

CITY OF NORWALK  
BOARD OF ESTIMATE & TAXATION  
MARCH 4, 2013

**ATTENDANCE:** Fred Wilms, Chairman; Mayor Richard Moccia, John Federici, James Fiegenbaum, Erik Anderson.

**STAFF:** Erin Halsey, City Clerk; Thomas Hamilton, Finance Director; Robert Barron, Director of Management & Budgets;

Call to Order

Chairman Wilms called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m., asked City Clerk Halsey to call the roll, stated the above members were in attendance, and there was a quorum present.

Approval of Minutes: February 11, 2013 Special Meeting

Mr. Federici noted on page 3, paragraph 4, the end of the last sentence “on” should be changed to “or.” Mr. Anderson noted that in paragraph 2, Golf should not be capitalized.

- \*\* **MAYOR MOCCIA MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES FROM FEBRUARY 11, 2013 SPECIAL MEETING AS AMENDED WITH CORRECTIONS NOTED.**
- \*\* **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**SPECIAL APROPRIATIONS AGENDA**

Advertised Items:

\$55,875 from Increased Revenues to Various Fire Department Accounts  
To cover the costs associated with the process of hiring new firefighters

Chief McCarthy provided an overview of the supporting documents and explained that this was needed to cover costs of running the exams.

- \*\* **MAYOR MOCCIA MOVED TO APPROVE \$55,875 FROM INCREASED REVENUES TO VARIOUS FIRE DEPARTMENT ACCOUNTS TO COVER THE COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROCESS OF HIRING NEW FIREFIGHTERS.**
- \*\* **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**Transfer Agenda:** Chairman Wilms noted that there were no transfers for approval.

Year-to-date BOE Operating Budget Report - FY2012-13

Mr. Hamilton explained that last year it as agreed to have a quarterly review of Board of Education financials and Mr. Longo was in attendance to provide an update.

Mr. Longo distributed the BOE Month and Year-to-Date Expenditure Summary Report for the Local Fund Budget for 2012-13 as of January 2013. He reviewed the % expended versus budget and highlighted the following areas where there are variances: Unemployment Compensation, Special Education/Out-of-District, and Classroom Supplies.

Mr. Hamilton noted that 200 category group reflects contributions of benefits from the General Fund into the Insurance Fund.

Mr. Longo explained trends and cyclical expenditures and fielded questions on potential favorable variances, projections and encumbrances.

Mr. Longo then provided an analysis of the self-insurance plan and reviewed the year-to-date monthly averages and favorable/unfavorable trends. He stated that there is a \$200,000 month trend over the past five months and there could be a positive variance of \$400-\$500,000 pending projections by Mr. Lindberg, the insurance consultant. Mr. Hamilton asked if this includes dental, administrative, and life insurance costs and Mr. Longo replied that it does cover those ancillary items.

Mr. Wilms asked about teacher retirements and if this was in a heavier year. Mr. Longo explained that there are 36 in the pipeline and they are looking at about \$350,000 of additional expenditures not included. He added that there is the unemployment compensation reserve that should cover this less the additional requirement of special education aides.

He added that while there is good news regarding a potential cushion with retirements, it is noted that in special disciplines such as foreign language and science there is a salary differential primarily with high school teaching qualifications.

Mayor Moccia asked about long term custodial vacancies that could be covered outside of the contractual obligations, and Mr. Longo replied that he is only aware of maintenance long term vacancies.

Mayor Moccia asked about costs for substitutes and suggested that this be monitored to track when time is taken before long weekends, to make sure management overview is being done. He added that increased use of subs has an impact in education along with financial impact when we are fighting for every dollar and every hour for education.

Mr. Anderson asked about the difference between certified and non certified substitutes, and Mr. Longo replied that the non-certified line item includes para-professionals and long-term secretarial temporary work. Mr. Anderson asked if there was a way to break

this down and Mr. Longo replied that he will get the detail on this for him.

Mr. Wilms asked about turnover projections and Mr. Longo replied that he is working on the calculation of the time banked that will not be used, and hopes to have this available to be addressed next Monday.

Mr. Hamilton asked about the sense of YTD encumbrances, and Mr. Longo replied that data is being entered into MUNIS on special education recommendation from Shapiro on Out of district bills. Mr. Long added that Richard Rudl, the new CFO is working hard to monitor the special education encumbrances. He explained that after discovering a surplus last year, they are doing a better job of monitoring these expenditures.

Mr. Hamilton noted that it looks like there is great improvement over other years regarding expenditure projections, and asked if there is confidence in being within the budget.

Mr. Longo replied yes, but the only concern is the Contra 564 account that has offsets that could have variances of approximately \$300,000, but that would be applied to the favorable variance in the unemployment side.

Mr. Wilms asked about the IT resignation and if there are plans to replace this position. Mr. Longo replied that there are discussions at the cabinet level regarding the certification requirements for this position and whether this may open it up to others. Mr. Wilms noted that oddly enough in the technology field these days there is a trend that some applicants are more knowledgeable and perhaps more affordable than those with high level education certifications.

Mr. Wilms noted that regarding the tracking report, things are in better shape and it looks like trends are being captured to have a good projection of potential variances and the unemployment reserve.

### Key Revenue Drivers

Mr. Baron reviewed the Key Revenue report and reviewed the significant surplus projection in areas of Real Estate Conveyance Tax and Building Permits. He added that after speaking to a long-term employee in this area, they have been extremely busy and that this amount is noted to be the highest in many years.

Mr. Hamilton noted that there could be offsets from additional expenses from hurricane damage repairs and tax appeal shrinkage. He added that overall this is the first evidence of a pick-up of a potential surplus.

### Other Business

Mr. Barron noted that the Oak Hills Authority has provided the financial reports that

document the request for the \$150,000 loan that was approved by the Common Council. He added that the authority has been thorough with being upfront with the financials and there is documentation in support of what they have been telling us regarding the need for the short-term loan.

**5. Additional Information (Section D)**

Additional Information –the following reports were submitted:

Report on Special Appropriations

Justification/Back-up material

Summary of Special Appropriation

Status of Contingency

Financial reports

- Tax Collector’s Narrative — January 2013

- Key Revenue Report YTD February 2013

Salary accounts

- Fire Overtime

- Dispatch Overtime

- Police Overtime

Adjournment

**\*\* MR. FEIGENBAUM MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn Knox

Telesco Secretarial Services