

**CITY OF NORWALK  
FINANCE/CLAIMS COMMITTEE  
SPECIAL MEETING  
NOVEMBER 18, 2010**

**ATTENDANCE:** Nicholas Kydes, Chair; Douglas Hempstead,  
Andrew Conroy (7:20 pm); Nora King.

**STAFF:** Thomas Hamilton, Finance Director; Fred Gilden, Comptroller;  
Lisa Biagiarelli, Tax Collector.

**OTHERS:** Karen Del Vecchio, City of Norwalk Information/Technology  
Tom Schadlich, Library Information/Technology

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Kydes called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m. He stated that in view of the lack of a quorum, the order of the agenda would be changed to have discussion items first, then action items once other members arrived.

Monthly Tax Collector's Report Dated October 30, 2010 - Receive Report and discuss.

Ms. Biagiarelli submitted the Tax Collector's Report Dated October 30, 2010 which tracks current fiscal year grant list collections, versus the original and corrected levy, with comparisons versus last fiscal year to date. There were no questions or comments by the committee members.

Narrative on Tax Collections dated November 18, 2010- Receive Report and discuss.

Ms. Biagiarelli submitted her written report and highlighted the following points:

- Collections remain slightly behind last year (.38%) and slightly ahead in current sewer use collections.
- An additional \$2 million in back taxes, interest and lien fees was collected, which was over versus prior year by \$383,457.
- Over \$1 million in past due business persona property taxes has been collected in concert with state marshal and delinquent tax collector's personal efforts.
- Currently 43 Alias Tax Warrants have been served since the last report.
- With 2011 being a non-tax sale year, the primary focus is on business personal property delinquencies.

Ms. King asked if the flyer will be included in the seniors' tax bills, and Ms. Biagiarelli responded that an informational flyer will accompany the December 2010 tax billing to include basic information on state and local property tax relief programs, Ms. Del Vecchio added that it also will be included on the City's website

Mr. Conroy entered the meeting at 7:20 p.m.

**\*\* MR. HEMPSTEAD MOVED TO RECEIVE THE NARRATIVE ON TAX COLLECTIONS DATED NOVEMBER 18, 2010 AND THE MONTHLY TAX COLLECTOR'S REPORT DATED OCTOBER 30, 2010 AS SUBMITTED. \*\***  
**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mr. Kydes requested to address the original order of the agenda, as follows:

Approve the Minutes of the following Finance Committee Meeting: October 14, 2010.

**\*\* MR. CONROY MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 14, 2010 MEETING AS SUBMITTED. \*\***  
**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

Claims Committee: Receive the Monthly Claims Report;  
Review and approve claims as required for Claims Report dated: November 11, 2010

Ms. Biagiarelli said that there was only one special claim request, as follows:  
Laidlaw Transit Inc. (\$41,889.31) filed this month - BAAD/Adjustments.

Mr. Kydes stated that this seems to be an unusually high amount and asked for further information, and a discussion ensued. Mr. Hamilton gave an overview that Laidlaw Transit is now First Student, which is the contracted school bus transportation vendor for Norwalk Public Schools. Ms. Biagiarelli responded that this is most likely the result of multiple bills that had been paid prior to lowered vehicle assessments.

Mr. Conroy asked if there is a commonality with this error and if the assessment appeal process needs to be reviewed, and who is on the Appeal Board. Mr. Hamilton replied that the Board of Assessment Appeals is an independent review board, not associated with the Tax Assessor's office. Ms. Biagiarelli added that the Assessor's Office cannot do inspections and must rely on tables and assumptions, and most likely this amount is a proration credit caused by value adjustments on multiple vehicles.

**\*\* MR. HEMPSTEAD MOVED TO APPROVE THE SPECIAL CLAIM REQUEST FOR LAIDLAW TRANSIT, INC. IN THE AMOUNT OF (\$41,889.31) \*\***  
**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Ms. King asked about rescheduling the special meeting regarding The Elderly Tax Relief Proposal. Mr. Hamilton replied that a special meeting was not required, and explained that state law states that the legislative body may make adjustments based upon Board of Estimate and Taxation recommendation. He added that in this case the process started with the BET recommendation and was then brought to the Finance Committee for review.

Mr. Kydes added that he had spoken to Mr. Wilms, the Chairman of the Board of Estimate and Taxation regarding this and he was very open to the idea, and he will follow up with him at the next BET meeting. Mr. Hamilton added that the process for require moving the item forward to the Ordinance Committee for a modification to the ordinance, then on to the Common Council for approval.

#### Replacing the Norwalk Public Library's Phone and Voice Mail System

##### Specific Action Requested:

Authorize the Mayor, Richard Moccia, To Execute all amendment to the agreement between the City and Total Communications, Inc. for equipment, training, installation and engineering services for the telephone and voice mail system at the Norwalk Public Library for an amount not to exceed \$69,000, acct. 09110600-5777-c0375 and to forward such authorization on to the Common Council for further action.

Ms. Del Vecchio presented a memo outlining the background and gave an overview of recommendation of the following key points:

- Replacing the Library's antiquated phone system with a system that meets both staff and patron needs, including multi-language support.
- The City-wide telephone and voice mail system was identified as a capital initiative in 2008; however, as the economy began to decline, the decision was made to postpone this project until the following fiscal year.
- During the 2009/2010 IT Capital Budget Development, again recognizing the age and the limitations of the 20-year old phone system used by the Library, funding was approved for the replacement of the phone system with the City-wide standard as a critical need.
- The City has a contract in place with Total Communications, a Cisco Certified Partner, for the supply, installation, training and support for the City-wide Cisco phone and voice mail system and negotiated a 37.5% discount on the equipment portion of this project which is reflected in the final proposal from the vendor.

Mr. Kydes asked how many handsets are included, and Ms. Del Vecchio replied sixty and improved efficiency was the guideline used with the recommendation. Mr. Schladlich, Information and Technology Director for the Library added that they did reduce the number of phones at certain desks from four to two and looked to make the system more efficient. Ms. Del Vecchio added that installation of the City-wide telephone system at the Library will provide operating costs savings by consolidating equipment and systems such as the Library stand-alone telephone service with the City's, will provide 5-digit dialing between the Main and South Norwalk branch libraries, eliminating the need for 11 digit dialing.

Mr. Hamilton added that the high schools are also included in this voice-over internet system that has worked out very well for the city in cost saving measures.

Mr. Kydes asked if there was any residual value of the old phones, and Ms. Del Vecchio replied that there was actual little value in keeping the phones, but that some elementary schools may be able to use them in certain areas.

- \*\* MS. KING MOVED TO AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR, RICHARD MOCCIA, TO EXECUTE ALL AMENDMENT TO THE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY AND TOTAL COMMUNICATIONS, INC. FOR EQUIPMENT, TRAINING, INSTALLATION AND ENGINEERING SERVICES FOR THE TELEPHONE AND VOICE MAIL SYSTEM AT THE NORWALK PUBLIC LIBRARY FOR AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$69,000, ACCT. 09110600-5777-C0375 AND TO FORWARD SUCH AUTHORIZATION ON TO THE COMMON COUNCIL FOR FURTHER ACTION.**
- \*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Other Business

Mr. Hempstead asked Ms. Del Vecchio for an update on the progress with upgrading the City Hall meeting room technology systems and she stated that up until now her primary focus was the City's website, and now that it is up and running, she will devote time to working on this request. She added that they are about at 50% of an evaluation of the problems and developing a comprehensive recommendation of requirements and improvements to the systems. She gave a background overview for the members and stated that they have identified problems in Council Chambers, such as feedback from microphones due to the placement of speakers, the location of screens and placement of podiums limit the filming angles for the cameras, etc. She added that City Hall Room 231 has been upgraded with a different layout and she hopes to have other rooms modernized, including the Community Room to have filming access and presentation capabilities.

Mr. Hempstead asked for her projected timetable, and she responded that she is hoping to have the issuance of an RFP by the end of the year. Mr. Kydes suggested that a free design consultation could be negotiated with one of the City's many vendors. Ms. Del Vecchio replied that this was a good idea, and that her overall goal was to keep things simple so that presenters could operate any equipment without the need for a technician.

- \*\* MR. HEMPSTEAD MOTIONED TO ADJOURN.**
- \*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn Knox  
Telesco Services