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**BOARD OF ESTIMATE AND TAXATION
REGULAR MEETING
MARCH 1, 2021
VIA TELECONFERENCE**

ATTENDANCE: Mayor Harry Rilling, Acting Chair; Ed Abrams; Sheri Brown; James Frayer; Troy Jellerette; Artie Kassimis

STAFF: Henry Dachowitz, Chief Financial Officer; Angela Fogel, Director of Management and Budgets; Donna King, City Clerk

OTHERS: Gino Gatto, Norwalk Fire Chief; Al Bassett, Assistant Fire Chief

Mayor Rilling called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m. Ms. King called the Roll as indicated above. A Quorum was present.

Mayor Rilling asked for a Moment of Silence in memory of those who passed as a result of Covid 19. From this day forward, March 1st will be a day of memory for those who lost their lives as a result of this virus.

Mayor Rilling said that a lot of hard work has gone into putting together a fair and equitable budget. He said he is aware that residents are struggling to put food on their table and over 60,000 pounds of food was distributed last week at Calf Pasture Beach. He said that Mr. Dachowitz put together a pro forma budget and he instructed him to reach out to each department and ask them to come back with a Plan B.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

February 8, 2021 - Regular Meeting

The following corrections were made to the January meeting minutes:

Add Ms. Brown to the attendance for the January meeting.

The following corrections were made the February meeting minutes:

Page 2: He explained that SNEW increased the fee to match the First District rates

Page 6: He said that theoretically, it

Page 7: balanced and fair and shows fiscal restraint

- ** **MR. JELLERETTE MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES AS CORRECTED**
- ** **MOTION PASSED BY ROLL CALL VOTE WITH FIVE (5) IN FAVOR (MAYOR RILLING; MR. ABRAMS; MS. BROWN; MR. FRAYER; MR. JELLERETTE) AND ONE (1) ABSTENTION (MR. KASSIMIS)**

2. Special Appropriations Agenda (Section A) None

3. Transfer Agenda (Section B)

Fire Department

Water \$71,278

- ** **MR. KASSIMIS MOVED TO APPROVE THE FIRE DEPARTMENT TRANSFER REQUEST FOR \$71,278.00**

Mr. Frayer asked what they were paying for. Assistant Chief Basset said he reached out to both water companies. The fees include water use, replacement of any hydrants, emergency replacement repairs, water main breaks, fire flow tests, maintenance of the infrastructure and any additional requested repairs. Chief Gatto said that the Fire Department was notified last year that the fees per hydrant were going up, but they were notified after the budget was accepted.

Assistant Chief Basset explained that the First District Water Company has an annual increase that averages about \$20.00 per hydrant. SNEW has not increased their fees since the 1980s. He said they were told that SNEW does not anticipate a fee increase for a number of years.

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Via Teleconference

Mayor Rilling said the City needs a level of confidents of what the increases will be from time to time. He encouraged Chief Gatto to reach out to the Law Department to instruct them to come up with a written agreement.

Mr. Frayer said this did not make a lot of sense. He said he wants a detailed analysis of how they came up with the numbers. He noted that \$71,000 is a lot of money. Chief Gatto said the increase matches what the First District has been charging.

Assistant Chief Basset said SNEW does not want to go into a contract because they feel they are not going to raise the cost for a number of years. Mayor Rilling said he knows they maintain and control the hydrants, but the City uses the hydrants. He said there needs to be an agreement relative to the fees and the Law Department needs to reach out to the Districts relative to an agreement. Mayor Rilling said there needs to be an understanding about the fees and what the increase will be.

Ms. Brown asked when this rate increase is going into effect. Chief Gatto explained that he got a bill that the rates will be in effect in June. Chief Gatto will reach out to the Law Department.

Mr. Frayer suggested getting an agreement through the Law Department and if everyone is in agreement pay the bill. Chief Gatto said the bill is past due. He said when he was notified of the price increase, he sent an e-mail to the Fire Commission. Assistant Chief Basset said the bill is due on June for the previous year.

Mr. Jellerette said they need to hold off on paying the bill until they get something from the Legal Department.

**** MR. FRAYER MOVED TO NOT PAY THE BILL AT THIS TIME AND TO DIRECT THE FIRE DEPARTMENT TO REACH OUT TO THE LAW DEPARTMENT TO NEGOTIATE A FORMAL AGREEMENT WITH EACH DISTRICT**

Ms. Brown said that since this has not been their practice, it makes sense to pay the bill, but put the district on notice that a contract will be drawn up.

Mr. Frayer said he feels they should not pay the district until an agreement is created. The bill is not due until June.

**** MS. BROWN MOVED TO AMEND THE MOTION THAT THE BILL WILL BE PAID, BUT A FORMAL AGREEMENT WITH THE FIRST AND SECOND DISTRICTS WILL BE NEGOTIATED AFTER THE FIRE CHIEF CONTACTS THE LEGAL DEPARTMENT**

**** THE AMENDMENT FAILED WITH ONE (1) VOTE IN FAVOR (MS. BROWN) AND FIVE (5) VOTES IN OPPOSITION (MAYOR RILLING; MR. ABRAMS; MR. FRAYER; MR. JELLERETTE; MR. KASSIMIS)**

**** MOTON PASSED WITH FIVE (5) VOTES IN FAVOR (MAYOR RILLING; MR. ABRAMS; MR. FRAYER; MR. JELLERETTE; MR. KASSIMIS) AND ONE (1) VOTE IN OPPOSITION (MS. BROWN)**

Mayor Rilling said it is not their intent to not pay the bill. It is due in June 2021. He said he is optimistic that the Law Department will work with the First and Second Districts to come to a suitable agreement.

Fire Department

Other Contractual Services

\$75,000

**** MR. FRAYER MOVED TO APPROVE THE ITEM AS INDICATED BELOW**

Mayor Rilling explained the item and said the City joined a consortium to administer entry level tests. There was no cost, but there were question about the credibility. As a result, the Fire Chief put out an RFP and the Fire Commission voted to hire Morris and McDaniel to administer the entry level tests. Funds were not budgeted for this.

Chief Gatto explained that this is a one time fee that helps with recruitment. He described the recruitment process. He noted that the Fire Department has no input into the questions in the test.

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY BY ROLL CALL VOTE (MAYOR RILLING; MR. ABRAMS; MS. BROWN; MR. FRAYER; MR. JELLERETTE; MR. KASSIMIS)**

Mayor's Office

Business Expense

\$5,000

**** MR. KASSIMIS MOVED TO APPROVE THE ITEM AS INDICATED BELOW**

Mayor Rilling explained they are starting to have available translation services for various community meetings. English to Spanish and English to Haitian Creole. Prior to this, they did not have translation services, which prevented members of the community from participating in community meetings. He described how the service works.

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Via Teleconference

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY BY ROLL CALL VOTE (MAYOR RILLING; MR. ABRAMS; MS. BROWN; MR. FRAYER; MR.**

ELLERETTE; MR. KASSIMIS)

SECTION B
CITY OF NORWALK TRANSFERS 2020-21
BOARD OF ESTIMATE AND TAXATION

FISCAL YEAR 2020-21

Fire Department

"FROM" ACCOUNT	"FROM" ACCOUNT NAME	"From" Account AVAILABLE Budget	"TO" ACCOUNT	"TO" ACCOUNT NAME	TRANSFER AMOUNT
01-9600-5900	Contingency	\$ 771,501	01-3120-5242	Water	\$ 71,278
01-9600-5900	Contingency	\$ 771,501	01-3110-5298	Other Contractual Services	\$ 75,000
TOTAL		\$ 771,501			\$ 146,278

Transfer 1: to cover an increase in hydrant rentals of \$31.80 per hydrant for 886 hydrants.

Transfer 2: Fire Commission voted to hire Morris and McDaniel to administer entry level test. Funds not budgeted.

Mayor's Office

"FROM" ACCOUNT	"FROM" ACCOUNT NAME	"From" Account AVAILABLE Budget	"TO" ACCOUNT	"TO" ACCOUNT NAME	TRANSFER AMOUNT
01-9600-5900	Contingency	\$ 771,501	01-010100-5286	Business Expense	\$ 5,000
TOTAL		\$ 771,501			\$ 5,000

This transfer will fund unbudgeted translation services from January 2021 to June 30, 2021.

Contingency Account Balance After the Above Approved Transfers	\$ 620,223
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CONTINGENCY PRIOR APPROVALS		
Department	Explanation	TRANSFER
Health Department	Fund PT Epidemiologist	\$ 44,000
Building Department	Maintenance of 98 S. Main Bldg	\$ 40,000
IT Department	25% Match Harbor FEMA grant	\$ 71,509
Recreation & Parks	Increase exp LAZ Parking	\$ 31,509
Economic & Community Development - Code Enforcement	Fund neighborhood cleanup - Blight	\$ 23,000
Registrar	Laptop purchases for election day	\$ 7,800
Health Department	Food bank event expenditures	\$ 700
Town Clerk	Laptop purchases for election day	\$ 5,200
Library	Security Contract shortfall	\$ 38,044
Operations & Public Works	Recycling account shortfall	\$ 48,859
Economic & Community Development - Business Development	Small business program matching grants	\$ 75,000
Registrar	Building & Office Rental - election	\$ 600
Registrar	Equipment moving exp related to election	\$ 4,590
Registrar	Ballots, memory card programming & shipping for election	\$ 15,809
Library	New security guard	\$ 38,440
TOTAL		\$ 445,060

4. Special Capital Appropriations Agenda (Section C) None

5. Additional Information (Section D)

The remainder of the agenda is for informational purposes.

Financial reports

- Oak Hills Financial Status – January 2021
- Year-to-date Capital Budget Report – FY 2020-21
- Year-to-date Operating Expenditure Report – FY 2020-21
- Year-to-date Operating Revenue Report – FY 2020-21
- Police Wages
- Fire Wages
- Public Works Wages
- Year-to-date BOE Operating Expenditure Report – FY 2020-21
- Tax Collector’s Narrative – January 2021
- Tax Collector’s Report – January 2021

**** MR. FRAYER MOVED TO ADJOURN**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

There was no further business and the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 7:19 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemarie Lombardi
Telesco Secretarial Services