

**CITY OF NORWALK
FINANCE/CLAIMS COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
JULY 8, 2021**

ATTENDANCE: Greg Burnett, Chair; David Heuvelman, Tom Keegan, John Kydes
Diana Revolus, Nick Sacchinelli

OTHERS: Chitsamay Lam, Comptroller; Lisa Biagiarelli, Tax Collector;
Henry Dachowitz, Finance Director; Joyce Liu, IT Director

This meeting was conducted by Zoom/Teleconference.
The public was able to listen to this meeting by calling a conference line.

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Burnett called the meeting at 7:02 p.m.

ROLL CALL

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

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mr. Burnett said that there were no written emails received. There was no one indicating their wish to address the Committee at this time.

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

• June 10, 2021 – Regular Meeting

**** MS. REVOLUS MOVED THE MINUTES OF JUNE 10, 2021.**

The following correction was noted:

Page 1, under **ATTENDANCE**: Betsy Bain’s name was listed twice. Please remove
“Betsy Bain, Rowayton Hilltop Houses;”

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JUNE 10, 2021 MEETING
AS CORRECTED PASSED WITH FOUR (4) IN FAVOR (HEUVELMAN, KEEGAN,
SANCHENELLI AND REVOLUS) AND ONE (1) ABSTENTION (KYDES).**

• **June 10, 2021- Special Joint Committee Meeting of the City of Norwalk and BOE.**

**** MR. HEUVELMAN MOVED THE MINUTES OF THE JUNE 10, 2021- SPECIAL JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE CITY OF NORWALK AND BOE.**

The following changes and corrections were noted:

Mr. Kydes noted that he arrived late to the meeting.

BOE Committee was not the Facilities, it was Finance Committee.

Page 1, under **ATTENDANCE**: Please change the following from:

ATTENDANCE: City Finance/Claims Committee:
Greg Burnett, Chair; David Heuvelman, Tom Keegan,
Diana Revolus, Nick Sacchinelli.

Board of Education School Facilities/Planning:
Diana Caprio, Chair; Suzanne Brown Koroshetz, Colin Hosten

OTHERS: Dr. Alexandra Estrella, Norwalk Public Schools Superintendent;
Chitsamay Lam, Comptroller; Thomas Hamilton, BOE
Comptroller; Dr. Richard Lemons, Connecticut Center for School
Change.

To:

ATTENDANCE: City Finance/Claims Committee:
Greg Burnett, Chair; David Heuvelman, Tom Keegan,
Diana Revolus, Nick Sacchinelli, John Kydes

Board of Education School Finance:
Colin Hosten, Chair; Suzanne Brown Koroshetz, Diana Caprio

OTHERS: Dr. Alexandra Estrella, Norwalk Public Schools Superintendent;
Chitsamay Lam, Comptroller; Thomas Hamilton, BOE
Comptroller; Dr. Richard Lemons, Connecticut Center for School
Change, Pamela Loeffelman, Silver Petricelli

Please change all references to “Ms. Pam” to “Ms. Loeffelman”.

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JUNE 10, 2021 - SPECIAL JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE CITY OF NORWALK AND BOE AS CORRECTED PASSED WITH FOUR (4) IN FAVOR (HEUVELMAN, KEEGAN, SANCHENELLI AND KYDES) AND ONE (1) ABSTENTION (REVOLUS).**

Finance/Claims Committee and Board of Education Finance Committee

Claims Committee: receive the monthly Claims Report; review and approve claims as required for Claims Report dated: July 8, 2021

Narrative on Tax Collections dated July 8, 2021 – Receive Report and discuss.

Monthly Tax Collector’s Reports dated June 2021 – Receive Report and discuss.

Ms. Biagiarelli said that the previous fiscal year had closed and the new one started. There are two spreadsheets this month, the 2019 Grand List and the new Grand List. Ms. Biagiarelli then reviewed the details with the Committee members.

The bills were mailed out on June 21st. There were no issues with the new billing. They are due on August 2nd, because August 1st is a Sunday. Any payments made after August 2nd will have 3% interest included for the entire month of August.

The Tax Sale property notices have not yet been filed. They will most likely be filed during the third week of July. The day that the notices are filed, the website will go live and the boards will be put in the atrium of City Hall. There are now less than 100 properties that are delinquent. Ms. Biagiarelli said that this was their eighth or ninth Tax Sale and she was looking for support from the Council Members once the notices were filed.

Mr. Heuvelman asked where the money that was used for a refund came from. Ms. Biagiarelli said that they were obligated by statute to pay a portion of their taxes and the City is precluded from taking action against them. Once the court makes a judgement in a case, the City works with the taxpayer to make the appropriate adjustments. In the case of refunds from previous years, the taxpayer’s surplus can be applied to subsequent years.

Mr. Dachowitz, Finance Director, gave a details explanation of how the reserve funds were handled.

Mr. Burnett said that the Tax Collector’s Report indicates there might be a \$4 million dollar levy against the reserve. Mr. Dachowitz said the City has an exceptional high collection rate. He was pleased to note that they were already at the 98% collection rate this year. Ms. Biagiarelli has been sending Mr. Dachowitz weekly comparisons of the tax payments compared to the previous year.

Receive Oak Hills Authority monthly Financial Statements for May 2021.

Mr. Andrasko presented the May 2021 report. He reminded everyone that the course was closed for the first part of May 2020. The June 2021 indicate that the revenue is 4% over last June when the course was open for the full month.

Mr. Andrasko then reviewed the figures with the Committee. He cautioned everyone that they do not expect the demand to remain as strong for the coming year. Rounds drives the revenue. An 11% rounds decrease has been included in the budget projections. There have been a number of projects that require attention. The projects that will be focused on are capital improvements or revenue generating improvements.

Mr. Andrasko said that they had hoped to open the restaurant in early July, but there has been some additional issues identified in the refrigeration system, along with on-going construction delays. At this point in time, they are looking for an end of July opening.

Mr. Burnett asked Dachowitz if he had received the 2021 Oak Hills Budget. Mr. Dachowitz said that he was not sure. Mr. Burnett asked Mr. Andrasko to send a copy to Ms. Lam.

Mr. Heuvelman asked about the expenses for the park portion of the area. Mr. Andrasko said that it would be difficult to parse it out because most of the maintenance of the park area was more clearing out brush rather than equipment

Mr. Heuvelman asked if Oak Hills was part of the City Parks Plan. Mr. Andrasko said that the Oak Hills staff handles most of the maintenance, so he did not know.

Authorize the Purchasing Agent to issue purchase orders to SHI (State of CT contract 2018011-02-CREC) for the procurement of Druva, Inc Software for cloud backup solution for an amount not to exceed \$62,452.00, account 09221370-5777-C0375 (budgeted IT capital item; no special appropriation required) and forward onto the Common Council for further action.

**** MR. KEEGAN MOVED THE ITEM.**

Ms. Joyce Liu said that this was for the replacement of the old backup system. The current archiving method is outdated. This program will allow them to have a faster restoration time. Having a good back up system is critical.

Ms. Liu then gave an overview of the program which includes multiple copy storage.

Mr. Sacchinelli has several technical questions including information about hardware, retention and archival cold storage.

Mr. Sacchinelli asked if it would be worthwhile to wait for the BOE to decide on their back up. Ms. Liu said that the City information is kept separate from the BOE and they realized that they need back up. The current back ups are physical. The appliances are working, but the manufacturers no longer support them.

A discussion followed about the details of the data migration, IT staffing and the cost.

Mr. Burnett noted that if the department stays with this company, they will see this request again next year. Ms. Liu said that this was so.

Mr. Burnett asked why this mitigation needed to be done now. Jeff said that if the hardware failed, they would not have the manufacturer's support.

Mr. Sacchinelli had a number of questions about the platforms and other potential vendors and programs.

Mr. Burnett said that in the current climate of randomware attacks, this was a high priority.

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE AUTHORIZING THE PURCHASING AGENT TO ISSUE PURCHASE ORDERS TO SHI (STATE OF CT CONTRACT 2018011-02-CREC) FOR THE PROCUREMENT OF DRUVA, INC SOFTWARE FOR CLOUD BACKUP SOLUTION FOR AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$62,452.00, ACCOUNT 09221370-5777-C0375 (BUDGETED IT CAPITAL ITEM; NO SPECIAL APPROPRIATION REQUIRED) AND FORWARD ONTO THE COMMON COUNCIL FOR FURTHER ACTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mr. Burnett asked if this item would be on the Common Council Agenda next Wednesday. He was told it should be.

Authorize the Mayor, Harry W. Rilling, to execute a joint City/NPS agreement with Evergreen Solutions, LLC for project 4040-City and BOE Operations Review-Efficiency Study for a total not to exceed \$275,500.00 Account # 011310-5286 Business Expense.

Authorize the Chief Finance Officer to issue change orders on the contract for a total not to exceed \$15,750.

**** MR. KEEGAN MOVED THE ITEMS.**

Mr. Dachowitz said that this process has taken almost 12 months to complete. He gave a brief overview of the process and how the members of the selection committee selected the company.

This proposal has already been approved by the BOE.

Mr. Kydes asked if the BOE had taken a formal vote on this particular company. Mr. Dachowitz said that when an RFP is done, the members of the selection committee were the ones that ratified the selection. Both Mayor Rilling and Dr. Estrella will be signing the contract.

Mr. Kydes asked if it would be on the upcoming Common Council agenda.

Mr. Burnett said that it would be on the next Council agenda. He also noted that the BOE had taken a formal vote and this was noted in the information packet. Both the BOE and the City would be covering the cost of the study. A discussion followed about the wording of the contract.

Mr. Kydes asked if this RFP was the original one that was released many months ago. Mr. Dachowitz confirmed that it was the original issuance.

Mr. Burnett asked Mr. Dachowitz to share the timeline and when they might have the first results. Mr. Dachowitz said that the consultants had indicated it would take about 6 months, but the clock would not start until the contract was signed.

Mr. Heuvelman thanked Mr. Burnett and Mr. Dachowitz for their work on this issue. They have been talking about working together with the BOE for a long time, but now it is happening. He said that he was very hopeful.

Mr. Dachowitz said that he had done some of these consultation in the past. The first key issue is the firm, the second was the scope of the work. The third hurdle will be once the recommendations are submitted the implementation is critical. He said that several people had noted that this was the first time that they had seen such cooperation between the City and the BOE, which was a major indicator of efficiency. The key is getting experienced people who know how to understand the information. Many industries have nuances and those who have not working in the industry don't address those fine points. Discussion followed.

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:**

AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR, HARRY W. RILLING, TO EXECUTE A JOINT CITY/NPS AGREEMENT WITH EVERGREEN SOLUTIONS, LLC FOR PROJECT 4040-CITY AND BOE OPERATIONS REVIEW-EFFICIENCY STUDY FOR A TOTAL NOT TO EXCEED \$275,500.00. ACCOUNT # 011310-5286 BUSINESS EXPENSE.

AUTHORIZE THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER TO ISSUE CHANGE ORDERS ON THE CONTRACT FOR A TOTAL NOT TO EXCEED \$15,750.

PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

ADJOURNMENT.

**** MR. KEEGAN MOVED TO ADJOURN.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

S. L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services