

**CITY OF NORWALK
HEALTH, WELFARE, AND PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
FEBRUARY 26, 2009**

- ATTENDANCE:** Michael Geake, Chairman; Laurel Lindstrom; Steven Serasis;
Nicholas Kydes,
- STAFF:** Tim Callahan, Director, Norwalk Health Department; Michele DeLuca,
Dept. EMD-Fire Department; Dennis McCarthy, Fire Chief, Norwalk
Fire Department; Lt. Paul Resnick, Norwalk Police Department (7:40 pm)
- OTHERS:** Mary Geake; Diane Lauriella, League of Women Voters;

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Geake called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Mr. Geake asked to suspend the rules of order to move up Public Comment from last to next on the meeting agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Diane Lauriella from the League of Women Voters, thanked Chairman Geake and the members of the committee for the opportunity to discuss a very important issue. She mentioned the fact that the Board of Directors of the League of Women Voters have voted to revisit their position on the reinstatement of the Environmental Position that is currently designated for elimination under the operating budget process. The reason she is bringing it to tonight's meeting is that there many areas that are directly and indirectly involved that affect the Department of Health, Welfare and Public Safety in connection to water quality of drinking water and environmental issues such as shell fish, preservation of the wetlands, rivers, etc. that this position has dominion over. She mentioned that they wanted to make this position more proactive and were hoping that the members of this committee could use their vast influence and friendly persuasion with the Common Council to help make a case for the position reinstatement. They were also planning to discuss this issue with members of the Conservation Commission to put forth a case on restoring this position and to do more outreach and public education to build awareness of the issues as they affect public health and safety. Mr. Geake said that she should be aware that part of this whole process was setting the CAP, and that at last week's meeting the Board of Estimation and Taxation had "upped" the budget cap by \$400,000 specifically to address this issue. She said that she was aware of that, and that was a good first step, but she wanted to ask the committee members for their support as the budget approval process continues.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

**** MS. LINDSTROM MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 23, 2008 MEETING WITH THE FOLLOWING CORRECTION:**

On page 4, paragraph 4, the first sentence “allowed to call” should be “allowed to listen in, usually speaking only when called upon.

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** MS. LINDSTROM MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 3, 2008 MEETING.**

**** MOTION PASSED WITH ONE (1) ABSTENTION (MR. KYDES).**

Lt. Paul Resnick of the Norwalk Police Department arrived at 7:40 p.m.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Child Immunization Grant

Mr. Callahan presented the Immunization Action Plan Program, which outlines that the Department of Health received a three-year grant from the CT Department of Public Health in the amount of \$279,819 that runs through 2011. This I.A.P. Program conducts activities aimed at increasing immunization levels among preschool children. He did note that proposed federal and state budget cutbacks may affect the amount ultimately provided to the City of Norwalk.

**** MR. KYDES MOVED TO APPROVE AND TO PASS ALONG FOR AUTHORIZATION TO THE COMMON COUNCIL FOR THE MAYOR TO EXECUTE ANY AND ALL DOCUMENTS NECESSARY TO APPLY FOR AND ACCEPT THE I.A.P. GRANT, AND TO IMPLEMENT THE PROGRAM FOR THE PERIOD OF JANUARY 1, 2009 TO DECEMBER 31, 2011.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mr. Callahan added another item for discussion, which was a proposal from Salamone & Associates, P.C. Consulting Engineers on professional services related to upgrading the roofing system at the Norwalk Health Department building. Ms. Lindstrom asked if the Land Use Committee had any objections, and that as long as Mr. Hempstead was informed of the agreement, the proposal should be presented for approval.

Mr. Kydes stated that the rates seemed on the high side and that the proposal should be amended to a fixed price contract statement, and suggested the section “in the event of additional services are required...” be eliminated.

**** MS. LINDSTROM MOTIONED TO ACCEPT THE ROOFING UPGRADE PROPOSAL AS LONG AS THE LAND USE COMMITTEE HAD NO OBJECTIONS.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Frequency Reconfiguration

Lt. Paul Resnick presented two (2) amendments to the Frequency Reconfiguration Agreement to the contract between the City or Norwalk and Nextel two amendments to the Frequency Reconfiguration Agreement to the contract between the City or Norwalk Communications relative to the re-banding transition plan. Lt. Resnick explained the process of reprogramming and replacing old radios, and installing new radios with old/new frequency to insure that there is no interruption in service. He added that there has to be a reassignment of channels with work done/tested, etc. before the transmitter change process is begun. This is a federally mandated program to switch frequency at no cost to the user, with the exception of associated legal fees.

Mr. Kydes clarified the issue of costs, that there is no cost to the City of Norwalk, as Sprint-Nextel has already agreed to cover the costs associated with equipment, transponders, mounting brackets, etc. Lt. Resnick stated that RCC Consultants are excellent and that Sprint-Nextel have been great, and predicts that all will go well with the transition.

**** MS. LINDSTROM MOTIONED TO ACCEPT THE TWO (2) AMENDMENTS TO THE FREQUENCY RECONFIGURATION AGREEMENT FOR THE CONTRACT BETWEEN THE CITY OF NORWALK AND SPRINT-NEXTEL COMMUNICATIONS, AND TO PASS ALONG TO THE COMMON COUNCIL FOR APPROVAL.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

MOU with CT Dept. of Mental Health and Addition Services

Lt. Resnick presented a memorandum of agreement between the CT Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services and the City of Norwalk outlining the Tobacco Prevention and Enforcement Program. This program is a partnership with the Police Department that will require an inspection of tobacco vendors primarily to insure that cigarettes are not sold to minors.

Ms. Lindstrom asked if there are additional costs associated with signing this relative to the cost of inspections, and are they defined as special services. Lt. Resnick answered that the inspections are to be done during normal work hours. Mr. Geake asked if they would be checking tobacco tax stamps. Lt. Resnick stated that this only a youth access prevention program.

Health, Welfare, and Public Safety Committee Minutes

February 26, 2009

Page 3 of 5

Ms. Lindstrom asked if additional costs could be specified in the memorandum agreement relative to the rules and responsibilities and referred to the liquor inspection experience. Mr. Geake suggested to prepare an estimate of the hours of personnel required for the full council presentation. Lt. Resnick stated that this was just a pre-set agreement that was a part of normal duty, but would have the personnel estimate ready if needed.

**** MR. SERASIS MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT ON THE TOBACCO PREVENTION AND ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM CONTINGENT UPON GETTING FURTHER INFORMATION RELATIVE TO HOURS OF PERSONNEL REQUIRED TO PRESENT TO THE COMMON COUNCIL FOR APPROVAL.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mr. Geake requested a suspension of the rules of order to move up Other Business to the next item on the agenda.

OTHER BUSINESS

Ms. Michele DeLuca, of the Emergency Response Unit presented a proposed resolution to request a transfer of the excess grant for technology to an upgrade of the response capability at the Emergency Operation Centers. This money would be used specifically to provide WIFI access for the Police Department Community Room for public use. She stated that this was a reimbursement program of \$4,410. There would be no incremental cost to the city; and all items purchased including installation and service expenses would be forwarded to the Regional DEMHS headquarters, which will reimburse the city in approximately 60 days.

**** MR. KYDES MOVED TO ACCEPT THE PROPOSED RESOLUTION FOR SUBMISSION TO THE COMMON COUNCIL FOR APPROVAL.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

FIRE DEPARTMENT

Fire Station Study

Chief McCarthy reported on the status of the consultant's assessment regarding the need for a new fire station. Highlights of the report are that the existing building is beyond its life expectancy, and except for essential repairs, is beyond rehabilitation. The current stations are in optimal locations, and even with minor modifications, would not improve the city's response

Health, Welfare, and Public Safety Committee Minutes

February 26, 2009

Page 4 of 5

capability. They could shift the Volk Station, but based upon the density population of the area, it is in the appropriate location where the station currently is. An additional station is needed in Cranbury, which is currently underserved, but the manpower cost is expensive. This element of the assessment should not be considered in view of the current economic condition. The consultants have looked at considering various properties, but it is premature to report the locations at this time.

Chief McCarthy stated that the issue is really defined as should the city buy or build, considering the cost escalation of construction of about 8-10% per year. The Fire Department is working towards applying for a federal Firefighter grant as part of the federal stimulus package that has allocated about \$210 million in available funds. Mr. Geake asked if they are torturing our congressmen arms to be ready to take advantage of this grant money. Ms. Lindstrom asked how the grant is appropriated. Fire Chief McCarthy said it is a peer reviewed program different than AFG with smaller projects funded in their entirety.

While awaiting guidance on the grant program, they should get appraisals of various properties and evaluate the potential exposure for the city. Mr. Kydes stated his 110% support of the Fire Department. If the city receives Stimulus Package Funds in capital funding, it will be highly beneficial to the Fire Department and the City of Norwalk. Ms. Lindstrom mentioned that she looks forward to pursuing the project and is very encouraged about the potential of the Fire Department applying for federal grants. Chief McCarthy will keep the commission posted on the outcome of the grant application requirements and further information at a later date.

**** MR. SERASIS MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** MOTION PASSED ANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn Knox
Telesco Secretarial Services