$10 million and impacts the debt service of the city by less than \$6 million this is in keeping with the finance department's recommendation. There are many items that can be interpreted differently but at the end of the day there is no unworthy project in the budget and it is presented as lean and fiscally responsible.

**** MR. MIKLAVE MOVED TO AMEND THE CAPITAL BUDGET BY REDUCING ITEM 3KI FROM \$200,000 TO \$190,000 AND TO MOVE BACK TO \$10,000 TO THE OPEN SPACE FUND BRINGING THE BALANCE TO \$25,000.**

Mr. Miklave indicated that he was pleased to offer the amendment in recognition of comments from the public.

Mayor Knopp thanked council members and members of the public who spoke on this item. He explained that the money is being transferred from matching project set up for transportation projects.

Ms. Bain thanked the Mayor for re-considering the \$10,000 to the Open Space account. It is not very much but does show a minimal commitment on behalf of the city. She asked Mr. Alvord to comment on the impact it would make on his budget having \$10,000 removed.

Mr. Alvord noted that he had learned about this amendment tonight. The match project that they applied for is matched 1-5 or 1-10; so at some point that \$10,000 would become \$60,000 to \$200,000 that they will not have available.

Mayor Knopp indicated that he was sorry that they did not have a chance to discuss this Mr. Alvord before hand.

Mr. Kimmel said he was in support of the amendment adding that they should not have to go through this same process each year; open space needs to be recognized as a serious issue.

Mr. Poruban commented that he was not in favor of the amendment as the money was allocated for various projects.

Mr. Hempstead thanked Mr. Miklave for the amendment commenting that they are back to where they were last year. He added that the open space fund is woefully under-funded and this is just a symbolic gesture.

**** AMENDMENT PASSED TWELVE VOTES IN FAVOR, ONE VOTE OPPOSED (MR. PORUBAN) BY VOICE VOTE.**

Mr. Miklave stated that there is one more item that he would like to draw attention to, that is the \$200,000 for affordable housing. In the last two years the city has set aside approximately \$190,000 for affordable housing all of which has been allocated to a single project. The \$200,000 is far short of what is needed to address this crisis and suggested this line item be increased to \$300,000 it replaces the money spent on Fair Street and can help along the next project.

**** MR. MIKLAVE MOVED TO AMEND THE CAPITAL BUDGET BY REDUCING VI. 1 (TECHNOLOGY) BY \$50,000 TO \$825,000; BY DELETING VII. 11 (SHOWMOBILE) OF \$86,000 AND INCREASING X. 1 (AFFORDABLE HOUSING) TO \$296,000.**

Mr. Miklave said it his understanding that the school technology budget, when it was originally priced to the Council estimated each computer at \$1000 a piece, recently the Technology Committee learned that the Dell computers were coming in \$800 (approximately). He proposed to take \$50,000 of that change and transfer it to housing for working families. At the same time that if the project for technology is short then he would move to restore that money. With respect to the Showmobile, Mr. Miklave proposed to delete this from the capital budget. This is a worthwhile project, however it is old and needs to be replaced, however he noted that he could not support the Showmobile at the expense of housing for working families.

Mr. Kimmel said that he would be supporting Mr. Miklave's amendment as he agreed with transferring the money back to school technology if there is a shortfall during the year, as they would not allow this fund to be jeopardized.

Mr. Coffey commented that he would not be supporting the amendment and he would not support cutting money from education. He said they should not forget their fiduciary responsibility to keep government affordable for all the taxpayers.

Mr. Hempstead said he too would not support the amendment. Last year the Exchange Club offered to pay for 50% of the Showmobile and he suggested that this would send out the wrong message. He also disagreed with the amendment because zoning is not within their purview noting that over the last twenty years the city was able to maintain the level of affordable housing.

Mr. Hilliard indicated that he would be supporting Mr. Miklave's amendment and applauded him for addressing the issue. This is the right thing to do and is necessary for the future of the city. He did not agree with comments made over the last twenty years adding that this is something that was neglected in the past.

Mr. Bondi said under the economic times they are facing regarding the budget and keeping everything down to \$10 million it is well done. All departments have tightened their belts and are trying to fund necessary items within this budget. Regarding the Showmobile, Mr. Bondi said it has been used by numerous organizations to bring enjoyment to the community. The present one is tired and once again the Exchange Club came forward and pledged \$40,000 also the St. Anne's club have pledged some money for the cost of a new Showmobile. If they don't replace it this year they are at risk of losing the money.

Mr. Wien said he would not be supporting the amendment. Affordable housing is a bigger issue with needs to be looked at seriously to see how it can grow.

Ms. Bain stated that she would not be supporting the amendment, as she did not agree with the removal of money from the Board of Education.

Mr. McQuaid asked the status of the 80 Fair Street project.

Mr. Sheehan (Redevelopment) replied that the design work is complete and the financing is secured they are now in the process of hiring a construction firm.

Mr. McQuaid asked when the mediation process would take place.

Mr. Sheehan said they have already have their second mediation meeting and it took place about four weeks ago.

Mr. Kimmel commented that they are not taking money away from the schools they are taking the opportunity to use funds in the technology fund for another item. He referred to Mr. Bondi's comments noting that some of the money has been raised and felt positive that they could find the money from somewhere.

Mr. Bondi said as a point of order that Mr. Kimmel's comments are wrong and for the last three years they have been searching all avenues to fund the Showmobile and they are not there. He said he would hate to see them lose the money that has been raised.

Mr. Coffey said the \$100,000 could be put towards the roads or senior citizen tax relief; he said there are other many important issues.

Mayor Knopp stated that the difficulty with this amendment is that it sends out the wrong message. There is a tremendous amount of city funds that have been allocated to affordable housing; he listed all of the funding totaling \$2.3 million of city funds in the coming fiscal year. The Mayor said he was disappointed that the message being sent tonight is that the \$200,000 in the capital budget is that the Council is not interested in affordable housing. The amount of funding for affordable housing is extraordinary and should not be belittled. Regarding the school technology fund the city made a commitment to the Board of Education and the city needs to keep its agreement. He suggested that the capital budget put forth be supported.

Mr. Miklave appreciated the spirit of debate and some may say that this is just a symbolic gesture but it only moments earlier the Council took great pride in accepting \$10,000 for open space as a symbolic gesture. He stated that he believed the \$300,000 to be real money. It is also a mistake to say that they are raising taxes, they are not raising the capital budget by this vote; they have identified saving and they are being re-allocated.

** THE AMENDMENT FAILED, THREE VOTES IN FAVOR (MR. MIKLAVE, MR. HILLIARD, MR. KIMMEL) TEN VOTES OPPOSED (MR. BAKER, MR. COFFEY, MR. SUTTON, MR. MCQUAID, MR. WIEN, MS. WILLIAMS, MR. BONDI, MR. PORUBAN, MR. HILLIARD, MS. BAIN) BY A SHOW OF HANDS.

** MAIN MOTION AS AMENDED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY BY VOICE VOTE.

VIII. RESOLUTIONS FROM COMMON COUNCIL

There were none this evening.

IX. MOTIONS POSTPONED TO A SPECIFIC DATE

There were none this evening.

X. SUSPENSION OF THE RULES

There were none this evening.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

** MR. BONDI MOVED TO ADJOURN.

** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY BY VOICE VOTE.

The meeting was adjourned at 11.25 pm.

ATTEST: _____

Mary Roman, Assistant City Clerk

