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**CITY OF NORWALK
SPECIAL MEETING
BOARD OF ESTIMATE & TAXATION
MARCH 22, 2021
VIA TELECONFERENCE**

ATTENDANCE: Edwin Camacho, Chair; Mayor Harry Rilling; Ed Abrams; James Frayer; Troy Jellerette; Artie Kassimis; Sheri Brown (6:15 p.m.)

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

Mr. Camacho called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. He announced that the public hearing will take place on March 24th at 6:30 p.m.

1. TRANSFER AGENDA

Mr. Camacho explained that the one transfer agenda item was to cover the consulting fee for Led By Us to launch the City's new Equity and Justice for All Commission.

**** MR. JELLERETTE MOVED TO APPROVE THE TRANSFER REQUEST OF \$150,000 FROM CONTINGENCY TO OTHER CONTRACTUAL SERVICES**

Mr. Daniels reviewed the request. He explained that about a year ago many rallied together to address issues brought forward by residents. The \$150,000 will be used to hire Led By Us. He reviewed the hiring process. Mr. Daniels said that overall this commitment affirms the City's commitment to the respect of all people. The goal is for Led By Us to help the City develop a commission and develop a list of appropriate people to serve on the Commission.

Mr. Daniels said that in 1993, the City created a Blue Ribbon Panel. Led By Us will review that document and identify where the City is doing well and where improvement is needed. Mr. Daniels encourages the Board members to listen to the Personnel and Community Services meeting where they met with the Led By Us team. They want to ensure that all residents are a part of the process.

Mr. Daniels said that under Ms. James of the Fairfield County Community Foundation, they are investing \$50,000 in this initiative. He said that he is asking for \$150,000 and once they receive the \$50,000 that money will be returned to the Contingency. He added that Led By Us will be working with the Norwalk Public Schools as well as Norwalk Acts.

Mr. Camacho asked what the \$150,000 covers and about the mission of the organization. Mr. Daniels said the RFP proposes that they design the Commission and conduct focus groups. They will also help the City through community relations with the Police Department. The consultant fee is for one year. Mr. Camacho asked Mr. Daniels if he thought they would need more than one year. Mr. Daniels said they will have to revisit that in the third quarter.

Mr. Frayer asked Mr. Daniels what is going to be the measure of success. He also asked him for background on the consultant and what they have done in other cities. Mr. Daniels explained that they will develop the Commission, including developing community engagement. They will be asked to review the Blue Ribbon document and refresh it. They will also look at practices and policies.

Mr. Daniels said that Led By Us gave a compelling presentation and the Search Committee felt they were a good fit for Norwalk. Currently they are working in Waterbury and they also have a strong presence in Bridgeport. In addition, one of their top Strategists was from Norwalk and her parents still live in Norwalk.

Mr. Jellerette asked if Led By Us is Connecticut based. Mr. Daniels said they are Connecticut based and the group has over 30 years of experience. Mr. Daniels said there were nine responses to the RFP.

Ms. Brown joined the meeting at 6:15 p.m.

Mr. Kassimis asked if the consultants will be Ombudsman or a complaint department. Mr. Daniels said they are going to conduct surveys and make recommendations.

Ms. Brown said that assuming the Commission identifies three to five items, who will determine what will happen. Mr. Daniels said those decisions will be made collaboratively.

Mayor Rilling said he read the 1993 document created by the Blue Ribbon Panel. He said it was good, but not many items were implemented. He noted that he is not interested in a report that will sit on a shelf. He said he was interested in hearing where the City can do better. There are serious problems with race relations, hate and bigotry. Mayor Rilling said the City can't make things better if no one is willing to talk about it. Led By Us has a very experienced staff.

Mayor Rilling said he would like to see the Equity and Justice for All Commission become a permanent commission. He said he is excited about this and feels it is going to be a good thing for the City.

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

There was no further business, and the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 6:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemarie Lombardi
Telesco Secretarial Services

**CITY OF NORWALK TRANSFERS 2020-21
BOARD OF ESTIMATE AND TAXATION**

FISCAL YEAR 2020-21

Community Services Department

"FROM" ACCOUNT	"FROM" ACCOUNT NAME	"From" Account AVAILABLE Budget	"TO" ACCOUNT	"TO" ACCOUNT NAME	TRANSFER AMOUNT
01-9600-5900	Contingency	\$ 690,085	01-2010-5298	Other Contractual Services	\$ 150,000
TOTAL		\$ 690,085			\$ 150,000

Transfer 1: to cover consulting fees for "Led by Us & Associates" to launch the City's new Equity and Justice for All Commission

Contingency Account Balance After the Above Approved Transfers **\$ 540,085**

CONTINGENCY PRIOR APPROVALS		
Department	Explanaiion	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 cleaup - 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
Mayor's Office	Translation services	\$ 5,000
Fire Department	Entrance Exam Consulting	\$ 75,000
TOTAL		\$ 525,060