

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET & APPROPRIATIONS
BUDGET HEARINGS
APRIL 9, 2014**

ATTENDANCE: Susan T. Brannelly, Co-chair; Howard Austin, Denese Taylor-Moye, Patricia Swain, Council President Thomas McCarthy, Lydia Martinez (8:30 p.m.)

OTHERS: Council Member Jack Banta, Council Member Rick Torres, Jorge Garcia, Public Facilities Director; David Koresh, OPED Director; Thomas Sherwood, OPM Director; Robert Kennedy, DPW; Council Member Milta Felicano. Charles Carroll, Parks and Recreation Director; Council Member Martinez-Walker

CALL TO ORDER.

Council Member Brannelly called the meeting to order at 6:09 p.m. A quorum was present.

**CAPITAL PLAN OVERVIEW - PUBLIC FACILITIES, PARKS AND
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Council Member Brannelly said that this time, the larger departments were coming first and the focus was on the Capital Budget. She added that on Saturday, there would be a meeting with the Superintendent of Schools along with an overview of the budget. The smaller departments have been requested to submit their budgets in writing. Some departments will be coming in to discuss ongoing activities that may have an impact on the budget, such as Labor Relations and Health Benefits. There will also be a meeting scheduled for State Funding and Federal Funding representatives to discuss activities on the State or Federal funding.

Council Member Torres asked what the difference between the Capital Budget and the Operating Budget. Council Member Brannelly explained that Capital was used for major items that were planned in advance.

Mr. Sherwood pointed out that the reason that the Capital Plan is done for five years because there is a significant amount of planning that needs to be done before a project goes out to bid. In order to implement State funds, the Council must present a plan. He also reviewed the process of using LOCIP funds. Council Member Brannelly noted that the header for FY 2015 listed the Capital Plan as Adopted. Mr. Sherwood explained that he had used last years template and that he would correct this.

Mr. Sherwood gave a brief overview of the bonding process. He said that while the City might bond for 70 million dollars, the City might not actually use the full 70 million. The current plan is to only bond once every two years. Right now the rates are favorable.

Council Member Torres asked where the line items were for LOCIP funding projects. Mr. Sherwood said that the general budget would not have grant funding or reflect items where the City has shared costs such as school reimbursements from the State.

Council Member Brannelly requested a printout of some past five year capital plans and a listing of the projects that are almost completed. Council Member Swain asked for clarification on how the bonding authorization works. Mr. Sherwood explained how this is done. He pointed out that if the State was working on a streetscape, the City could go ahead and pave other roads while waiting for the State to start the Streetscape.

Mr. Koresh said that there were five key areas: Downtown, the two major corridors, eco-technology park; and waterfront recapture.

The Downtown area has mixed used with residences above retail or office. Private investment is occurring. Around McLevy Square, there are several private investments.

The East Bridgeport Development Corridor, which runs from Pleasure Beach to Lake Success. Focus is on a second train stations, pedestrian transportation and allowing the larger employers to grow. This also includes remediation.

Eco-technology Park runs from Cedar Street to Black Rock. It is similar to East Bridgeport and energy infrastructure in the focus. There are issues with flood mitigation.

The Waterfront Recapture is critical and the City is a series of peninsulas that have been cut off from the general public for many years. The City is working on near continuous access on the waterfront. This will add value to the properties nearby by removing a dilapidated building, and transforming areas into open space.

The major corridors run throughout the City and include traffic calming, streetscapes and remediating property. There is a legacy in the City where the parcels are very narrow and developments require multiple building parcels for any large development.

Mr. Koresh spoke about "place making", which encompasses public spaces. Land management includes things like blight removal, and demolition. He spoke about the new plan that the City has to recover funds for blight removal by adding the cost of that blight removal to the lien on the property.

Council Member Brannelly asked if 25% of the plans were actually ready. Mr. Koresh said that about 70% of the plans were shovel ready and a subset of that 70% would be able to be completed in the coming year. She also requested a list of items that would be going out for bonding. Mr. Sherwood said that the City's strategy was to borrow for a two year period. He said that the projects listed were things that should be able to be completed by the summer of 2016.

Council Member Torres said that said that there was no specificity attached to the Capital Plan descriptions. Mr. Sherwood said that the broader descriptions were used because if the

description was too specific, the project would come to a halt if there was a problem discovered such as asbestos. He gave an example of how the Board of Education is now leasing computers and the items were constantly changing.

Council Member Torres asked how a line item veto would be done. Mr. Sherwood explained that when the authorization list was presented, the amounts could be adjusted. The Capital Plan is required by Charter.

Council Member Brannelly reviewed the information requested. Council Member Swain said that she would like to have a list of the projects underway and those that have been recently completed so that she could go back to her constituents with the information.

Mr. Koresh said one of the amendments would be to add a project 2.6 million for Marina Village Placement and demolition site work. He said that the ultimate goal was to provide approximately 150 new units following flood damage. Mr. Koresh said that this would be for a demolition of the cluster of uninhabitable units by Park Avenue. The Housing Authority has selected two developers to work on this. The new buildings will have between 1,000 units of mixed income units at various sites in the City. HUD will not be funding this, but there will be significant funding from the State and Federal government. HUD will not pay for demolition. Mr. Koresh then reviewed the details of why the Housing Authority could not bond on this project. Mr. Sherwood then reviewed how the various Authorities in the City, such as the Housing Authority or the WPCA, cannot go out to bond.

Council Member Torres said that he had tried to get information about one of the developers for Main Street from the Housing Authority with no success. He pointed out that there are many low income units thorough the City and that the city was becoming a low income area.

The developers involved are the McClutchy and Richman Group, POKO Trust and the Housing Authority. The City's part is the demolition of the units. Council Member Torres said the fact that the City is demolishing the units should allow the City a seat at the table. Mr. Koresh said that the development of the site is a future phase, but the demolition is a public safety issue. Council Member Torres said that this was an establishment of a project and that he would need more information. Mr. Koresh said that this was a separate request because the Blight Removal pertained to the entire City, while the Marina Village project was location specific. Discussion followed.

Council Member Halstead asked if the funding could be used to repair some of the buildings that were not damaged as heavily. He said that he couldn't justify the amount of money for demolition. Mr. Koresh said that these buildings had been damaged by not only super storm Sandy, but also Irene and other weather events.

Council Member Torres asked if the Marina Village residents could own their units. Mr. Koresh said that he did not feel that unit ownership would be allowed in the complex.

Council Member Swain asked about mixed income neighborhoods would work. Mr. Koresh said that the previous model of clustering was found to be faulty. It is not wise to have a cluster of very high income units in one area with the low income units in another. Federal law requires that all the units must be identical to one another.

Council Member Halstead asked if there would be employment opportunities. Mr. Koresh said that there would be jobs for the residents. Council Member Halstead said that the cost per unit seemed high. Mr. Koresh said that it wasn't just demolishing but remediation.

Council Member Taylor-Moye said that she was happy to see the City working with the BHA for betterment of the City. She pointed out that there were people who were living in deplorable conditions and commended the City for stepping forward on this project. The residents would love to have new places. She repeated that she commended the City for helping out the residents in need.

Council Member Torres asked if the funding would be used to hire low income residents. Mr. Koresh said that there was discussion underway with the Housing Authority about this. Council Member Torres said that he would like to know that the residents would be employed. Mr. Nunn pointed out that there were City ordinances that would apply to this and put money back into the community. Council Member Torres said that minority contractors were not what he meant. Council Member Halstead said that it would be easy to add restrictions about that. He added that since the foundations were sound, it would be easier to repair the buildings while training the local residents. Mr. Koresh said that the amount of remediation required would trigger the flood plain requirements, which would mean the buildings would have to be elevated.

Council Member Swain said that she liked the positive idea of employing Bridgeport residents. She said that it would be important to check on this.

Public Facilities - Jorge Garcia, the Public Facilities Director came forward and introduced his department staff to the Committee.

Mr. Bobby Kennedy then addressed the Committee about roadway paving and street saving in the form of crack sealing. The past winter has been particularly difficult. He said that the department was investigating the Pothole Killer. In a way, it is not more expensive, because it comes with the machine, the operator and the materials. If the City does it, it pulls crew off other projects, plus the cost of the materials. Mr. Sherwood then explained how this would work with the plan. Mr. Kennedy said that it's just not paving, but includes milling, engineering, crosswalks and aprons.

Council President McCarthy said that he would be interested in spending more money on paving. Council President McCarthy asked about the fact that the utilities often cut into newly paved streets. Mr. Kennedy said that there was a meeting once a month with the utilities about this type of situation. This has reduced the number of incidents. The utilities are now being held accountable for maintaining the cuts.

Council Member Swain said that she had received a mailing about the Pot Hole Killer. Mr. Garcia said that this was the item Mr. Kennedy was talking about.

Council Member Torres said that this was a major issue and was in favor of spending money where it was needed.

Council Member Halstead asked about the width of a street. He was told that the average street was about 32 feet. Council Member Halstead asked what the cost would be for repaving. Mr. Kennedy said that it would vary based on the level of repair. Council Member Brannelly said that there was a list published every year listing the streets that would be paved, and the cost of doing so.

Council Member Halstead said that he rides a bicycle and other than some signs and striping, there was no real improvement. Mr. Garcia said that his department had met with OPED on this. Council Member Halstead said it would be important to connect all the pieces together so people could ride to and from the train station.

Council Member Swain asked about the grant funding for paving. She wished to know what would happen if the money came in.

Council Member Austin said that he had to compliment Public Works on their hard work. He said that there were numerous comments about how

Council Member Felicano asked about the half a million dollars for each district for paving. Council President McCarthy gave a brief overview of how the road repairs are ranked. The Council Members will receive a list of their streets needed repair and would have some choice on which streets would be repaved. There are some streets that are in serious need

City Beautification - Mr. Sherwood said that this category covers things such as when an esplanade is damaged by an accident and the City has to repair it. This category allows the department to repair these items without going back to the Council.

Public Facilities Equipment - Council Member Torres asked how much a truck would cost. he was told that a snow plow could easily cost \$300,000 before the sander and other items were added on.

Mr. Garcia then reviewed the HVAC, Security improvements, Energy Renewable resources, energy conservation, Harbor Yard Ballpark. Mr. Garcia then said that the request for an Airport Runway Sweeper was this year's project and the Rapid Response Fire Truck and the Maintenance Garage Apron were for the next two years.

Mr. Steve Hladun gave a history of development of Knowlton Park following the 2010 tornado. The Phase One of the plaza area has been completed. Now a basketball court, playgrounds a fishing pier and waterfront access are underway. Another goal is to provide more open space.

This will also incorporating water quality and the Rails to Trails has been shifted to pass through Knowlton Park.

Mr. Sherwood said that the fishing pier at Seaside Park had been destroyed by the hurricanes and the City can replace it, but must front the money for the project, then the State will be reimburse the City.

Council Member Brannelly asked for a breakdown of the projects in the parks.

Council Member Austin asked if the Seaside Park pier would be repaired. Mr. Sherwood said that it would.

Council Member Halstead said that he had just read a study about the impact of piers on rivers. He also had concerns about the Rails to Trails project crossing North Avenue. Mr. Carroll listed where the trail would go. Discussion followed.

Council Member Torres said that there was a type of herring that will only return to clean water and hoped that the river by Knowlton Street would support them.

The discussion then moved to the Pleasure Beach Bridge. The center span is deemed historic and can't be touched. Council Member Halstead asked that the buildings be boarded up and cleaned up. Mr. Sherwood said that this would be included in the next phase of the project. Council Member Brannelly asked for the details regarding the work that has been done on Pleasure Beach. Mr. Garcia and Mr. Sherwood updated the Committee on this.

Mr. Sherwood then spoke about the Various Park Improvements. He said that there had been a number of items covered such as splash pads, basketball courts and fencing. The splash pad at Marin has significantly reduced the amount of fire hydrant tampering.

Council Member Martinez joined the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

Mr. Sherwood said that the field at Kennedy Stadium needed to have the turf replaced. He also gave an overview of Columbus School corner and Success Park. Mr. Carroll said that the way that the City was constructing buildings with the bathrooms on the outside of the buildings so that Parks and Rec. will have access without opening the building up. Discussion followed.

Council Member Halstead asked about the Boys Club property. Mr. Sherwood said that there were LOCIP funds involved for that project. The discussion then moved to using various fields with lighting so that teams can play at night. Council Member Swain said that she liked the idea of using the schools year round.

Mr. Garcia said that one of the goals was to start consolidate the resources of the Board of Education and the City. Both the City and BOE see the value of having the City use the facilities. Mr. Garcia said that the new schools are LEED Gold certified.

Council Member Martinez said that the park improvements were wonderful but it would be important to involve the community, particularly where the lighting is concerned.

Mr. Sherwood said that there were two amendments. Dunbar is going to be re-utilized. Cross School is completed and needs more fine tuning. These will be included when the Superintendent arrives on Saturday.

Mr. Sherwood said he would be able to update the plans for the BOE on Saturday. Council Member Torres asked for an explanation for the debt service. Mr. Sherwood said that it would be covered in Finance. Council Member Torres asked how long the bonds were for. Mr. Sherwood replied that they are usually for 20 years.

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT MCCARTHY MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER TAYLOR-MOYE SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET & APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
PUBLIC HEARING
THURSDAY, APRIL 10, 2014
6:00 P.M.**

ATTENDANCE: Co-chair Brannelly; Council members: Martinez, Swain
*Council President McCarthy

**=sat in to make a quorum*

NON-COMMITTEE: Council member Torres

Co-chair Brannelly called the public hearing to order at 6:11 pm.

Public Hearing Agenda Items (66-13) & (49-13):

Co-chair Brannelly asked if there was anyone present to speak in favor of the items

Co-chair Brannelly asked if there was anyone present to speak against the items

There were none heard.

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ MOVED TO CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARINGS**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER SWAIN SECONDED**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

The public hearing was closed at 6:13 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Graham
Telesco Secretarial Services

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS
BUDGET HEARINGS
APRIL 11, 2014**

ATTENDANCE: Susan Brannelly, Chair; Council President Thomas McCarthy,
Denese Taylor-Moye, Lydia Martinez, Patricia Swain

OTHERS: Council Member Rick Torres, Thomas Sherwood, OPM
Director; Anne Kelly-Lenz, Finance Director; Council Member
Robert Halstead

CALL TO ORDER

Council Member Brannelly called the meeting to order at 6:16 p.m. A quorum was present.

DISCUSSION OF THE CAPITOL PLAN

Council Member Brannelly said that Mr. Kennedy had submitted information on the road paving. Mr. Sherwood distributed a document titled Fiscal Year 2012-2015 Capital Plan History Document to the Council Members. He reminded everyone that the documents were keyed on to a Fiscal Year, which in the State of Connecticut runs from July 1st to June 30th.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ MOVED TO ENTER THE DOCUMENT TITLED FISCAL YEAR 2012-2015 CAPITAL PLAN HISTORY DOCUMENT AS EXHIBIT #1-04/11/14.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER SWAIN SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ MOVED TO ENTER THE DOCUMENT TITLED MARKED AS RETIRED DEBT AS EXHIBIT #2-04/11/14.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER SWAIN SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER SWAIN MOVED TO ENTER THE DOCUMENT TITLED CAPITAL PROJECT REPORT FISCAL YEAR 2012- PRESENT CAPITAL PLAN HISTORY DOCUMENT AS EXHIBIT #3-04/11/14.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ MOVED TO ENTER THE DOCUMENT MARKED AS OPED CAPITAL BUDGET PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS AS EXHIBIT #4-04/11/14.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER SWAIN SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ MOVED TO ENTER THE DOCUMENT MARKED AS BLIGHTED PROPERTIES/ SITES AS EXHIBIT #5-04/11/14.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER SWAIN SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ MOVED TO ENTER THE DOCUMENT TITLED CAPITAL PLAN -- APRIL 11, 2014 BRIEF SUMMARY OF RECENT ACTIVITIES AND NEXT STEPS DEPT. OF PUBLIC FACILITIES AS EXHIBIT #6-04/11/14.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER SWAIN SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ MOVED TO ENTER THE DOCUMENT TITLED CITY OF BRIDGEPORT PUBLIC FACILITIES ADMINISTRATION PARKS ADMINISTRATION CAPITAL BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS DETAIL 4.11.2014 PARK DEVELOPMENT CAPITAL REPORT AND IMPROVEMENT DETAIL AS EXHIBIT #7-04/11/14.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER SWAIN SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ MOVED TO ENTER THE DOCUMENT TITLED PAVEMENT SCENARIO RESULTS REPORT AS EXHIBIT #8-04/11/14.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER SWAIN SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ MOVED TO ENTER THE DOCUMENT TITLED FISCAL YEAR 2012-2015 CAPITAL PLAN HISTORY DOCUMENT - CITY CAPITAL SECTION AS EXHIBIT #9-04/11/14.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER SWAIN SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Council Member Torres asked for clarification on the difference between Exhibit #1 and Exhibit #9. Mr. Sherwood explained the difference.

Council Member Swain asked if the bonding would increase the taxes on the residents. Mr. Sherwood and Ms. Kelly-Lenz said that the administration tries to keep the borrowing level, so as debt is retired, new debt is added.

Council Member Torres asked for more details on Exhibit #2 - Retired Debt. Mr. Sherwood explained that the City requests authorization in advance for bonding so that when the market conditions are favorable, the City can take advantage of it.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ MOVED TO ENTER THE DOCUMENT MARKED AS DEBT SERVICE AS EXHIBIT #10-04/11/14.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER SWAIN SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Council Member Halstead joined the meeting at 6:52 p.m.

Ms. Kelly-Lenz then reviewed the figures on document and explained how the debt service is amortized over time. She said that she contacted the Bond Counsel for his input on the Assumed Rate. Mr. Sherwood said that if the City is able to close on a borrowing at 1.5% , it is actually "cost avoidance" rather than "savings". Discussion followed about avoiding large repairs by regular maintenance, keeping the debt service level, the policies regarding the use of the fund balance, and avoiding major fluctuations in the taxes. The rating agencies want to review the CAFIR and the amount of the Fund Balance. Bridgeport has committed to putting a reserve into the Fund Balance.

Council Member Swain asked if there was a light at the end of the tunnel. Mr. Sherwood said that there had been a 19 years during which a re-val was not done. That meant the property values stagnated. Ms. Kelly-Lenz pointed out that by having more businesses into Bridgeport, it will equalize the tax costs.

The discussion then moved to the potential of land value tax. Mr. Sherwood gave a brief overview of the land value tax. Council Member Torres pointed out that there was a parcel along the waterfront that was over an acre and valued at \$1,000. He said that when the city devalues the land, it dis-incentives the owners to do anything with the land. Mr. Sherwood agreed with Council Member Torres.

Council President McCarthy left the meeting at 7:20 p.m.

The Committee then began reviewing the projects listed for Parks and Recreation as outlined in Exhibits #1, #3, and #6 by line item.

Council Member Torres said that he would not be able to attend the meeting at 9:00 a.m. tomorrow. Council Member Brannelly said that the Superintendent of Schools would be presenting the BOE Capital requests at 9:00 a.m. and most likely go for an hour. Ms. Kelly-Lenz will not be able to attend the meeting. The remainder of the meeting will be focused on the Capital Budget.

Mr. Sherwood said that House Speaker Sharkey has proposed having the PILOT entities pay 100% to their residential municipalities and then receive the rebate directly from the State. Discussion followed.

Council Member Torres asked about Kennedy Stadium. Mr. Sherwood said that this would discuss this on Monday. He then reviewed the Capital Plan and its function. On Monday there will be a request for the bond authorization. The authorization to borrow will then allow the City to borrow in order to move projects in the Capital Plan forward.

The discussion then moved to the details of how the school bonding is done. Mr. Sherwood explained that the work on the high schools have already been authorized for borrowing.

Council Member Halstead asked if the Council Members could add to the Capital Plan. Mr. Sherwood gave a brief overview of the process to do this.

Council Member Swain asked why Harding was being building anew and not being repaired. Mr. Sherwood said that Council Member Martinez would be able to speak directly to the state of Harding. If the City decided to change the plan, which is to build a new school, the City would lose the 80/20 % reimbursement from the State. A new plan to repair the school would have a 60/40% State reimbursement. It was also pointed out that the current footprint of the school is too small for the student enrollment.

The discussion then moved to the paving information listed on Exhibit #8.

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL MEMBER TAYLOR MOYE MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET & APPROPRIATIONS
BUDGET HEARINGS
APRIL 12, 2014**

ATTENDANCE: Susan Brannelly, Co-Chair, Lydia Martinez, Denese Taylor-Moye; Patricia Swain; Council President Thomas McCarthy (9:25 a.m.)

OTHERS: Thomas Sherwood, OPM Director; Frances Rabinowitz, Interim Superintendent of Schools; Lissette Colon, Staff to Superintendent of Schools; Sauda Baraka, BOE Chairman; Jorge Garcia, Public Facilities Director; Council Member Rick Torres; Council Member Robert Halstead

CALL TO ORDER.

Co-Chair Brannelly called the meeting to order at 9:15 a.m. A quorum was present.

COMMITTEE - BUDGET HEARINGS
(CAPITAL PLAN OVERVIEW - BOE - POSSIBLE CAPITAL PLAN VOTE - BUDGET OVERVIEW)

Interim Superintendent Fran Rabinowitz came forward and introduced herself to the Council Members.

She said that often the Capital Plan requests become lost in large numbers. She said that after discussions with Mr. Garcia of Public Facilities, and others, it was clear that Bassick needed to have maintenance. The roof replacement has been authorized, however, no funds have been allocated.

Interim Superintendent Rabinowitz pointed out that the front of the Gymnasium has peeling paint. While this is a simple repair, the overall improvement will be dramatic and positive. She went on to give an overview of the various repairs needed, including replacing the exterior observatory surface, updating the building communication system for safety reasons; installation of central air conditioning; replacing the HVAC system including the boilers; renovating the restrooms, updating the classrooms and furniture; updating the security system; replacing and repairing windows; replacing the gym bleachers and updating the athletic areas; renovating the lockers areas; planning for asbestos and PCB removal among other things.

Interim Superintendent Rabinowitz said that often the climate of a building is influence by what the facility looks like. She said that after being away for 13 years, Bridgeport schools have changed significantly.

Council President McCarthy joining the meeting at 9:25 a.m.

Council President McCarthy said that all the students should be treated equally and said that Bassick's time for repairs have come. He then asked if there has been any discussion about building a new high school as opposed to patching and repairing. The cost of all the repairs would be at 20 million. Mr. Garcia said that there had been some preliminary conversations, but the reimbursement breakout would be 60/40, which would result in the City's portion would be 40 million. Discussion followed.

Interim Superintendent Rabinowitz said that she had discussed the new building versus repairing with the Mayor and that the bonding would take years to arrange. She pointed out that the building would continue to deteriorate during that time. Council President McCarthy said that he would be very interested in leveraging State dollars. He said that the City was planning to bond within the next year. Interim Superintendent Rabinowitz said that the building was a historic building. Mr. Garcia agreed and said that the original conversations years ago explored taking the building down.

Council President McCarthy asked what the priority was. Interim Superintendent Rabinowitz said that the roof was the priority, followed by the heating and air conditioning Mr. Garcia said that a few years ago, there had been a request for a new roof, but it had not been funded. For the entire renovation, it would cost 113 million. Mr. Garcia said that the engineering would be about 12% simply because the solid construction.

Mr. Garcia said that there was asbestos in the floor tiles and the boilers. He added that while the staff would like to do work on the facility, it is hampered by the asbestos remediation. In the past, the funding for repairs has been taken from the Operations.

Council Member Taylor-Moye said that she was not happy about the fact the City was educating its students in deplorable conditions. She said that she was in favor of rebuilding the school. She then asked how long the cosmetic surgery would take. Mr. Garcia said that some of the repairs would depend on the roof repair. Once the roof is repaired, then the leaks will stop and the subsequent repairs will last longer. The City has done a significant amount of repointing, but some of the work, such as on the limestone, would have to be done by an outside contractor.

Council Member Taylor-Moye asked where the students would go if there were renovations. Mr. Garcia said that if the roof was redone, he would have to go to the State to streamline the process so the work could to be done during the summer.

Council Member Brannelly asked if this item was being added to the plan. Mr. Sherwood said that he would add it for the vote.

Mr. Garcia said that the work at Cross was a housekeeping item and the Dunbar school project involved a change in focus from an energy upgrade to a renovation. Council Member Brannelly reminded everyone that the Committee was voting to go out to Bond on Monday.

Council Member Swain asked about the timeline for the repairs. Council President McCarthy said that the Council will be voting on the bonding issue on Monday, but if the roof is done before the bonding, then the money can't be included in the State reimbursement. Mr. Garcia said that Bassick needs immediate attention. Discussion followed.

Interim Superintendent Rabinowitz said that there was a NEASK visit scheduled and that working on the building would be helpful in terms of getting re-accreditation.

Council Member Martinez said that she would like a brand new school, but understood the situation with the building. Mr. Garcia said that he would suggest approving the cost of the roof and then create a building wide budget line, which would allow the smaller projects to move forward.

Council Member Swain said that this was a historic structure. She asked if the Board members present wanted to save the observatory. The general consensus was that BOE representatives wanted to save the observatory. Council Member Martinez said that she was envisioning brand new construction because it would be more efficient and better maintained.

Council Members Rick Torres and Robert Halstead joined the meeting at 9:58 a.m.

Council Member Martinez asked about the possibility of a new building. Mr. Garcia then reviewed the way this could be done. He pointed out that there was no land. Moving the school to another site would entail land acquisition and other items. Batalla cost 1 million dollars an acre, which took out 7 million from the budget just for land acquisition. Since Battalion was constructed, the City has spent \$725 million on new schools.

Council Member Swain said that having community participation was important. Mr. Garcia said that Bassick had 400 people turn out for a clean up event.

RECESS

**** COUNCIL MEMBER TAYLOR-MOYE MOVED TO RECESS.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The Committee started Recess at 10:03 a.m. Council Member Brannelly called the meeting back to order at 10:20 a.m.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ MOVED TO ENTER THE DOCUMENT TITLED BASSICK HIGH SCHOOL AS EXHIBIT #1 -04-12-14**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER TAYLOR MOYE SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ MOVED TO ENTER THE DOCUMENT TITLED PUBLIC FACILITIES BOARD OF EDUCATION -BUILDING OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT STEWARDSHIP REPORT AS EXHIBIT #2 - 04-12-14**
**** COUNCIL MEMBER TAYLOR MOYE SECONDED.**
**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Council Member Torres said that he was concerned about the number of projects being proposed and also about the Marina Village development, which will be done by Julian Construction. He had concerns about crossing over into the private sector. He said that he would be happy with a percentage reduction of the remaining projects with the priorities to be determined by management.

Council Member Taylor Moyer said that she was concerned about Council Member Torres's suggestions because there were many factors that hadn't been considered. She said that she would like Council Member Torres to reach out and talk to people. Discussion followed.

Council President McCarthy said that the Marina Village project is for demolition of the buildings that were not habitable. He said that the first step would be to take down these building. Council Member Halstead said that he didn't agree that the buildings should come down. He didn't feel that the City should subsidize the rich to provide housing for the poor. Council Member Halstead said that the buildings should be repaired and that the residents could participate in that. Spending 2.6 million for demolition was not right.

Council Member Halstead said that Jimmy Miller who had worked for the Housing Authority had quit because he was told to give contract to certain developers. Council Member Brannelly cautioned Mr. Halstead about this type of statement because it had to do with illegal activity and she could not speak to it. Council Member Halstead said that there was also a problem with \$895,000. Council Member Taylor-Moyer said that she had attended the Housing Authority meetings and Mr. Miller was appointed as an Interim Director and left because he had other commitments in New Haven.

Council Member Halstead reiterated that he did not believe that the buildings had to be torn down. He added that he was only repeating what Mr. Miller had told him. Council Member Brannelly said that it was clear that they had agree to disagree on this issue.

Council Member Martinez said that she wanted to know if the various agencies, such as the NRZ, would be reporting how they would be spending the funds.

Mr. Sherwood said that on Exhibit #9 anything in a box was a current project.

Council President McCarthy left the meeting at 10:51 a.m.

Mr. Sherwood spoke about how the plans are utilized. Unless the Committee authorizes the projects, and then funds allocated, nothing happens.

Council Member Martinez asked for a list of the houses in her district that were slated for demolition. Mr. Sherwood said he would get that for her.

Council Member Martinez asked about the Bassick school roof. Mr. Sherwood said that when Mr. Ramos was superintendent, he asked about the roof, but after the roof was installed, if the HVAC system was put on the roof, it would void the warranty because they would be cutting into skin of the roof. Mr. Sherwood said that the Committee would have to modify the Capital Plan to add the work on Bassick. He reviewed the process with the Committee.

Council Member Torres said that if Marina was demolished, he felt that there should be some compensation from the Housing Authority for the City's cost. Mr. Sherwood said that the City puts a lien on the property and if anything is done with that property, the costs are reimbursed through that in some manner. There is no contract prepared.

Council Member Torres then asked about the Bassick project and he wished to know if this is included in the Plan, would it establish the basis for approaching the State for reimbursement. Mr. Sherwood agreed and gave an overview of the process. Discussion followed regarding the allocations.

Council Member Halstead said that he thought that the City should consider repairing the various Historic buildings that were blighted and rotting away. Many are foreclosed. These should be rehabilitated. Mr. Sherwood explained that this type of project would be considered under the Operating Fund. Council Member Martinez said that there were a number of beautiful old houses on the East Side that were boarded up and just waiting to be set on fire. She said that she had been talking with the Office of Economic Development about this.

Council Member Halstead said that he was concerned about the landscape around the buildings, such as Bassick. Mr. Sherwood explained that the State would not reimburse the City for landscaping. He added that the City could not force the BOE to do this, but it could be done as a side project. Council Member Martinez suggested that a request could be submitted to CDBG funding. Council Member Torres suggested that this might be a good project for the Education and Social Services Committee.

Council Member Swain said that she would like to know how the Committee felt about just doing the Bassick Roof without the Central Air. Mr. Sherwood reminded everyone the City would be paying for the entire roof. Council Member Swain agreed and suggested that the Committee approve 1.5 million for the roof. This would indicate that the Council was on board with the work and stop the water penetration. Discussion followed.

Council Member Brannelly suggested that the Committee put in 1.5 million for this year and 6 million for the boilers next year. Mr. Sherwood suggested both the roof along with the heating system as a separate line item. Council Member Halstead mentioned that there was a variety of green technology methods, such as a green roof, or geothermal heat exchange.

Council Member Swain said that the Committee might want to consider allocating some funds for repainting the front of the building. Mr. Sherwood said that he believed this was an item that should have been under the operating budget.

Council Member Halstead left the meeting at 11:30 a.m.

The discussion then moved to whether the Committee wanted to include the 6 million for the heating system. Council Member Torres suggested that perhaps the Education and Social Service Committee could contact some businessmen about helping with fund raising.

Council Member Taylor-Moye asked about the MBR. Mr. Sherwood explained that this was the Minimum Budget Requirement. He added it was a State requirement and could not be adjusted.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER SWAIN MOVED TO INCLUDE BASSICK IN THE CAPITAL WITH 1.5 MILLION FOR THE ROOF AND 6 MILLION FOR THE HEATING SYSTEM IN THE SECOND YEAR.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ SECONDED.**

Discussion followed about the details.

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ MOVED TO AMEND THE CAPITAL PLAN TO INCLUDE DUNBAR SCHOOL FOR \$2,500,000, CROSS SCHOOL FOR \$400,000 AND MARIN VILLAGE REPLACEMENT FOR \$2,600,000.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER TAYLOR MOYE SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Council Member Torres asked what the final version of the Capital Plan would look like. Mr. Sherwood explained that he would be presenting a formal resolution on April 14, 2014 at the Budget and Appropriation meeting.

Council Member Torres said that he was impressed with the fact that the Finance and OPM was able to maintain the tax level, but would prefer that the taxes be reduced. Mr. Sherwood said that with all building that was going on, when it ends, the bond payments should eventually decrease.

A discussion followed about the Pleasure Beach access.

Council Member Swain asked for clarification on the road paving allocations. Discussion followed about the details.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ MOVED TO APPROVE THE 2015 CAPITAL PLAN AS AMENDED.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER TAYLOR-MOYE SECONDED.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ MOVED TO ADJOURN.
** COUNCIL MEMBER TAYLOR-MOYE SECONDED.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 12:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS
BUDGET HEARINGS
APRIL 15, 2014**

ATTENDANCE: Susan Brannelly, Co-chair; Michael Marella, Co-chair;
Patricia Swain, Council President Thomas McCarthy,
Denese Taylor-Moye (6:20 p.m.); Howard Austin (7:00 p.m.);
Lydia Martinez (7:21 p.m.)

OTHERS: Fire Chief Brian Rooney, Scott Appleby, EOC; Deputy Fire Chief
Petrucelli, Council Member Rick Torres, Council Member Richard
DeJesus

CALL TO ORDER

Council Member Brannelly called the meeting to order at 6:15 p.m. A quorum was present. She then gave a quick overview of the presentation process.

FIRE DEPARTMENT PRESENTATION

Chief Rooney came forward and greeted the Committee members. He explained that in reviewing the budget, it was decided to request an increase of \$55,000 in order to repair the rust on the vehicles and the dented fenders.

Council Member Taylor-Moye joined the meeting at 6:20 p.m.

Chief Rooney said that there is only one place that will repair their fire vehicles and this is located in Rocky Hill, Connecticut.

The smoke alarm program is a great asset to the city by reducing blight. When a building burns, the burned out lot is a blight issue for the neighboring houses. There have been 41,000 smoke alarms installed in the City. The Fire Department provides the alarms and RYSAP installs them. These are 10 year lithium battery models. In 2012, there were 151 fires and in 2013 there were 115.

Chief Rooney then spoke about the overtime policies. The Department must have 62 fighters on duty and the Union contract limits the number of firefighters on a shift to 65. If there is a day when there are people out sick and the shift only has 58, then the department must bring in overtime firefighters. If a firefighter is out for three months, the firefighter must meet with the Fire Commissioners and provide a doctor's note. Often firefighters come back on light duty.

Deputy Chief Petrucelli said that there had been a number of items, such as Public Safety Equipment, where the department had asked for an increase, but the Mayor either gave a very little increase or flat lined it. All the firefighting equipment such as self contained breathing

equipment comes out of Line Item 55175 along with all the protective turn out gear. The jacket and pants for turnout cost \$2,000. Each firefighter had two sets of turn out gear. Each time there is a new class, the new firefighters are given two new sets of gear.

Council Member Torres asked about the increase in 2012. Deputy Chief Petrucelli explained that there was a new engine that the Department has been leased and there was a request that the Fire Department pay it out of their budget. Discussion followed about the details of the 10 year lease agreement.

Council Member Swain asked about the Personal Time and Holiday Pay Out. Chief Rooney said that this was the line item that covered the pay out of accumulated personal time and holidays for the administration that retire. It is contractual issue.

Council Member Taylor-Moye asked about the difference between the public safety equipment and the uniform account. Deputy Chief Petrucelli said that the public safety equipment covers the leather boots that the fire fighters wear. The yearly \$900 Uniform allowance check is for each fire fighter to maintain their dress uniform and regular work uniforms.

Deputy Chief Petrucelli then reviewed the details around Line Item 56205 on pg 143, which has to do with a State requirement for paying a fee for a radio service that allows the ambulance EMTs to speak directly to the doctors at the hospital.

Deputy Chief Petrucelli then directed everyone's attention to Line Item 59005, which is the vehicle maintenance line. There had been a request for an amount, which the Mayor then cut by 50%. Discussion followed about the details.

Deputy Chief Petrucelli then gave a brief overview of the Connecticut Fire Academy training program. It is a sixteen week course and includes room and board and meals. When the class of 21 recruits were up there in 2012, the cost was over \$100,000. The following year, there were fewer recruits. Chief Rooney said that there was continual training going on for the staff in the City at three different sites. He added that for 10 years, the State had paid half of the cost of the training for the firefighters, but they no longer do.

Chief Rooney said that there had been a request for two more fire inspectors. Originally, there were sixteen fire inspectors, but then the staff was reduced to 10. State law requires three family residences be inspected every year. There are over 3,000 three family residences in the city. That does not include the four family residents, or hospitals. A fire inspector's salary would be approximately \$70,000.

Council Member Austin joined the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

He said that there were numerous codes that were being proposed by legislators that were unrealistic, such as requiring a steel door and frame in all apartments that can withstand one hour of a fire.

Council Member Taylor-Moye asked about how many houses the Department is able to inspect. Chief Rooney explained that they obtained a list from the Tax Assessor and assigned 65 addresses to each Station for inspection.

Council Member Torres asked how the Fire Department knows a residence has illegal apartments. Chief Rooney gave a brief overview of how the staff can determine whether the buildings have illegal apartments. The discussion moved to the issues around balloon construction and the need for sprinkler systems. Council Member Torres asked if the City could work with the insurance companies to help the landlords afford the sprinkler systems. Discussion followed.

EOC PRESENTATION

Mr. Appleby said that his office falls under the Fire Department according to Homeland Security.

Council Member Martinez joined the meeting at 7:21 p.m.

He talked about how the department has worked at leveraging grants and attaining the goals and objectives. He then listed a number of programs that are currently underway that help with Emergency Preparedness. Since 2010, there have been at least 26 different events that have bordered on emergencies. Technology is critical to the Emergency Operations Center.

Council Member Swain asked about the new employees. It was determined that these were the 18 employees who were paid through grants and are now moving onto the City payroll.

Council Member Taylor-Moye thanked Mr. Appleby for the outreach efforts in the South End. Mr. Appleby said that he appreciated it and that the major focus was to save lives.

Council Member Torres asked out the neighborhood outreach. Mr. Appleby said that the department will be starting in the spring. He then outlined the process and how the community meetings were structured. Council Member Torres asked for a copy of the template that was sent to the South End.

Chief Rooney said that he would like to let everyone know that there were 450 firefighters in 1972 and now they were down to 262 firefighters. He said that the Fire Department has closed six stations. He said that the way this was done by educating the public about fire prevention and requesting mutual aid coverage from Trumbull and Stratford.

RECESS

**** COUNCIL MEMBER AUSTIN MOVED TO RECESS.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The Committee entered into recess at 7:40 p.m. Council Member Brannelly called the meeting back to order at 7:45 p.m.

Council Member DeJesus joined the meeting at 7:45 p.m.

BUDGET OVERVIEW

Council Member Brannelly began to establish the budget items that are non-negotiable such as the Board of Education, Debt Service, including Capital, Police and Fire Pension, and Amortization of Plan A.

The Committee then began to review the various revenue streams

Council Member Brannelly said that it would be good to see a total for each code category.

Council Member Torres said that he would like to see the City determine whether non-profits are really not for profit. Council Member Brannelly said that she would contact Ms. Kelly-Lenz about vehicle registration.

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARELLA MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS
BUDGET HEARINGS
APRIL 16, 2013**

ATTENDANCE: Susan Brannelly, Co-chair; Michael Marella, Co-Chair;
Council President Thomas McCarthy, Patricia Swain, Lydia
Martinez, Denese Taylor-Moye; Howard Austin

OTHERS: Thomas Sherwood, OPM Director; Charles Carroll,
Parks and Recreation Director, Steven Roach,
Fairchild Wheeler Golf Course; Andre Baker, Pauline
Mize, Sikorsky Airport; Jorge Garcia, Public Facilities Director;
John Cottell, Public Facilities Deputy Director; Robert Kennedy,
Roadway Manager; Steve Layton,

CALL TO ORDER.

Council Member Brannelly called the meeting to order. A quorum was present.

Aging - Ms. Rose Hoyt came forward and said that the Senior Center was working out fine. Mr. Carroll said the new space was much nicer and that the fact that the pool was in one building while the programs were in another was working out. Mr. Sherwood said that the City was working on starting up electronic registration and will be issuing identity cards to the seniors. Mr. Carroll said that parking is still an issue because it is hard to park in this area.

Council Member Martinez asked how involved the City was in the East Side Senior Center. Rose said that the Center does report to main center, and that information is included in the newsletter. Council Member Martinez said that there was a problem with transportation.

Golf Course - pg. 204 - Mr. Sherwood gave a brief overview and said that the revenue was sustaining the course. The weather had an impact on the number of rounds played. The biggest increase was for the water bill.

Council Member Brannelly asked about the impact of last year's change in the green fees. Mr. Roach, of First Tee, said that during the heat wave, the rounds were down, but otherwise the rounds were consistent. He then distributed a document to the Committee members.

****COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ MOVE TO ENTER THE DOCUMENT INTO
THE RECORD AS EXHIBIT 1-4.16.14
** COUNCIL MEMBER TAYLOR-MOYE SECONDED.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Council Member Brannelly asked what would happen if there was a small increase in the fees again. Mr. Roach said that he felt it would be better not to do it again so soon after last year's increase.

Council President McCarthy asked if the revenue was solely green fees. Mr. Roach said that it was just the rounds and cart fees. Council Member Marella asked what would happen if the cost of a bucket of balls for the range fee was increased. Mr. Sherwood said that the revenue from the range would go right back to the driving range. He reminded everyone that Mr. Roach is paid from the revenue from the range and is not a City employee.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARELLA MOVE TO ENTER THE SPREADSHEET INTO THE RECORD AS EXHIBIT 2-4.16.14.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mr. Roach said that the water bill was high, but there were some who said that the previous manager over watered. He expects that the water bill will be lower this year.

Council Member Brannelly asked about the possibility of double decking the driving range and putting in lights. Mr. Carroll said that it wasn't a priority, but he would look into it. Right now the priority is a cart barn with electric golf carts. Once that project is underway, he said that he would start work on the driving range.

RECESS

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ MOVED TO HAVE A RECESS.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER TAYLOR-MOYE SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The Committee began the recess at 6:40 p.m. Council Member Brannelly called the meeting back to order at 6:47 p.m.

Airport - pg. 242 - Mr. Sherwood gave a very brief overview. Ms. Mize said that as the project moves forward, the airport is trying to find grant funds. She said that the project is being vetted by the State DOT and it is hoped that the Issue to proceed will be received by May 14th. While the construction is underway, there will be more operating hours to insure safety. There are a number businesses working out of the airport. Right now, the road has to be moved and then it will take 18 months to rebuild the runway. The FAA has invested heavily in the airport.

Ms. Mize said that she would like to see a new Master Plan. Mr. Sherwood explained that this project was approved in last year's Capital Plan but not funded.

Ms. Mize was asked what the largest plane would be that could land at the airport. She replied that the largest plane that could land at the airport would be a Global Express.

Ms. Mize said that the FAA pavement specialist would be at the airport to help facilitate the project. Mr. Garcia said that he was able to be at the airport when the FAA was there for the walk through and it went well. Ms. Mize encouraged the Council Members to come out to take a tour of the facility.

Council Member Martinez asked about the number of commercial aircraft that were using the airport. Ms. Mize said that the commercial flights aren't presently using the airport, but that when the runway project is completed, she hopes they will return.

Recreation Programs - pg 216 - Mr. Carroll said that the program has seasonal help and covers the summer camp along with running the various leagues. Mr. Sherwood said that there is some partnering with the Health Department for the kids. The Department also opens the pool at Blackham School.

Council Member Swain asked if the local young people were hired for these programs. Mr. Carroll said that many of the youth were local. Council Member Taylor-Moye asked if these opportunities were offered through Connecticut Works. Mr. Carroll said that many of the people just contact the Parks Department directly. Council Member Taylor-Moye said that she has seen the program at Seaside and it was a great program. She also asked if the campers were fed. Mr. Carroll said that the Nutrition Center provides breakfast and lunch.

Council Member Austin said that the recreation department is sensational. He said that this department has taken kids off the street and keeps them busy on Saturdays and night. His grandchildren have participated, and he fully supports this program.

Council Member Martinez asked how many kids were employed. Mr. Carroll estimated about 150 kids including the lifeguards and counselors. Council Member Martinez asked about the pool on the east side. Mr. Carroll said that the department was staffing the pool but no one was coming. Council Member Martinez said that she would like to see the pool open again. It was pointed out that there was a cost for security and custodial. Council Member Marella stated that the union requires that a minimum time of 4 hours, costing \$280. Mr. Carroll said that it would be important to try opening the pool again and see if the attendance increased.

Parks Maintenance and Administration - pg 228 - Mr. Sherwood said that this would show all the revenue items. He said that if the Committee wanted to change fees, this was where the change would be done. Mr. Carroll said that the change was from \$5.00 to \$10.00 for residents, \$20.00 for out of town Connecticut residents per trip and \$40.00 for out of state residents per visit. The checkpoint staff takes a great deal of abuse. More than once, they have had to close the gates to move the traffic thought.

Council Member Austin asked about the concession stands. Mr. Layton said that the bids were opened yesterday. The concession stand by Park Avenue had not done well.

Council Member Torres said that he believes that Bridgeport owns Long Beach. Mr. Carroll said that he had been told that Bridgeport owns the parking lot. Council Member Torres said that he had discovered that Bridgeport owns Long Beach and the parking lot. He said that if it was true, the City could make it like Seaside.

Council Member Torres asked about the apartment above the horse barn. Mr. Carroll said that a City employee lived there as a security measure and there was never a break in there until the employee retired. Currently, the apartment is empty because the roof needs repair.

Council Member Torres asked about the Wonderland of Ice. Mr. Carroll gave a very brief overview of the history of the issues with that venue. Discussion followed.

Council Member Martinez asked about having multiple vendors in food trucks inside the park. Mr. Carroll said that the big money was made on the week-ends and having other vendors competing with them would not work out. Discussion followed.

Council Member Swain asked about the revenue from the Vibes. Mr. Sherwood and Mr. Carroll explained how the revenue was handled. The Vibes rents the Park and also any City services. Council Member Austin asked about the park being closed during the Vibes event. Mr. Carroll said that they close the camps to keep the kids out of the chaos. However, the staff know that they will be paid for 25 days if they come to work for 25 days. Discussion followed.

Council Member Martinez asked whether the non-profits could participate in the event. Mr. Carroll said that the non-profits could have booths but can't sell anything. He added that Mr. Hayes request the campers to bring non-perishable food that is donated to the food pantries.

Mr. Carroll said that at one time, there were four times as many park employees. Currently there are 14 employees. Council Member Swain asked about the vacant position at the golf course. Mr. Carroll explained that the department was hoping to fill the second position in the near future. Council Member Swain asked about the golf course Superintendent. Mr. Sherwood said that this was a union position that transferred when the golf course was privatized. The staff member does many different things for the City now, such as acting as a Tree Warden since he is also an arborist.

Council Member Swain asked about the seasonal employees. Mr. Carroll said that these were temporary workers who help out with grass mowing, leaf removal and other seasonal tasks.

PUBLIC FACILITIES

Facilities Maintenance - pg 172 - This department is responsible for all the City buildings and the deco lights. The largest change is the

Paul directed everyone's attention to page 173, with the graph. He reviewed the figures associated with the electrical usage. The actual usage had decreased. This equals 5.6 million dollars in cost avoidance. He displayed a graph from the Hartford Courant that shows that both electric and natural gas prices have increased by 55%. However, the City locked prices in two years ago. Mr. Cottell then gave an overview of the electric power market. Paul pointed out that the street lights was roughly 2/3rd of the total cost.

Council Member Swain asked what the process was to let UI know. Mr. Cottell said that the person needs to know what the pole number and the nearest cross streets. The best way is to report it to UI, or the resident can put it in QueAlert. Mr. Cottell said that when the lights are out a long time, he calls UI and works on getting a refund.

Sanitation and Recycling. - Pg 197 - Mr. Sherwood said that majority of the costs are the tip feeds. There is a line item called In Kind Expenses. Mr. Sherwood said that the City is in discussions with the State of Connecticut about the service the City provides to the BOE for recycling. He explained the process.

Paul said that between the cost avoidance involved in the tipping fees and the \$20 per ton recycling revenue, that is worth \$460 million to the City. Mr. Garcia then

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT MCCARTHY MOVED TO ENTER THE DOCUMENT
BGREEN INTO THE RECORD AS EXHIBIT 3-4.14.14.
** COUNCIL MEMBER AUSTIN SECONDED.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Council President McCarthy said that last year, the Committee had cut the Public Facilities severely. Council President McCarthy said that he would like to know what kind of impact that had on the department in terms of overtime. Mr. Sherwood said that the State reimburses the City long after the fiscal year is closed out. So the City has established a Special Revenue fund that they now can use to pay vendors when plowing is needed during a storm event. Mr. Garcia said that when the storms are one right after another, then the department is running two shifts. Often the City will use vendors during those events. During snow removal, the sanitation is not done because the staff is plowing the streets. Paul pointed out that the department was already down by seven positions before sick days, vacations, personal days are factored in. Discussion followed.

Council Member Austin left the meeting at 8:41 p.m.

The discussion then moved to the Transfer Station. Council Member Torres said that he has seen certain individuals at the dump all the time. Mr. Garcia said that the staff does a balancing act because if the City starts to charge for it, the illegal dumping increases. Council Member Torres said that he would be willing to sit down with Mr. Garcia to craft a plan.

Council President McCarthy congratulated Mr. Cottell on his recent promotion.

Council Member Brannelly said that at the next meeting, the Committee would be working on the budget figures. Council Member Martinez said that she would like to have a meeting with the key departments about various issues. Discussion followed. Council Member Taylor-Moye said that she hoped that the Committee would continue to follow up with the departments and develop projects that the Committee would like to see. Additional discussion followed about the details of this.

ADJOURNMENT

- ** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ MOVED TO ADJOURN**
- ** COUNCIL MEMBER TAYLOR-MOYE SECONDED.**
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS
BUDGET HEARINGS
APRIL 17, 2014**

ATTENDANCE: Susan Brannelly, Co-Chair; Council President Thomas McCarthy, Councilmember(s): Denese Taylor-Moye; Patricia Swain; Lydia Martinez (6:06 p.m.); Michael Marella, Co-Chair, (6:07 p.m.)

OTHERS: David Kooris, OPED Director; Thomas Sherwood, OPM Director; Neil Austin, Labor Relations

CALL TO ORDER

Council Member Brannelly called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m. A quorum was present.

OPED

Mr. Sherwood directed everyone to pg. 256 for Redevelopment

Council Member Martinez joined the meeting at 6:06 p.m.

Mr. Kooris said that he would also be speaking about the building permits on page 252.

Co-chair Marella joined the meeting at 6:07 p.m.

Mr. Kooris said that the Bass Pro Shop had not filed for a building permit. Neither did Longfellow School. This has impacted anticipated building permit revenues for this budget year. However, it is fully expected that both Bass Pro and Longfellow to have building permits issued in FY 2014-2015. Mr. Kooris then listed a number of projects that may pull permits in 2015. A discussion followed about the entry methodology for MUNIS in the requested Column.

Council Member Martinez asked where the Habitat for Humanity building permits were reflected. Mr. Kooris explained that the Habitat projects were included in the general permits and indicated which line that information was listed on.

Mr. Sherwood explained that when the City does State projects, State funding cannot be used for the permitting process. Harding High School will be the biggest project. A BOE vote on Harding is expected on April 28th. Following this, the City will be going to the State for an extension on the application because it will go over the June 30th deadline. The three other upcoming projects are the former Father Panik site, 375 Main Street and McLevy Square. Mr. Kooris said that he expects at least one of the projects to pull a permit in 2014-2015. Mr. Sherwood said that sometimes for financial stability, OPM will ask OPED to hold a permit until after July 1st to smooth out the revenue stream.

The Jewish Home for the Elderly will be a major permit revenue source on par with Harding High School. The Bass Pro Shop will be a modest permit revenue source but a solid property tax revenue source, whereas the Jewish Home and the High School will not be a property tax source.

Council Member Swain asked if there could be a list of the new projects that would be included in the budget. Council President McCarthy suggested that the Council take a bus tour of the various sites.

Mr. Kooris said that he would like speak about Land Dispositions. He explained that as the City acquires parcels through foreclosure, the administration sells the parcels off. He said that Achievement First purchased some small parcels for their school. Another project, Waltersville, has not closed on the purchase. Mr. Sherwood said that when these sales happen, 50% goes into the Fund Balance and the remaining 50% to the General Fund.

Mr. Kooris said that he was very focused on tracking the various projects so that there would be more reporting on the status of the projects.

Council Member Marella asked about the graffiti on various properties. Mr. Kooris said that most of the properties have passed from the City's hands to the new property owners. He spoke about the Newfield building that will have 92 new units.

Council Member Taylor-Moye asked about the old movie theaters. Mr. Kooris said that the hurdle is the sustainable operating costs. Discussion followed.

Mr. Sherwood said that Council Member Torres believes that the City owns Long Beach in Stratford.

Council Member Taylor-Moye asked if the City owned any parcels downtown. Mr. Kooris gave a quick list of the properties that the City still owns. Council Member Taylor-Moye asked for a list of those parcels. Mr. Kooris said that he would print out one for her.

BUDGET OVERVIEW

The Committee then began discussing the financial aspects of the budget. Mr. Sherwood said that the State funds had already come out of Committee and was waiting for full Legislature approval. He then listed a number of entities that were covered by PILOTs. There is also a manufacturing grant, which is much smaller.

The BOE receives funding with ECS and Transportation. Then there are Federal and State grant has the Nutrition funding program. Mr. Sherwood said that there was also an ECS Alliance Grant. He pointed out that this grant does not factor in the debt service on the school buildings.

Mr. Sherwood said that there was 8 million in kind and 1.6 million in new aid. That comes to \$230 million. It does not include Nutrition, (\$14 million)

The Library will equal one mill which currently is \$6,817,000.

Mr. Sherwood then explained that since the Police and Fire are 24/7/365 operations. Those who work holidays accumulate unused holidays. He indicated where this figure was in the book. The fringe line item is the money in reserve for those employees who have earned vacation, holidays or sick days.

Mr. Sherwood said that right now the Police Department has a very large class of officers who could retire tomorrow. He then gave an overview of the MERF program, which is the Municipal Employees Retirement Fund. The City only pays for active employees. Once the employee retires, the retirement check comes from the State of the Connecticut. Council Member Swain asked about the Federal Police grant. Mr. Sherwood reviewed how the City must adhere to the budget for the Police for one fiscal year after the conclusion of the two year grant funding period.

Council Member Swain asked about the "ghost positions". Mr. Sherwood explained that the various departments have people leaving or retiring and once that happens, the unions require that the job be posted for 45 days. Following that, the interviews have to be conducted. If the hire is in-house, then another position is open in that department, so the process starts over again.

Mr. Sherwood then reviewed the budget figures for Heart and Hypertension and Utilities with the Committee members.

The discussion then moved to the library allocation and its history.

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL MEMBER TAYLOR-MOYE MOVED TO ADJOURN**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARELLA SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services

City of Bridgeport
Budget and Appropriations
Budget Hearings
April 17, 2014

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET AND APPROPRIATION
BUDGET HEARINGS
APRIL 22, 2014**

ATTENDANCE: Susan Brannelly, Co-Chair; Michael Marella, Jr., Co-Chair;
Patricia Swain, Denese Taylor-Moye

OTHERS: Frances Rabinowitz, Superintendent of Schools; Andre Baker,
BOE Member; Council Member Jack Banta, Council Member
Rev. Mary McBride-Lee; Council Member Michelle Lyons;
Herman Illingworth, BOE Member, Andre Baker, BOE Member

CALL TO ORDER

Council Member Brannelly called the meeting to order at 6:09 p.m. A quorum was present. Council Member Brannelly said that Council Member Martinez was at an Ordinance meeting.

BOARD OF EDUCATION PRESENTATION

Ms. Rabinowitz greeted the Committee and various members of the BOE. She distributed copies of a document titled Bridgeport School District 2014-2015 Budget Plan - Discussion with City Council Finance Committee.

Ms. Rabinowitz then reviewed the key points on the sheet. She said that the schools have lost sight of the entire child, particularly the social and emotional development. This has resulted in an increase in suspensions.

She then said that the school was working hard to develop a strong curriculum that would take the students from kindergarten through Grade 12. This means providing interventions for the all the students, including the special education student.

Ms. Rabinowitz said that she wanted to build on the initiatives started by Mr. Vallas including the SRBI Intervention, University Partnerships, Early College Enrollment, New High Schools, Technology Initiatives, and Investments in facilities.

The District is working on learning to do more with less. There is an intensive focus on Literacy and Mathematics, There has been an addition of Social Studies to the Curriculum Initiative, there is Socio-emotional Learning, and strengthening Instructional Practice, with Teacher Evaluation Model.

Ms. Rabinowitz said that while she realizes the District budget accounts for a major portion of the City budget, in order to keep the District moving forward, she needed to request a full funding of the MBR by the Council.

There are 72 teaching positions that are currently vacant and the full MBR allocation will not restore those positions. The District will have an increase of 300 students. When the charter school opens, it will put extra strain in term of Special Education and Transportation. There are increasing needs for Special Education at all levels. 22 of the 72 positions that were cut were Special Education staff.

Ms. Rabinowitz said that she would like to have the City accompany the BOE when they go to the State to argue for more funding for the District.

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT MCCARTHY MOVED TO ENTER BRIDGEPORT SCHOOL DISTRICT 2014-2015 BUDGET PLAN - DISCUSSION WITH CITY COUNCIL FINANCE COMMITTEE AS EXHIBIT #1-04/22/14.**
**** COUNCIL MEMBER SWAIN SECONDED.**
**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Council Member Taylor-Moye asked how the Socio-emotional development component would work. Ms. Rabinowitz said that there are quick ways to check with students about their emotional status each day and makes the students feel comfortable in school. This cuts down on bullying and helps with the various

Council Member Taylor-Moye asked if there was a list of the in-kind services that the City provides to the BOE. Ms. Rabinowitz said that the list was provided to the BOE by Mr. Sherwood.

Council Member Brannelly said that the variance between the Mayor's budget and the MBR was 9 million. Ms. Rabinowitz said that there were discussions about the MBR with the City. She said that sometimes the State accepts in-kind services as part of the MBR, but the actual law refers to cash, not services. Council Member Brannelly pointed out that there were some expenses that the City assumed, which means that the BOE no longer has that expense. Ms. Rabinowitz said that there were three items that were being reviewed by the State, the crossing guards, snow removal and tipping fees.

Rev. Lee said that while services are fine, but she felt that the help should be returned to the classroom. She said that she would rather have the cash in hand rather than having the snow removed. She said that Bridgeport was the most under funded district in the State.

Ms. Rabinowitz said that she was shocked at the lack of intervention in the classrooms. There are no para-professionals, reading specialists, math specialists, so it all falls on the classroom teachers. She said that class size matters and there are 29 students in the classrooms.

Council President McCarthy then said he would love to hear the details about the cost of charter schools. He was told there was a one page summary about the cost of the charter schools for the District. Ms. Rabinowitz said that she would see that the Council Members would have that document tomorrow. There are things like extra bus routes and other items listed on it.

Council President McCarthy said that he really appreciated Ms. Rabinowitz's return to Bridgeport. He said that he agreed that the BOE was under funded from the State. He went on to speak about the burden of the property tax in terms of the total land mass of Bridgeport compared with Fairfield or Greenwich.

Council President McCarthy then reviewed the various portions of the budget that the Committee cannot touch, such as union contracts, the MBR, and debt service. He said that finding the path to balancing the budget and cover the cost was important.

Ms. Rabinowitz said that she was already involved in the suit against the State about equal education.

Council Member Brannelly asked if there were other funding sources. Ms. Rabinowitz said that she spends about half her time working with outside funding sources trying to bring in funding. The grants are incredibly important and she said that she works very hard to find grants that will support the direction that the District is moving. Ms. Rabinowitz said that she would email a list of the grants. It was also noted that the grants had increased. However, the Federal grants had decreased across the nation.

Rev. Lee said that there were 22,000 students in the District and that these children need to have people fighting for them because they are being slighted and not getting what they deserve. She said that they can't turn anyone away.

Council Member Brannelly said that she would like to hear more about the issues that the Committee should be aware of. Ms. Rabinowitz said that there were several topics, such as the Alliance Grant, ECS and other grants. She suggested that the Committee strategized with the District regarding moving forward with the State. Ms. Rabinowitz said that the State had promised 100% funding for Special Education, but the State has never done that.

The CJEF - Lawsuit being brought forward by a number of school districts who feel that they have been under funded. There are a number of attorneys working on this issue and a judge just ruled that the case will be heard this summer. The ECS funding formula needs to be readjusted.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARELLA MOVED TO ENTER THE FOUR PAGE DOCUMENT TITLED PROPOSED NEW CHARTER SCHOOL- FISCAL ANALYSIS 2014-2015 THROUGH 2018-19 AS EX 2-04/22/14.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER TAYLOR-MOYE SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mr. Baker said that Mr. Garcia has utilized the BOE staffing and the City staff together to accomplish projects. He said that partnerships were very important and that it could be a win/win situation.

Council Member Brannelly said that she did not want to take back the in kind services, but that if the MBR was funded to the full amount, she didn't know if this would that be in lieu of the services. It was pointed out that the collaborations could actually be a cost to the BOE staff rather than a savings.

Council Member Brannelly said that there were sandwiches brought for the Committee and the lettuce was grown at one of the schools.

Council President McCarthy said that he would encourage more interaction with the BOE. He said that he would encourage more of the efficiencies. Ms. Rabinowitz said that she felt that everything worked best when it was a partnership.

Mr. Robert Kramer, a teacher at Blackham, said that he supported everything that Ms. Rabinowitz said. He related a recent incident when a kindergarten teacher had to take

RECESS

Council Member Brannelly declared a recess at 7:10 p.m. She called the meeting back into order at 7:35 p.m.

BUDGET OVERVIEW

Council President McCarthy asked if there would be any additional documents that the Committee would need.

Council Member Taylor-Moye said that she had concerns about the in-kind services and whether or not this would continue if the full MBR was allocated. The discussion moved to the history of the in-kind services and the ECS funding. Council President McCarthy gave a brief overview of Sheff vs. O'Neill. He said that there had been something called the MER that allowed the City to give in kind services which had value, but determining the value became a problem. Following this, the State instituted the MBR, which is a budgetary funding requirement. He added that the current Board was not the same board that originally agreed to recognize the in-kind services. The Mayor is claiming that there is 8 million dollars of in-kind services currently provided. However, if the District was given the 8 million dollars, it would also be charged for all the current in-kind services.

Council Member Marella pointed out that the Lighthouse program was not part of the BOE.

Council Member Brannelly then listed the various costs from the City budget that were included as part of the in-kind services for the Committee members.

Council Member Taylor-Moye asked whether the partnership between the City and the BOE would happen if the full MBR was not given. She also asked about the issues surrounding Charter Schools. Discussion followed about the transportation costs and the various issues surrounding the conditions of the various school buildings. Council President McCarthy said that the City had bonded for a number of new school buildings that were part of the Capital Budget. The cost of those bonds and debt service are not included in the in-kind services.

The discussion then moved to the inclusion of grants in the budget book. Council President McCarthy gave a brief overview of how grants factor into the financial pictures.

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT MCCARTHY MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER TAYLOR-MOYE SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET & APPROPRIATIONS
BUDGET HEARINGS
APRIL 23, 2014**

ATTENDANCE: Susan Brannelly, Co-chair; Michael Marella, Co-chair; Patricia Swain, Lydia Martinez, Denese Taylor-Moye

OTHERS: Janet Finch, Benefits; Rich Weiner, Benefits; Larry Osborne, Labor Relations; Tom Sherwood, OPM Director; Council Member Rick Torres; Neil Austin, Labor Relations; Council Member Robert Halstead (6:16 p.m.); Council Member Michelle Lyons (6:40 p.m.)

CALL TO ORDER

Council Member Brannelly called the meeting to order at 6:07 p.m. A quorum was present.

BENEFITS PRESENTATION

Mr. Sherwood said that the information was found on page 82. He reminded everyone that the City was a self-insured entity and the role of the Internal Service Fund, stop loss program and other aspects of the benefits.

Mr. Weiner came forward and narrated a Power Point presentation including the mission statement, managing the plans for medical, prescription drug, dental, vision, group life, short and long term disability and worker's compensation.

Council Member Halstead joined the group at 6:16 p.m.

This also includes vendor selection for insurance Companies, Third Party administrators, brokers, consultants and actuaries. Mr. Sherwood commented that the State was encouraging the various groups to regionalize. By participating in the CT Public Purchasing Coalition, the City is getting a discount and also following the State requirements.

Mr. Weiner said that they are in contact with the various vendors on a daily basis working on changes such as family members aging out of insurance, prescription problems, and other issues. The department also works with the various employees to assist in problem resolutions. He went on to give an overview of the budget preparation, and monitoring expenses.

Mr. Sherwood said that Line Item 5279 in each department contains the cost of the health benefit for that individual department.

Mr. Weiner said that the retired employees contribute to their retirement but the amount depends on when they retired. He then gave an overview of the various pension plans.

Council Member Lyons joined the meeting at 6:40 p.m.

Another major issue for the department is the management of change, which entails staying abreast of issues that will affect the expenses and operations. He then reviewed the following five programs: Retiree Drug Subsidy from 2006-to present; the 2010-2011 early retirement reinsurance program; the employer Group Waiver Plan; the Wellness Plan, and the Affordable Care Act.

Council Member Torres asked about OPEB. Mr. Sherwood explained that this area would be covered after Labor Relations.

One of the staff members came forward and gave an overview of the various wellness programs offered, including Biometric testing, walking programs, blood pressure testing heart and health fairs, on-site mammography, health risk assessment, stress reduction, smoking cessation, life style management, zumba exercise classes and weight management. These programs are available through the Cigna website. Discussion followed.

Mr. Weiner then reviewed the details about the Affordable Care Act. He explained there was a fee of \$897,600 charged to plan sponsors to support insurance exchanges covering high risk individuals in FY 2015. An additional fee of \$102,500 will also be paid to the State for childhood immunization Program.

The two parts of the Employer Mandate of the Affordable Care Act was the next topic Mr. Weiner reviewed. The City and the BOE has 1,330 seasonal employees, some of which work over 30 hours a week. If one employee is not offered coverage and works over 30 hours, then the City would be fined \$7.2 million dollars. The second portion of the requirement includes minimum value (pays for 60% of covered service). Affordable means insurance that does not exceed 9.5% of the paycheck.

Beginning in 2018, there will be an excise tax of 40% of the health coverage that exceed specific limits. That will mean the City will be taxed 6 million dollars, 1.5 million, which would be absorbed by the employees.

Council Member Torres asked how the payments would be handled. Mr. Sherwood said that employee's portion would go right into the fund. He added that there would be difficulty with amending the union contracts.

Council Member Torres asked about the seasonal employees could be contracted out. Mr. Sherwood said that the issues were being discussed. There are several potential solutions being considered. Discussion followed.

Council Member Swain asked about the potential of having individuals who are contract hires and issued a 1099. Mr. Sherwood said that it was difficult because there are requirements.

Council Member Lyons had several technical questions about the details of the part-time employees who would qualify for the Affordable Care.

Council Member Taylor-Moye asked if Connecticut Works would fall under the City of Bridgeport. Mr. Sherwood said that he believed the group was under the State, not the City.

Council Member Martinez asked about the Library. Mr. Sherwood said that they receive their own money, but that the Labor Relations would be involved in the union negotiations.

Council Member Torres had questions about how the self-insurance aspect worked with the City paying the claims. He also wished to know whether there were investigators working on disability claims. Mr. Weiner reviewed the details with him.

Council Member Brannelly thanked Mr. Weiner for his work. Mr. Weiner said that he had hard copies of the Power Point presentation for the Committee members.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARELLA/ MOVED TO ENTER HARD COPY OF THE POWER POINT PRESENTATION AS EXHIBIT #1-04/23/14.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER SWAIN SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The discussion then moved to specific line items.

LABOR RELATIONS

Mr. Austin greeted the Committee. He said that he would be speaking about the negotiations and what the goals are for the contracts.

The main items that will impact the budget, such as MPPs (claims by bargaining units that the City is involved in a prohibitive practice) and union contracts and discipline and grievances.

Mr. Austin said that the Fire Department contract has been approved recently and gave a brief overview of the key points. Mr. Sherwood said that the City was moving positively in terms of contracts. Mr. Sherwood then talked about Other Post Employment Benefits (OPEB).

Mr. Austin then spoke about what kind of concessions that Labor Relations had been able to secure from other department. He spoke about the various settlements that have been secured and how this has saved money for the City.

Council Member Lyons left the meeting at 8:05 p.m.

Council Member Torres asked about the details about the Firefighters contract. Mr. Sherwood reviewed the details with the Committee.

Council Member Torres asked about the grievances. Mr. Austin explained that grievances could only be discussed in Executive Session.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ MOVED TO ENTER IN TO EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS CONTRACTUAL ISSUES.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER SWAIN SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Council Member Marella left the meeting at 8:12 p.m.

The Committee entered in to Executive Session at 8:12 p.m. They returned to public Session at 9:10 p.m.

Council Members Torres and Halstead left the meeting at 9:13 p.m.

Council Member Brannelly said that the Committee would be focused on the budget as a whole on Saturday morning.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ MOVED TO ENTER FY 2015 BUDGET 101 BREAKDOWN AS EX 2-04-23-14**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER TAYLOR-MOYE SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ MOVED TO ENTER THE VACANCY LIST AS EXHIBIT # 3-04-23-14.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER SWAIN SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mr. Sherwood then gave a brief overview of the Budget 101 figures.

Council Member Martinez asked about the blight ordinance budget. Mr. Sherwood said that the department had never had a budget line because it was a special revenue. A discussion followed about the establishment of an appropriation line.

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL MEMBER TAYLOR-MOYE MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 9:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services

City of Bridgeport
Budget & Appropriations
Budget Hearings
April 23, 2014

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET & APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
PUBLIC HEARING
THURSDAY, APRIL 24, 2014
6:00 PM**

ATTENDANCE: Co-chair Brannelly; Council members: Swain, Taylor-Moye,
Vizzo-Paniccia

NON-COMMITTEE: Council President McCarthy, Council members: McBride-Lee,
Torres, Halstead, Salter

Co-chair Brannelly called the public hearing to order at 6:05 pm.

She stated that each speaker that signed up will have a 3-minute time limit.

She introduced the committee members and the non-committee members that were present.

- ❖ *All speaker comments and statements have been summarized. The comments and statements are written here in statement form; rather than he said/she said format; for the purpose of conveying the true message as it was spoken:*

Item (66-13) - Mayor's Proposed General Fund Budget for Fiscal Year 2014 – 2015

Fran Rabinowitz, Interim Superintendent; 45 Lyon Terrace stated that she was there to advocate full funding of the (MER), noting that she would be grateful. She stressed that the schools are in great need and they are hurting, in terms of limited staff. She stated that they are in need of hiring additional staff for special education, counselors etc. She urged the committee to think of ways to augment the MER for the students and parent's sake.

Tom Lombard, 2156 Park Avenue spoke on behalf of Bob Keeley. He read a statement from Bob Keeley that highlighted his support of increased funding for the Bridgeport school system to establish a Department of Youth Services and Department of Recreation. The statement outlined that children deserve better than they currently receive and that we must also rethink our education system as we now know it. In addition, we need to reinvigorate our Bridgeport community to fight and overcome the political impediments that currently deny Bridgeport children a proper education. In

summary, he expressed that we must create a new reality starting with a total commitment to our children, leaving bad political decision-making in the dust.

Donna Koolis, Bassick High School, S.G.C. stated that the Board of Education really needed funding. She referenced a report that was received, related to the school being on probation due to the condition of the facility. She relayed that lab desks are in disrepair. She emphasized that they are good kids and they have seen the conditions at the school worsen; the roof leaks that causes the tiles to fall down. She strongly urged to put the children first.

Jocelyn Ault, 1181 Fairfield Avenue, Bassick High School PRC stated that she was convinced that they will continue to do what has been done. However, she said they then need to determine what's important, noting that expenses will grow. She urged funding of the educational system and to continue the attitude of "together we can" for the sake of the talented kids she sees.

Maria Pereira, 85 Nutmeg Road stated that she is a graduate of the Bridgeport school system and she has a child in public school. She highlighted the following points: MER in reference to the review of the audits; 2003, 2004 and 2005 audits and the alleged violation of state law per the amounts mentioned; the audits were never completed; the claim that the city undercut the Board of Education by \$13 million and the audits revealed that the City of Bridgeport undercut the Board of Education in violation of state law; indirect costs charged by the city that have gone unexplained; CT statutes have been disregarded that put a stranglehold on the BOE budget; the Minimum Budget Requirement (MBR) submitted and in place should be in accordance with compliance. She emphasized that the \$5.2 million that is being requested should be the only amount that is accepted.

Tammy Boyle, 324 Lyon Terrace stated that PACT was a recognized organization that represents 20,000 parents. She highlighted the following comments regarding: cash contribution to public schools that has only been increased by \$3 million; the 2012 forums that were held to discuss state taxes being raised to increase funding to public schools; during 2013, they voted to take back \$1 million which equated to a \$2 million appropriation; the \$3.3 million appropriation for this school year as of today, Bridgeport hasn't been paid the \$3.3 million required by state law. She emphasized that anything less than \$5.2 million is unacceptable and they will not accept a violation of state law, because the children deserve more.

Gabrielle Rosario, Central High School student in the 11th grade stated that she knows how bad the Bridgeport schools need the extra money. Teachers have to be careful about giving out supplies and books because of the fear that they may run out. The

students deserve a quality education and given all the tools to make sure that they have the chance to succeed. With the parent's tax dollars, they should ensure a quality education. She urged funding to help the students excel.

Joann Kennedy, Hancock Avenue stated that they need quality education for the students. She emphasized that she was sure they want what is best for all children. They need to spend the money wisely, noting that overall we are responsible for "our" children. She noted that she has children in public schools and she wants them to have a quality education. They need to respect each other and do what's right over and above. She emphasized that the message to children should be to reach for the stars, but then they are told that they can't give the money to the schools; this defeats the meaning of the message to believe in the schools.

Tony Barr, 405 Taft Avenue strongly urged to give the kids in Bridgeport a chance and opportunity. The kids are being disrespected and shouldn't have to beg.

Rob Traber, 110 Hale Terrace recalled that council chambers during the 1990's was packed with speakers that came forward to beg for money for the schools. There is great skepticism about the intent of the city council, noting that the children suffer and if the city and state don't pay their share, then who is the victim. Mr. Trefy, Superintendent of Schools at the time compared the Bridgeport school system to a starving child. He urged that the city council closely consider what happens to children that are the future of the city.

Jehan Raheem, Fairfield Avenue emphasized the topic of quality education in Bridgeport won't be improved unless it's fully funded. Schools can't survive with limited resources and supplies. He urged the city council to ensure that the decision reflects a fundamental decision to fund.

Robert Jefferies, 794 Norman Street spoke about against the budget, due to spending way too much money in general. Relayed it was a mirror image scenario with a big debt in other areas. We need to consider living within our means and come up with positive solutions. The situation is likened to putting a shovel in the hole, but you don't stop digging.

Jacqueline Keller, 392 Eckart Street spoke about having the ingredients of a world class education in Bridgeport that will attract people to the area. They have expert teachers, but they need the resources to bring the quality of education up. It's important to close the achievement gap and they need to build a scale of excellence and they can't do without full funding and meet the (MBR). The children deserve it.

Steve Karganis, 425 Thorne Street stated that he has been a school social worker for twenty years. He had concerns about wanting students to achieve, but they aren't inspiring them by fighting over money. It doesn't make sense to have the worst school system, if they want to produce productive, viable employees. Questioned when was the last time a state representative attended a Board of Education meeting. The children shouldn't be treated as second hand citizens and they shouldn't be given a second hand education. They aren't preparing them for higher paying jobs and they are taking the youth and their dreams from children and need to fight for them. Politicians make empty promises and it's crucial to expect great things for the betterment of the students and set a better example.

David Gordon, 2612 North Avenue thanked the council members present for taking the time to listen to the public, noting shame on the others that weren't present. He has worked in Bridgeport schools for twenty years as a substance abuse counselor. The current budget isn't close to funding education for children and it's not fair. How will they compete with mediocre resources? They need to serve the best interest of the constituents. They need to address the problem of gang activity that infiltrates the schools and they need to address the 50% drop out rate. The schools are continuously producing poor results. He asked to construct a budget to reflect the true needs of children, because the issue is getting serious about the future of students. The budget should meet the (MBR).

John Marshall Lee, 30 Beacon Street spoke about the departmental budgets being situated differently in terms of the budget review process. The stipend accounts haven't been revised appropriately. For the current debt, why don't they require a purchase shown for each expenditure on the debit card? The charitable contributions report as it applies to the payment to the city, to make the point that's why the budget is out of balance. Why are there department vacancies and positions that haven't been reported or listed? Questioned how much will be available, noting the estimate will be approximately \$7 million that will help the budget. The grant revenue from the Lighthouse Program isn't shown in the budget or reported. Fringe benefits to city employees aren't reported. He urged funding the schools for the full budget.

Steve Nelson, Stoneridge Apartments had a concern that without proper funding, it will be difficult for employees to perform. The school system needs help from all government entities because under funding destroys the entire community and inadequate education contributes to; high crime, homelessness, joblessness. Funding schools promotes; college education, jobs in the community and a lower crime rate. Why is Bridgeport receiving a lower amount of funding than New Haven? He urged to please address the issue.

Dr. Dan, 280 Compo Road Westport, stated that he is a teacher at Bassick High School. He loves the city and has been teaching for three years. He's shocked at the condition of the building and there are environment issues. He reconsidered going back to Norwalk to teach, however; he found that the students are fantastic and they are looking to excel and many have gone on to Ivy League schools. The students need support and he pleaded to fully fund the (MBR). The lack of funds has affected the loss of support to numerous school programs and activities. They need to ensure that students have a fighting chance.

Bishop Griffith, 707 Central Avenue stated that he is an advocate for children and for change in the school system. He wants to ensure adequate funding for all schools. Asking them to compete with less money is like asking for a miracle. Classes aren't up to par and books and materials are sparse. They need to look at the budget closely, noting that the proposed \$229 million isn't sufficient. Emphasized that helping children is important and he believed in education. They should support the request for full funding to meet the requirements and take care of the children. He expressed that education is the key to economics.

Claudia Phillips, 74 Alameda Place expressed her gratitude to Mayor Finch for the work he's done in the city, particularly his support of charter schools. Overall she was pleased with the Mayor's direction regarding the schools.

Ethan Book, 144 Coleman Street mentioned the city's internal audit process that has been terminated and the legal aide position that was de-funded during 2012. The situation puts everyone at a disadvantage by eliminating these positions, noting they would help improve things to help the city run more efficiently and the budget process run smoother. Mentioned the stipends that the council members currently receive versus what they received in past years and compared to other cities, in relation to the alleged abuse of stipends.

Marylee Taylor, 59 Bennett Street stated that she has a daughter in second grade. Two charter schools have been constructed and included in the budget, but it's difficult for a child to get in unless their name is pulled from the lottery. They are proposing to take millions from the budget to build a bridge in Black Rock, when they should be putting the money into the schools. They need to figure out where we want the city to go.

Michael Rosario, 135 Beverly Drive a student at Central Magnet School mentioned the Mayor including in-kind services in the \$5.2 million and they want the funding in cash. During 2014-2015, \$224 million has been proposed for 21,000 students, questioned why the amount seems much less than New Haven schools receive.

Ileana the parent of three girls in Bridgeport schools congratulated the Mayor for looking at the education issue. She was there to contest the budget, noting that they need to come together as a community. Parents are most important in their child's life and they needed more parental input. They need to cross the finish line by educating children, commenting that children of single parents generally tend to mostly be the ones that get into trouble.

Samantha Roach, 52 Waldorf Avenue stated that we can't commence to have passion for children if we can't relate to them. She believed that not funding education is akin to suppressing children. If they have the opportunity to believe in the education system, they will have hope. Frustration is expressed by kids in the Bridgeport school system and as a parent; there is concern due to being pro-education. There is also concern about her son, a young black male and she has considered relocating to Fairfield or Trumbull so that he can receive a quality education and she shouldn't have to consider this. He should be afforded the same quality education as other towns give their students. She urged them to fully fund the schools, to allow the students to succeed.

David King, 199 Yacht Street stated that he is a former Central High School student. He struggled with reading and since then, he has been an active member of the community. It's sad to hear that 6th and 8th graders have said that the budget stops them from doing certain things. He wants to eliminate the problem of kids leaving school without learning to read to get a good job. He stressed that the council needs to consider the students education, so they can go on to live properly and they can't do that without a proper education.

Jeanne Meadows stated that during the year 2006, it cost \$4.69 to educate each student and now the amount is \$2.00 per student. A box of crayons at state bid is .35 and there isn't enough to fund programs; clay had to be donated to keep two art programs going. There was no support for equipment needed and they can't continue to do this to children. She's dedicated to kids and expressed that creativity is the number one thing they ask from children. She has spent money out of her paycheck to do her job. She strongly questioned how dare they treat people like this?

David Goodman, 746 Railroad Avenue emphasized that residents pay high taxes. Where is the money going because kids are suffering and why are they putting the burden on taxpayers. Why not fund education like they should. Elected officials aren't doing their job right and should be. It's a shame and when elections are held, they want to be voted in. Teachers work and are dedicated, but they are failing to give them what they need and it's shameful and wrong. There are issues with city officials related to education, taxes and other issues. He's against bringing in charter schools unless they address the public school system first.

Tom Coble, Hartford, CT spoke about being a former Bridgeport resident. He has a grandchild in the public school system, noting that the formerly; the school system was good, but it's changed. The core problem for him was looking at the people in the audience tonight pleading for good quality education. It's crucial to recognize the matter of coming forward to ask for what they need. He grew up in the community and was committed to the citizens. They must be aware of the way each council member votes for the budget and they need to take a better position and do the right thing.

Steve Nelson spoke for the second time. He added that the (MBR) matter was very upsetting to the community and he stressed that they should take time and go to the schools to observe what they are presenting to the children. He mentioned athletics in Bridgeport to comment that a little over a million dollars has been spent, noting that other towns spend triple that amount on sports. So again, there is a question of how kids will compete. He once again urged them to visit schools to observe the conditions. He pointed out that many of the schools are dirty for no reason, because they don't have the proper supplies to clean with.

Mildred Maldonado stated that the school system was strong in the past, but as years went by; they started to deteriorate. She has seen the arts and education suffer as she has grown older and although she doesn't have any school age children in the city, she noted that her sons have moved to other towns so their kids could receive a better education. They need to educate the children in Bridgeport and she wants to urge her children to come back to teach. She commented that she believed they are barking up the wrong tree and they need to get together and fight Hartford and let them know that the city belongs to the citizens. It's crucial to provide a good education system and lead in the right direction, before it becomes a dead issue.

Jim Damone stated that he has two boys in public school. The budget isn't a desire, it's a necessity. Please fund fully.

Kenny Jackson, 519 Connecticut Avenue stated that he hoped what he said wasn't a formality. The city is known for being corrupt and for being in a politically weak environment. Any time that people have to come forward to speak up for the students is wrong and the matter should be addressed by the elected officials. If they aren't funded, they will continue to have failing schools. They shouldn't have to fight for children to receive a good education. He relayed his past trouble and being incarcerated, noting that he changed his life. He made an analogy in reference to what could happen to our children if they don't fully fund schools, and mentioned that there is a book with an illustrated book cover that shows a school bus next to a prison bus.

Gladys Walker Jones, 44 Oxford Street mentioned the rate of Bridgeport property taxes compared to Greenwich. They need to provide for the (MBR), noting that the path was before them and she urged to fund the (MBR) fully.

Cynthia Jacques, 174 Bronx Avenue a student stated that she was there to say that they should fund Bridgeport schools for other kids that are willing to learn; as well as students that come from other countries to build up their academic skills.

Jeanne Russo, 9 Granfield Avenue stated that she was born and raised in Bridgeport and attended public school. Teachers and students need the full funding and they need to give to the children what is theirs!

PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT McCARTHY MOVED TO CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING**
**** COUNCILMEMBER TAYLOR-MOYE SECONDED**
**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

The public hearing closed at 7:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Graham
Telesco Secretarial Services

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS
BUDGET HEARINGS
APRIL 28, 2014**

ATTENDANCE: Susan Brannelly, Co-chair; Michael Marella, Jr. Co-Chair; Lydia Martinez, Howard Austin, AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia, Patricia Swain

OTHERS: Thomas Sherwood, OPM Director; Atty. Mark Anastasi, Atty. Art Laske, Council Member Rick Torres, Council Member Richard Salter, Anne Kelly-Lenz, Andy Nunn; Elaine Carvalho, Tax Assessor

CALL TO ORDER

Council Member Brannelly called the meeting to order at 6:17 p.m.

CITY ATTORNEY

Attorney Anastasi gave a brief overview of the City Attorney's department. He said that the department supplements staff with outside counsel in cases where there are areas of specialized expertise, such as environmental issues, pension issues, and other suits that may involve conflicts of interest.

He explained that the City was self-insured and listed a number of areas where the insurance applies, such as the airport and various other issues. An assessment of the insurance is currently underway. He explained that funds were reserved in the budget to cover the amount of expected costs. He said that so far, the City has been able to meet their obligations without bonding.

Atty. Anastasi then gave a brief overview of how the assessment is done and said that the City general reserves a million a year for suits and claims. Council Member Brannelly noted this was on page 67 in the budget book.

Council Member Torres asked about the budget compared to New Haven. He said that he would like to know what New Haven was doing to reduce their costs. Mr. Sherwood pointed out that the City may be insured or they use Capital funds. He said that a major point would be when they do their budgets. Ms. Kelly-Lenz commented that they might spread the legal costs out over departments.

Atty. Anastasi said that there was also the possibility of having a Risk Management Department or out of line item. All major cities pay out millions in claims.

Council Member Torres asked about personnel services figures and wanted to know why the City hired outside services. Atty. Anastasi explained that legal issues come in ebbs and flows and

it would not be fiscally prudent to have a year round environmental legal expert or tax expert on the payroll.

Council Member Torres asked about Litigation Services. Deputy Atty. Laske pointed out that there were times when they had to bring in doctors or experts for testimony. These experts are not attorneys.

Regarding Personal property, Deputy Atty. Laske explained that these funds are used for pre-trial settlements. Atty. Anastasi gave an overview of how these types of claims are settled.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

**** COUNCIL MARELLA MOVED TO ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS PENDING LITIGATION.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The Committee, Mr. Sherwood, Ms. Kelly-Lenz, Atty. Anastasi, Deputy Atty. Laske and Mr. Nunn entered into Executive Session to discuss pending litigation at 6:38 p.m.

Council Member Halstead joined the meeting at 7:02 p.m.

Mr. Sherwood left the meeting at 7:05 p.m.

The Committee returned to Public Session at 7:17 p.m.

TAX ASSESSOR'S OFFICE

Ms. Kelly-Lenz said that Ms. Carvalho's budget stayed the same. The Tax Assessor does not generate revenue, but there are line items called Revenue Line Items that are on page 50. These funds are funds that the State will be giving to the City.

Council Member Brannelly said that the City had received a letter from State Secretary Ben Barnes regarding the shortfall in tax revenue for the State of Connecticut.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER SWAIN MOVED TO ENTER A LETTER FROM BEN BARNES, THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT SECRETARY AS EXHIBIT #1-4-28-14.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER AUSTIN SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Council Member Torres asked about a dramatic increase last year. Ms. Carvalho explained that her department had not had a deputy for six years and for three months the department operated with three clerks rather than five clerks.

Council Member Torres asked what the property appraisers do. Ms. Carvalho explained that these employees inspect new constructions, and appraise personal property in business. They

also audit the various issues. Ms. Kelly-Lenz said that the program highlighted on page 51. The property appraisers will also fill in as clerks.

Ms. Carvalho said that right now the elderly are coming in to enroll in a State program. Council Member Torres asked for more detailed information about the income for the elderly. Ms. Carvalho explained that this happens every other year.

She also spoke about how the property appraisers do their jobs. Council Member Torres said that he had seen some properties owned by churches that have been vacant for some time. He asked how to report these issues. Ms. Carvalho said that all they have to do is to contact her via telephone or email. She cautioned everyone that a church would have to own a property for it to be tax exempt. If the church is renting from the property owners, the owner is paying taxes.

Council Member Martinez wished to know what would happen to the PILOT payments if the Governor does not get the money that he expects. She was told that the State determines how much money it will give to the City in PILOT payments.

Council Member Torres asked how the re-evaluation process was done. Ms. Kelly-Lenz gave a brief overview of the process.

Council Member Torres asked about land value taxation. Ms. Kelly-Lenz said that there were three towns that were currently testing this type of taxation, but said that it was only on the State level at this time.

Council Member Torres asked about standardized the taxes. A discussion followed about the details of this issue.

Council Member Brannelly asked for an overview of the re-evaluation and impact of this on the budget. Ms. Kelly-Lenz reviewed how the mill rate and property values affect the tax bills. She said that it would be important to keep the tax base stable so that the smaller businesses remain open and larger businesses are attracted to the area. Ms. Kelly-Lenz explained that one company, Vision, has collected all the raw data for Bridgeport, but it does not include any exemptions or adjustments. Vision is holding the raw information. The Tax Assessor's Office would have to make all the adjustments. Discussion followed.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked a question regarding the State renegotiating a contract, which Ms. Kelly-Lenz answered

Council Member Swain said that the re-evaluation had been cancelled for 2013. Ms. Kelly-Lenz said that it would be done in 2015. The discussion then moved to how often a re-evaluation should be done.

Council Member Halstead said that he saw their point regarding delaying the reval, but did not agree with it.

Council Member Torres said that the departmental totals for Police and Fire were missing. Council Member Brannelly made a note of this request and said she would follow up with Mr. Sherwood.

ADJOURNMENT

- ** COUNCIL MEMBER MARELLA MOVED TO ADJOURN.**
- ** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ SECONDED.**
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET & APPROPRIATIONS
BUDGET HEARINGS
APRIL 29, 2014**

ATTENDANCE: Susan Brannelly, Co-chair; Michael Marella, Co-Chair;
Howard Austin, Lydia Martinez, Denese Taylor-Moye,
Patricia Swain, (6:08 p.m.) AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia (6:09 p.m.)

OTHERS: Thomas Sherwood, OPM Director, Police Chief Gaudett, Assistant Chief
James Gardoze, Lt. Cueto, Scott Hughes, Librarian
Sauda Baraka, Library Board Vice President; Don Greenberg, Library
Board Member; Tom Errichetti, Library Board Treasurer;
Council Member Rick Torres (6:08 p.m.), Council Member Michelle
Lyons (6:45 p.m.); Council President Thomas McCarthy (7:25 p.m.)

CALL TO ORDER

Council Member Brannelly called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. A quorum was present. She introduced the Committee members and gave a general overview of the process.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Chief Gaudett introduced his staff members and explained that the department was not only located on Congress Street but thorough

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ MOVED TO ENTER THE DIAGRAM OF THE BRIDGEPORT POLICE DEPARTMENT AS EXHIBIT 1-4-29-14.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARCELLA SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Chief Gaudett then reviewed the Department's Goals. He said that he would like to address some of the crime statistics.

Council Member Torres and Council Member Swain joined the meeting at 6:08 p.m.

He explained that there had been one situation where a minor had been abused repeatedly over the course of the year and the Federal Government required the City to count the episode as 300, basing it on the fact that the abuse occurred repeatedly.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia joined the meeting at 6:09 p.m.

The number of homicides was down to 13, which included two police officer involved shootings.

He gave an overview of the Traffic calming efforts that are underway. Another goal is to provide training to the new officers. Chief Gaudett said that there were negotiations underway and that can not be discussed.

Chief Gaudett said that the Firearms Training was still underway. He said that the training is taking place out of town.

The class of 17 new recruits are at the Academy now. There is some attrition underway due to the new pensions. Recruiting is underway and it is targeting the local community for the candidates. Work continues on testing with Civil Service.

Chief Gaudett gave a brief overview on the pension and he said that 94 of the 423 officers are eligible to retire. The new Time and Attendance software is a contractual issue and will be a software issues. Mr. Sherwood said that the issue was the scheduling in order to have coverage.

Project Longevity is started by Governor Malloy and a U.S. Attorney are working on reduce gun violence. A list of all the gangs and the relationships between the various groups. He then explained that there was a program that focuses on group accountability. This means that if the gun violence continues, then the full focus of the law enforcement will be on that particular group. Since this was done, the number of group related homicides and shootings have dropped. Council Member Martinez said that there had been a gathering of 300 people at a recent program and it was very successful.

A Police Manuel update is underway. It acts as a management tool and insures that the officers have a state of the art best practices.

Council Member Brannelly reminded everyone that the focus was about the operational issues, not the daily workings of the department.

Council Member Brannelly then expressed concerns about the attrition. Chief Gaudett said that by the time the 17 officers were finished with probation, it should be a wash in terms of retirements. He added that he was authorized to hire 31, but there were only 17 names left on the list. This was why the department was recruiting locally. Discussion followed.

Council Member Brannelly asked if there would be any savings through the savings. Mr. Sherwood said that it varied because of the individual factors, such as a retiree just having his wife and himself on the health insurance but the new hire has a wife and family.

Council Member Taylor-Moye asked whether the curfews were reflected in the budget. Chief Gaudett said that this was not reflected in the budget.

Mr. Sherwood then distributed copies of the Fire and Police Summary Report.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER AUSTIN MOVED TO ENTER THE SUMMARY REPORT OF THE POLICE AND FIRE AS EXHIBIT #2-4-29-14.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER SWAIN SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Council Member Torres asked why there was such a spike last year in the budget. Mr. Sherwood explained that spike was caused by the need for overtime. He said that he could run a report that would give more detail. Council Member Brannelly said that would be helpful to have that.

Council Member Torres asked about the Pension benefits. Mr. Sherwood gave an overview of the events in 2008 and the economic crash that happened just after the City bonded for the pensions.

Council Member Lyons joined the meeting at 6:45 p.m.

Council Member Torres has several questions about the details of the pension. Mr. Sherwood said that last year he had created a pension graph that showed when the pension obligations would start to decrease.

Council Member Swain asked if there were minimum shift staffing. Chief Gaudett said that there is no legal staffing, but he has departmental minimums for public safety. Currently there are 423 officers, but 437 would be optimal. Mr. Sherwood said that the testing is costly and the department needs serious candidates. Because of this, the City now requires the candidates to pay a fee.

Chief Gaudett then spoke about the fees and permits, including bazaar permits, junk dealer permits, and public hall permits. Mr. Sherwood said that in Connecticut, the ticket revenue from moving violations goes to the State. Chief Gaudett gave an overview of how the original intent for the Police Academy, which was to have a training facility. However, the facility has been gutted and Bridgeport does not use the facility because the classes require a group of more than 10.

He then spoke about how the department had been aggressive regarding snow plowing tows where there were vehicles parking on the wrong side of the street and these were towed.

Council Member Lyons then asked about privatizing the animal shelter. Chief Gaudett said that there had been some turn over in the animal shelter staff. He said that there were two good, solid employees there now and that he felt that with more training, there would be an even stronger staff.

Council Member Lyons asked about the software and computer use. Chief Gaudett said that all the computers go through IT, but cautioned everyone that there were specialized programs and support that have to be done by outside vendors. He said that there was a good working relationship between IT and the Police Department.

Council Member Lyons asked the combination of the computers and centralization the printers so that they were in designated locations. She said that she was concerned about equipment and

supplies. Lt. Cueto said that the department has a contract on the equipment. He added that when the contract was renewed, Mr. Heller, the IT Director, was involved.

Council Member Martinez said that she had been told Bass Pro would be selling firearms. She wished to know if the permits would be handled through the Bridgeport Police Department. She was told that firearms permits are handled through the State.

Council Member Martinez commented that Radio Cumber worked very well during the snow emergencies.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked about the Parking meters funds going to the Public Facilities. Chief Gaudett said that this was so.

She asked if there was a way to gain revenue when a tow company does not clean up after an accident. Chief Gaudett said that there is a contractual agreement. He added that if the tow company does a poor job, they are skipped the next time around.

Council Member Torres asked about the Personnel Services decreases, but the fringe benefits have not decreased. Chief Gaudett said that he thought those items remained in Administration.

Council Member Marella asked about the 11 homicides that occurred last year. Chief Gaudett said that the focus deterrents had an effect on the groups. He said that using the various Longevity methods has changed the overall fabric of the department. The parents appreciate the fact that their kids are not being hassled, but the kids that the parents do not want their kids around are being moved along.

Council Member Brannelly asked about the security in the Board of Education and the impact operationally and budgetary. More than half of the uniformed officers are not in the same union as the other half. The security staff cares deeply about the students and there has been wonderful two way communication. He said that it has been very beneficial. There is a grant for 10 more school resource officers.

Council President McCarthy joined the meeting at 7:25 p.m.

Council Member Brannelly said that the over-riding theme was to find more revenue and reducing expenses. Chief Gaudett reiterated some of the ideas from last year, including a quartermaster. He explained that the department was considering having the officers get their uniforms through the department, which would be handled by the quartermaster.

The discussion then moved to an impound yard. Chief Gaudett said that the problem was finding space. A tow truck was included in the Capital request.

He also then spoke about the License Plate Readers and there would be three through a grant and one through the Regional District funding. He then gave a brief overview of the Visible Intermodal Response (VIPR).

Chief Gaudett then spoke about the increased foot patrols at the various housing projects, which he believes reduced the incidents last year.

There will be a number of electric bicycles from Federal grant funding.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked about acquiring the police car rates for dirt jobs. From CCM. Chief Gaudett said that he would consider this.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked about having civilians in the Records Room. Chief said that any uniformed officers in the Record Room were on administrative suspension or light duty.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked about how long the License Plate Readers retained the data. Chief Gaudett said that there was no law but that the Department would follow the legal statutes.

Council Member Martinez asked about the credit card parking meters. Mr. Sherwood said that there was a study done and the City was ready to install the parking meters, but the technology changed completely before the City ordered the meters. Council Member Lyons also asked about the parking meters in fronts of businesses. Mr. Sherwood said that Mr. Nunn was looking into this.

Council Member Martinez left the meeting at 7:41 p.m.

Council Member Marella asked about the percentages the City gets from moving violations. Chief Gaudett said that the City gets about \$10.00 per ticket.

Council Member Brannelly thanked the Chief for their work and said that the Council Members appreciated them greatly.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARELLA MOVED TO INCLUDE DOCUMENT OF LIST OF FEES AND PERMITS AS EXHIBIT #3-4-29-14.**

****COUNCIL MEMBER TAYLOR-MOYE SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

BRIDGEPORT PUBLIC LIBRARY

Mr. Hughes said that the library expanded their hours by cross training. He said that one of the first things that he did was a strategic plan and had some success with grant writing. He said that the Bookmobile has been in use for seven years and is handled by volunteers.

On May 21st, there will be a Community Stakeholders meeting for a Library Facilities Master Plan. The last plan was done decades ago. He said that the lowest bidder was Antonozzi and listed a number of projects that the developer has done.

The Library is now working on being green with e-blasts. All the branches are open 52 hours, six days a week. The main library is open 7 days a week. He spoke about the recent Mayor's Community Cabinet.

Mr. Errichetti said that the acquisition policies are being reviewed to insure that the best materials are offered to the residents. Right now, DVDs are the top circulating items. In the budget, there were funds earmarked for debt service for the East Side, but since that was not possible, the funds were used to replace the roof at the Main Library. Solar panels are being installed on that new roof and the HVAC system.

The Friends and the Library worked with the recently discontinued Literacy program and it is now part of the Library. The two employees will be

Ms. Baraka said that the BOE was looking to bring the library services into the school. She said that there are discussion about possibly bringing the Newfield branch to Tisdale School.

Council Member Brannelly then asked for an overview of the library budget and what kind of Capital dollars were. Mr. Errichetti then listed the costs of the books, and added that the Library pays all the utilities. The major expense is salaries and benefits. He said that there were many things that needed to be addressed at Burroughs. There has been a great deal of the funding used for deferred maintenance.

Council Member Brannelly said that the Budget Committee had shifted to the larger departments regarding their goals. She said that the budget information did not include all the various goals just listed.

Council Member Marella asked if the out of town students were charged for using the Bridgeport libraries. Mr. Errichetti said that the State has the Connecticard system that allows any resident to borrow materials from any library in the State for free.

Mr. Errichetti said that there were non-levy funds and some endowment funds. He said that if the reval had been done, he was concerned about the mill rate dropping.

Council Member Brannelly asked about surpluses. Mr. Errichetti said that any surplus funds were turned back over to the City. A discussion then followed about whether this was a restricted capital funds.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia congratulated Mr. Errichetti on the fact that the Newfield Library may move to the Tisdale School. She said that this had been mentioned years ago, but that it was finally coming to fruition. Council Member Taylor-Moye asked if the South End could have a library in a school in their area. Mr. Hughes said that the Master Plan would address an issue like that.

ADJOURNMENT

- ** COUNCIL MEMBER MARELLA MOVED TO ADJOURN.**
- ** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA SECONDED.**
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET & APPROPRIATIONS
BUDGET HEARINGS
APRIL 30, 2014**

ATTENDANCE: Susan Brannelly, Co-Chair; Michael Marella, Co-chair;
Denese Taylor-Moye; Patricia Swain, AmyMarie
Vizzo-Paniccia, Council President Thomas McCarthy,
Lydia Martinez (6:18 p.m.)

OTHERS: Alanna Kabel, Mayor's Office; Christina Smith, Grants
Director; Council Member Michelle Lyons (7:00 p.m.);
Andy Nunn, Mayor's Office (7:34 p.m.); Adam Wood
(via telephone at 7:34 p.m.)

CALL TO ORDER

Council Member Brannelly called the meeting to order at 6:15 p.m. A quorum was present.

GRANTS DEPARTMENT

Council Member Brannelly said that the goal was to have an overview of the grant funding.

Council Member Martinez joined the meeting at 6:18 p.m.

Ms. Smith distributed copies of a summary titled Grant Application to date for Fiscal Year 2014 (July 1, 2013 to date).

**** COUNCIL MEMBER SWAIN MOVED TO ENTER DOCUMENT GRANT APPLICATION TO DATE FOR FISCAL YEAR 2014 (JULY 1, 2013 TO DATE) AS EXHIBIT #1-4-30-14.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER AUSTIN SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Ms. Smith said that she had broken the information out into four categories of OPED, Public Facilities, Public Safety, and Health and Social Services.

She then reviewed each one of the grants in the document with the Committee members.

Ms. Smith spoke about the White House Council on Strong Cities, Strong Communities grant was denied. Ms. Smith said that this was a technical assistance initiative. Ms. Kabel explained that she had spoken to the group earlier in the day and that when the website for Strong Cities, Strong Communities website went up, Bridgeport will be allowed to have a portal for information provided by the group.

Ms. Smith also reviewed the pending grants and indicated that several of the grant applications had just been submitted.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked why the tobacco grant was having the city employees checking local stores to insure that the staff was not selling tobacco to underage customers. The State only has two inspectors, so they are starting a pilot program in three cities, Bridgeport, New Haven and Hartford. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia expressed concerns about liability issues for those who may be conducting the inspections. Ms. Smith said that she had submitted the contract to the Legal for review. She said that she would check with the City Attorney about this.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that the City was getting more grants to plant trees, but that the maintenance of the trees was becoming a problem when the roots push up sidewalks or die and have to be cut down. Ms. Smith said that the maintenance of the trees falls in the Parks and Recreation control.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that she wanted more details about the removal of blacktop at the school. Ms. Smith said that she would contact the project manager and get more information.

Council Member Taylor-Moye asked about two grants that seemed very similar between the AIDS research and education grant and the AIDS United Syringe Access Fringe. Ms. Kabel explained that the funding would augment the currently existing program.

Council Member Martinez asked about one of the grants that was pending. Ms. Smith indicated that there was already a program in place for it and the application was actually a renewal.

Council Member Brannelly asked how the grant funds were being accounted for in the budget. Ms. Kabel then said that she could give an overview of the CDBG funds, which would be similar to how the other grants were handled. She said that the amount that HUD was allocating less funds than in past years and that there are more communities that are qualifying for Title 1 funding.

Council Member Swain asked about the staff that work in the grants programs. Ms. Kabel said that most of the salaries were from grant funding. Council President McCarthy said that the Director of Health is listed in the City Budget and the amount listed there was only the City portion of the Director's salary.

Council President McCarthy said that it would be good to have a list of the staff positions and the salaries attached to the positions. Council Member Brannelly made a note of this.

Ms. Kabel said that there have been times when the City had been awarded grant funding, but half way through the year, the City is informed that the grant amount was reduced because the funds had not come in to the government.

Council Member Austin has several detailed questions about the Port Security grant funding, which Ms. Smith answered.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked about the grants that were available from Homeland Security. She said that she had been told that the grant information was often posted at night. Ms. Smith said that her department receives emails from grants.gov and that the City has access to two other grants. The staff reviews these emails on a daily basis.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that the grants has been doing a wonderful job with the programs and staff that are in the department. She said that she had heard very positive feedback from people all over the country at a Homeland Security meeting.

Council Member Lyons joined the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

The Committee then spoke with Mr. Andy Nunn and Mr. Adam Wood via conference call. She said that the Committee would like come to an understanding about the recent BOE agreement.

Mr. Nunn explained that the Governor has based his revenue projections on last year, but it has been discovered that the projection was off by about 400 million dollars. Mr. Wood then spoke about the Governor's proposed budget for education.

Council Member Brannelly asked about the changes in the BOE education budget. Mr. Nunn said that the State decision would have little impact on the tentative agreement that was reached recently. He said that in the past, the State had assisted the City with \$700,000 in the budget towards the 1.2 million MBR and would require the City to add an addition \$500,000 funding.

Discussion followed about the Mayor's proposed budget allocated 1.2 million, but that included the in-kind services. Council President McCarthy said that the Committee had not heard what the results of the recent agreement were.

Mr. Nunn joined the meeting at 7:34 p.m.

Mr. Wood said that the State Senate passed the revaluation by a vote of 35 to zero.

Council Member Brannelly said that the Committee was interested in the changes in the budget.

Mr. Wood explained that the Governor's projections had been positive but the Appropriation Committee will be trimming these back due to a shortfall of between \$350,000 and \$400,000 in the projected revenues. He said that he was not anticipating major cuts in the PILOT program or the Pequot allocations. If there is a cut, he said that it will likely be across the board to all the municipalities. Mr. Wood said that the delegation was working hard to preserve the State allocation.

Mr. Wood gave the ECS numbers and that the Governor's proposed budget had increased a total of 5 million. He went on to give the details of the various budget items.

Mr. Nunn said that the City would be responsible for 1.6 for the MBR. The City will be responsible for another \$100,000. The State will be giving the BOE an increased ECS allocation. He gave an overview of the past agreements with the BOE. The State had originally planned to give 1.2 million but with the State's shortfall, the amount will be around \$700,000 and the City will be responsible for \$500,000 difference.

The discussion then moved to the legal issues around the MBR. Mr. Wood said that the MBR was allocated somewhat arbitrarily for the various towns. The final ruling is given by the State, who also decides what in-kind services are eligible. Mr. Nunn said that the City is having a conversation with the State OPM office about the in-kind services. He said that some of the services that the City provides should count towards the MBR. If it is not counted towards the MBR, it is double taxing the residents. He added that in the future, the State should count the amount of the bonds for building schools towards the MBR.

Council Member Brannelly asked if there was a way to remedy to prevent this from happening again next year. Discussion followed. Mr. Nunn said that the best solution would be to have the State to judge Bridgeport fairly.

Mr. Wood said that this was an issue that would keep re-occurring until the State stops funding the Board of Education through the property taxes. He added that the last BOE meeting had been extremely contentious and that a number of inappropriate comments had been made about the Council, the Committee and the Mayor. He offered to provide a transcript of those comments to Council Member Brannelly and suggested that the Budget and Appropriation have a meeting with the Chairman of the BOE to address these issues. He pointed out that there may need to be a lawsuit against the State because using property taxes for education is illegal.

Council Member Brannelly asked for a chart of some sort about the allocations of the 1.2 million funding. Mr. Nunn said that he would get one to her.

Mr. Nunn said that the City had helped the BOE by cutting things on the City side to give more money for the BOE. However the BOE has continued to be rude and contentious towards the City staff. Mr. Wood said that he had to acknowledge former Council Member Andre Baker's calm demeanor during the BOE meeting. Former Council Member Andre Baker was the deciding vote on the issue.

Council Member Austin left the meeting at 8:15 p.m.

The discussion moved back to the State issues.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that the level of disrespect from the BOE was increasing. She added that this was not a good example to show the children.

Council Member Brannelly said that perhaps the Education Committee could move the potential lawsuit forward. Discussion followed.

Council Member Brannelly said that the next few meetings will be focused on budget discussions. Council Member Swain asked how this would be presented for the Council Vote. Council Member Brannelly reviewed the process with everyone. She added that she would request Mr. Sherwood to bring a copy of last year's budget votes.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia announced that the pot luck dinner will be on Wednesday, the 7th.

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL MEMBER TAYLOR-MOYE MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Service.

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET & APPROPRIATIONS
BUDGET HEARINGS
MAY 1, 2014**

ATTENDANCE: Susan Brannelly, Co-chair; Denese Taylor-Moye,
Patricia Swain, Council President Thomas McCarthy

OTHERS: Tom Sherwood, OPM Director; Council Member Rick Torres;
Council Member Michelle Lyons (7:23 p.m.)

CALL TO ORDER

Council Member Brannelly called the meeting to order at 6:19 p.m.

Mr. Sherwood distributed a document titled Police Department Other Personnel Services Object Code Comparison to the Committee members.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER SWAIN MOVED ENTER THE DOCUMENT TITLED POLICE DEPARTMENT OTHER PERSONNEL SERVICES OBJECT CODE COMPARISON AS EX #1-5-1-14**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER TAYLOR-MOYE SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mr. Sherwood then reviewed the various different object codes and explained how the grouping of the budget lines allowed the Chief to track spikes in overtime.

Council Member Taylor-Moye asked about the Outside Overtime. Mr. Sherwood explained that it was for the police when a vendor like U.I. or another contractor has to open up a street. Council Member Swain asked if this was income or expense. Mr. Sherwood said that it was an expense. The revenue is reflected pg. 122.

The Committee then reviewed Ex. #2-4-23-14 with Mr. Sherwood.

During the past two or three years, the expenses for snow and ice have been over a million and a half each year. Because of the State of Emergency being declared, the City is eligible for FEMA funding. However, FEMA is very slow in issuing the relief checks, so a special fund has been set up where the funds can be drawn from when the event happens, and later replenished when the FEMA check arrives. Council Member Brannelly asked for a break down of these special revenue lines. Mr. Sherwood said that he would prepare the report for the next meeting.

Mr. Sherwood said that there were three types of funding in the City. There is the Capital Fund and the Operating Fund. The third funding is for specific grants, or programs that are not part of the Capital or Operating Funds. Both the Capital and Operating Funds close on June 30th, but the Special Revenue Funds continues on year after year. He illustrated how this was done with the COPS hiring, which kept the funding separate from the General Fund for accounting

purposes. When the grant funded officers were transferred over the City, the line items were moved to the General Fund and became part of the regular Police budget. This also prevents shortage showing up in the budget when there is a major lag in the receipt of reimbursement funds.

Mr. Sherwood said that there were other funds like the BOE Special Education fund, the WPCA account, the pension fund, Internal Service Fund and some special trusts from behests with stipulation.

Council Member Torres asked about the Lighthouse Program. Mr. Sherwood said that the bulk of the Lighthouse Program was paid from the General Fund, including the personnel and administration. There are other revenue streams such as grants or fees paid by the parents. He said that the 1.3 million for the program counts towards the MBR.

Council Member Torres asked about the health care component. Mr. Sherwood explained the CIGNA details and their projections.

The discussion then moved to the balance between privatization and having the City provide the service.

Council Member Lyons joined the meeting at 7:23 p.m.

Mr. Sherwood then gave an overview of the Board of Education discussions about the MBR. He said that the Board had voted on Monday to accept the City's proposal for the MBR. The City will be providing the plowing, the garbage and recycling pick ups and the school crossing guards for 2014-2015 and 2015-2016. After that the City will give the BOE the funding for those services and no longer be in the business of school crossing guards. Mr. Sherwood pointed out that there were co-mingled services such as Comptrollers and Payroll. The BOE would have to hire someone to process the payroll and pay the bills. This is why the Lighthouse program will remain on the City side.

The discussion moved to a new hire in Public Facilities. Mr. Sherwood said that this position had been budgeted for the current fiscal year. Mr. Sherwood then gave an overview of the position and the process used to fill the position.

The Committee then reviewed the revenues.

Council Member Lyons said that she had asked about the City combining the printers and reducing the number of printers. Council Member Brannelly said that the Committee would like an update on this project. Mr. Sherwood said that the update would have to come from Mr. Heller.

Council Member Lyons left the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

Discussion continued regarding the revenue budget projections.

ADJOURNMENT

- ** COUNCIL PRESIDENT MCCARTHY MOVED TO ADJOURN.**
- ** COUNCIL MEMBER TAYLOR-MOYE SECONDED.**
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS
BUDGET HEARINGS
MAY 2, 2014**

ATTENDANCE: Susan Brannelly, Co-chair; Denese Taylor-Moye; Lydia Martinez, Howard Austin, Council President Thomas McCarthy (6:56 p.m.) AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia (7:00 p.m.); Michael Marella, Co-Chair (7:25 p.m.)

OTHERS: Council Member Rick Torres, Thomas Sherwood, OPM Director; Adam Heller, IT Director

CALL TO ORDER

Council Member Brannelly called the meeting to order at 6:07 p.m. A quorum was present.

IT DEPARTMENT

Mr. Heller said that last year there had been a discussion about consolidating printing. He said that he broke it up into copiers and printers. A visual inventory was done of printers and copiers. He said that the plan is to release an RFP for a vendor to have all the copiers with a flat print rate rather than a per page charge. Once that is done, then an evaluation of the printers. Those people who don't need the desktop printers will have the printing routed to the copier. Department heads that may generate confidential documents may still have their own desktop printer.

Council Member Taylor-Moye asked what happens to the old desktop printers. Mr. Heller said that the City will keep them and used them as replacement printers if needed.

Council Member Taylor-Moye asked about the details of the maintenance agreements. Mr. Heller reviewed the potential agreements. There are maintenance issues that will have to be negotiated.

Council Member Martinez asked about the small desktop printer in the Legislative Office. She said that she buys the ink. Mr. Heller said that the companies make the money on the ink, not the hardware.

Council Member Torres asked about the telephone service and the data storage. Mr. Heller then gave a detailed technical explanation of how the server relays work and the back up system. Due to the complexity of the servers, the City has a contract for maintenance of these blade servers and rack mounted services. The contract specifies the response time, also. All the software requires maintenance and licensing fees, including the MUNIS modules (payroll, general ledger, etc.) There are also assessment software programs and other specialized programs.

The discussion then moved to the telephone services. Mr. Heller said that he had reduced the amount significantly but has increased recently. He explained that the Department had absorbed all cell phones. The desk phones are all VoIP digital service. Every hardwire telephone line (fire alarms, elevator phones, fax lines etc.) are all charged \$10.50 per line.

Council Member Brannelly asked about the fax evaluation. Mr. Heller said that he was working on the VoIP rollout, and then will focus on the fax. The Margaret Morton Center has been converted over and other departments that have moved in the last year. Some of the old data cabling is very old and needs to be replaced.

The BOE have their own system that is compatible with the main system. There was major federal grant that was available to the schools for phones and fiber optics.

BUDGET DISCUSSION

**** COUNCIL MEMBER TAYLOR-MOYE MOVED TO ENTER FY 2014-15 BRIDGEPORT PROPOSED BUDGET AS EXHIBIT #1-5-2-14.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER AUSTIN MOVED TO ENTER FY 2013-2014 GENERAL FUND BUDGET CITY COUNCIL BUDGET AMENDMENT RESOLUTION EXHIBIT #2-4-2-14 AND ENTER ADJUSTING PUB FAC REQUEST FOR FY 14 EXHIBIT #3-5-2-14**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Council Member Torres asked about the process for the Council Budget votes. Mr. Sherwood reviewed the process involving the five budget votes that would be presented to the Council on May 12, 2014 for approval.

Council Member Martinez asked where the 5 million dollar shortfall would be coming from. Council Member Brannelly said that Mr. Koresh sent out an email saying that there would be 1.5 million from Harding High School. There could be additional funds from other projects.

Council President McCarthy joined the meeting at 6:56 p.m.

Mr. Sherwood said that he had heard that the Governor was going to increase the ECS funding, but would be decreasing other items. The legislature will be voting on Monday to approve the proposed changes.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia joined the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

REVENUES

Mr. Sherwood then directed everyone's attention to Exhibit #1-5-2-14. He noted that the column listed as "FY 2013 Budget" should be "FY 2013 ACTUAL".

Council Member Torres had several detailed question regarding the various line items. Mr. Sherwood gave overviews of the various items.

He then gave an explanation of the Contingency and Reserve. He said that in order to use those funds, it has to be approved by the Committee.

Mr. Sherwood then reminded everyone that the legislature would be voting on adjustments to the State budget on May 3rd. The final State budget is scheduled for a final vote on May 7th.

Council Member Taylor-Moye left the meeting at 7:24 p.m.

Council Member Marella joined the meeting at 7:25 p.m.

The discussion then moved to the various revenue streams.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ MOVED TO ENTER A SPREADSHEET LISTING THE FY 2012 ACTUAL, FY 2013 ACTUALS AS EXHIBIT #4-5-2-14.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The Committee then discussed the rate for police vehicles for dirt jobs or funerals.

Mr. Sherwood said that the Committee would see Mr. Dancho soon and ask if there were any updates on the Zoo Subsidy.

The Committee then reviewed the Charge for Services listed on page 2 of Exhibit 4-5-2-14. A discussion followed about the WPCA collections practices.

Council Member Austin asked about possibly increasing the cost of metered parking from .25¢ for 15 minutes to .50¢ for 20 minutes. Mr. Sherwood explained that the City had been ready to move forward with new meters that took credit cards, but then the technology changed dramatically.

Council Member Austin asked if it was possible to raise the penalty for the arrears taxes. Mr. Sherwood said that it was set by the State.

The discussion moved to page 127 regarding the police horses.

Non-business Licenses were the next item reviewed. Council Member Torres asked about an across the board increase for fees. Council Member Brannelly said that she would have this researched.

Council Member Austin left the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

The discussion moved to the garage in downtown. Mr. Sherwood said that there was some money from the State for the garage. Now the garage has been completed and transferred to the State.

Mr. Sherwood gave an overview of the Sale of City Property. He reminded everyone that the City takes approximately 50% of the revenue from a build-able lot for the Fund Balance. Public Works also sells scrap metal and the revenue goes into the General Fund.

Council Member Torres said that while he likes Habitat for Humanity, he had concerns about an upcoming vote on a Black Rock Parcel that were being sold to Habitat for Humanity for \$1.00. Council Member Martinez agreed with Council Member Torres. Discussion followed.

Council Member Torres left the meeting at 8:45 p.m.

The Committee reviewed the list of rents and leases.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked about the status of the Wonderland of Ice. Mr. Sherwood said that the rink was completed but the restaurant still needs to be finished. There is also an issue with the number of bathrooms required by the State.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked about various permit and license fees. Mr. Sherwood said that all the fees and permits are covered by either the ordinances or statutes.

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARELLA SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET & APPROPRIATION
BUDGET HEARINGS
MAY 3, 2014**

ATTENDANCE: Susan Brannelly, Co-chair; Michael Marella, Co-chair;
AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia, Patricia Swain, Denese
Taylor-Moye, Lydia Martinez; Council President
Thomas McCarthy (11:30 a.m.)

STAFF: Thomas Sherwood, OPM Director, Council Member
Michelle Lyons (11:33 a.m.)

CALL TO ORDER

Council Member Brannelly called the meeting to order at 10:40 a.m. A quorum was present.

GENERAL BUDGET DISCUSSION

Council Member Brannelly noted that there was a negative number in the Fringe Benefits on page 162. Mr. Sherwood explained where the claims and draw downs were. He said that this was very good for the City.

Public Facilities - pg 157. Mr. Sherwood said that Public Facilities has been working very hard on reducing worker's injuries on the job by having mini-seminars on proper lifting techniques and how to avoid injuries.

Council Member Brannelly pointed out that with the Parks Department has 14 full time workers and the remainders are all either part time or seasonal. Council Member Swain asked about seeing employees standing next to a piece of equipment when a project is underway. Mr. Sherwood explained that there were State and Federal requirements about how many employees will be involved when there is heavy equipment involved. He also pointed out that any one that moved the heavy equipment must have a CDL (Commercial Driver's License) to move the vehicles. Seasonal employees do not have CDLs.

The discussion moved to having a transfer sticker for the residents. Discussion followed.

Council Member Swain asked if there new hire at Public Facilities was included in the current budget. Council Member Brannelly pointed out that this was not a new position but a new employee filing a previously occupied job. She added that this particular job includes inspecting the road patches after the utilities make pavement cuts. If the patch pavement sinks, the utilities are supposed to return the road to the pre-cut condition. Discussion followed.

The Committee then discussed the fact that the maintenance staff are using the recycling blue bins as regular garbage receptacles. The garbage costs \$80 per ton for disposal and the City receives \$20 per ton for recyclables. It costs 3 million in tipping fees. The maintenance staff

needs training on this and there should not be black plastic garbage bags in the recycling containers. Council Member Brannelly said that this should be a City Wide push to encourage recycling as a means of increasing revenues and decreasing costs.

The Committee then reviewed all the departments in the Public Facilities. Mr. Sherwood pointed out that previously the City provided service for the Special Education vehicles for the Board of Education.

Council President McCarthy joined the meeting at 11:30 a.m.

However, from now on, the Board of Education will be billed for any work done on their vehicles.

Council Member Swain asked about the Advertising Budget for the Municipal garage. Mr. Sherwood said that was the budget line used for when the garage went to purchase something and must advertise.

Council Member Swain asked if there was tracking of the individual buildings. Mr. Sherwood directed everyone to page 179. He explained that for electricity, there are individual line items for each building, so that the Finance can look and see how much each building uses for electricity or heating.

Council Member Lyons joined the meeting at 11:33 a.m.

Council Member Martinez asked about the old Health building. Mr. Sherwood said that the City needs to find a new location for the health clinic since they provide services for contagious diseases. Once a new location is identified, the City can close the building completely.

Council Member Swain asked about the decorative lights. Mr. Sherwood said these were the decorative lights on various main thoroughfares.

A list of the potential line items for further discussion was compiled.

This discussion then moved to the potential of having a shortened work week. Mr. Sherwood pointed out that there would be no pay cuts and the electricity would still be running in the buildings. He said that the goal was to consolidate down on the buildings.

Council Member Lyons asked about minimum hour requirements for union employees. Mr. Sherwood gave an overview of the agreements. He said that in sanitation there is an incentive clause where the employees can clock out after when route is completed. Council Member Brannelly pointed out that this could work in favor of the City since someone who already completed their route could stay to cover a route for someone who was out sick and the covering employee would not be paid overtime.

Council Member Swain asked if the security service included employees. Mr. Sherwood said that the City had been able to reduce the cost from \$120 down to \$80 by shifting the equipment

to City ownership. Council Member Swain said that Sonitrol had the highest fees of all the security companies. Mr. Sherwood said that the City was working on installing cameras in the parks so that if there is a problem the City park, the various departments (Fire, Police, Public Facilities and Parks) could tag into the cameras via an iPad to see what is going on.

Council Member Swain requested a break out of several commodity line items such as Training (# 53610) and Public Facilities Roadway (#56185) on page 179.

Roadway Maintenance - pg 182 - Council Member Swain asked if the personnel were union. Mr. Sherwood said that these were all part time seasonal employees. Maintainers 2 can run some of the smaller equipment.

The discussion moved to the minimum wage increase to \$10.10. Mr. Sherwood said that the Mayor had put in the value of the minimum wage, but it was not reflected in the BOE. Most of the seasonal employees already make more than \$10.10.

Mr. Sherwood said that the staff had picked up 621 tons of bagged leaves, 18 tons of paper and litter by hand, and 1,000 tons of bulk trash. There are 892 lane miles in the City. Major paving is accounted for under Capital spending. Mr. Sherwood gave an overview. He reminded everyone that the City was investigating the potential purchase of a pot hole repair machine. This would allow the City to repair pot holes with fewer staff.

Sanitation and Recycling - pg 190. Council Member Taylor-Moye asked about a reference back to the revenues. Mr. Sherwood said that this line links the recycling revenue to the department.

Transfer Station - Council Member Brannelly said that there was already a request to implement some type of stickers.

Golf Course - Council Member Brannelly reminded everyone that next year, there will be discussions about beefing up the driving range. It will have no impact this year's budget. She added that last year, the greens fees were raised, but that the City had been asked not to raise the fees again this year. However, next year, raising the fees could be discussed.

Council Member Martinez said that she was very happy with the presentation and that it showed that the staff was working very hard. This can be a strong revenue generator.

Zoo - Mr. Sherwood spoke about the City's obligation for the Zoo. He said that last year, the State subsidy stopped. Council Member Martinez suggested that the Council recognize the Zoo for their efforts.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that Mr. Dancho was up in Hartford regularly working to get more money for the Zoo. Mr. Sherwood suggested that the Council work on having the park and the zoo moved from Tourism into the Parks Department because it would be easier to get funding.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that Mr. Dancho has above and beyond in working to preserve the Zoo's funding. MM said that when the City was going bankrupt, the State provided some funding, but wanted the something in return, so the City gave up Beardsley Park and the Zoo. Council President McCarthy said that the State was looking for a way to justify the financial funds.

Recreation - pg 215 - Council Member Brannelly asked about the fees for renting the parks and ball fields. Council Member Martinez said that there was \$100 fee per league team for the fields. Council Member Brannelly said that she would like to get the details for adult soccer, lacrosse and baseball teams rental of sports fields.

Mr. Sherwood said that changing the fees would require research to determine which ones that are set by statute, which ones are covered by ordinance and what the caps might be in place.

The discussion moved to the condition of the playing fields at Seaside Park that were ruined by the major storms that brought seawater in over the grass. Mr. Sherwood said that Senator Lieberman had proposed a major breakwater project. Council Member Brannelly reminded everyone that there were communities that were destroyed by the storms. Mr. Sherwood said that the City had finally received permission to replace the fishing pier.

Mr. Sherwood said that there were only 14 full time employees and they manage with seasonal employees maintain 1,100 acres of parkland. Council President McCarthy said that the Knowlton Park figure that was circulating was inaccurate. 9 million would cover Knowlton Park, Pleasure Beach and at least one other project. The State is still working on the fees for parking since the water taxis were purchased with Federal funding.

Senior Checkpoints were the next items discussed. The check points are manned for 14 hours a day from May 1st through the fall.

Sikorsky Airport - The airport was the next topic reviewed. Council Member Brannelly said that the new manager has breathed new life into the airport and was doing a terrific job. Mr. Sherwood suggested that perhaps the Committee or the Council would like to have an update on this project. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked if there could be a breakdown on the property taxes that are paid to Stratford. Council Member Brannelly said that she felt that there were opportunities for growth at the airport.

Engineering - pg. 246 - Mr. Sherwood said that this department works with the various other departments that show the revenue. When major projects are underway, this department supplies the plot maps to Planning and Zoning and other departments.

Council Member Martinez left the meeting at 1:20 p.m.

The discussion moved to the parking of commercial vehicles on the streets in the North End.

Council Member Lyons left the meeting at 1:22 p.m.

The Committee then moved to the Harbor Master. Mr. Sherwood said that this was mandated by the State. The Harbor Master generates his own revenues through mooring and docking fees. He is paid through the Port Authority. When the Water Taxis starts up, this will change because the taxis will require captains and staff for the boats.

Mr. Sherwood said that the City has a very good Police and Fire Marine Unit.

Council President McCarthy said that between now and the next Budget meeting on Wednesday, the Committee needs to have some serious reductions. Mr. Sherwood said that it is important to have the first draft resolution started by Friday, so that the Committee can start refining it on Saturday in order to make the deadlines.

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL MEMBER SWAIN MOVED TO ADJOURNED.**

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT MCCARTHY SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO ADJOURN PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 1:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS
PUBLIC HEARING
MAY 6, 2014**

ATTENDANCE: Susan Brannelly, Co-chair; Patricia Swain, Denese Taylor-Moye, AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia; Lydia Martinez; Council President Thomas McCarthy (6:20 p.m.); Michael Marella, Co-chair (6:20 p.m.);

OTHERS: Council Member Rick Torres; Council Member Milta Feliciano; Council Member Jack Banta, Council Member Mary A. McBride-Lee; Council Member Richard Salter (6:20 p.m.); Council Member Michelle Lyons (6:20 p.m.)

CALL TO ORDER

Council Member Brannelly called the public hearing to order at 6:08 p.m. A quorum was present. She introduced the Committee members present.

PUBLIC HEARING

Ms. Beth Lazar 1241 Main Street came forward and said she believes that having a strong school system was necessary for a democracy. This requires money for books, paper, and computers. She said that the towns and cities that spent the most money has the highest scores. Bridgeport, which does not meet the MBR, has one of the lowest scores. She said that the Mayor's budget with the in kind services included was actually a cut.

Ms. Donna Kooris came forward and said that she lives in Fairfield but is a teacher in Bridgeport. She said that Fairfield never have to go after the people for more money because they pay their taxes and spend the money on education. She said that the Board shouldn't have to beg for money. Her students often can't afford the more expensive supplies.

Ms. Maria Perriera came forward and spoke about how she was had been involved in the school district for years since Mayor Fabrizi had under cut the Board of Education. She said that some of the Council Members had signed a letter to the State saying that the students at Marin should have social workers, ELL workers and an extended day. However, every Bridgeport student should have this, not just the students at Marin. She said that the MBR was State Law and if the Council did not provide the District with the full MBR she was organizing a lawsuit and will sue everyone over this.

Ms. Mary Filo said that there were some things that were basic common sense. She said that the Mayor had stated that taxes will never go down. This is scary. In her job, if she didn't reduce her budget at work, she would lose her job. The City has been spending money reckless and now Bridgeport is in poor position. The citizens and the children pay for this. She said that in order

to save money, the Committee should start looking at Council Member Taylor-Moye's stipend spending.

Ms. Kathy Silver, a teacher at Bassick High School, came forward and said that she had been teaching in Bridgeport for 23 years. She said that the Council should do whatever it had to do to fully fund the schools. She listed the figures and said that the schools will lose funding in 2016 if they do not get the money. She said that she has been working on canvassing for people to vote. Politicians think that the charter schools will solve the problems but the top performing schools in the world, Finland, has strong public schools. The original goal for the charter schools was to collaborate with public schools not to compete with them. Charter schools are taking away from the public schools. She then went on to list reasons why charter schools are not helpful.

Ms. Gloradine Braxton came forward to address the Committee members. She said that she likes to have her kindergarten daughter attend these types of forums with her to give a visual example of the actual students. She said that she had been requested to participate in her local school and has hands on experiences. The teachers are overworked and the parent participation is at an all time low because of loss of hope. She wanted to know why the students didn't have the basic equipment.

Council President McCarthy, and Council Members Richard Salter, Michael Marella & Michelle Lyons joined the meeting at 6:20 p.m.

Ms. Braxton asked why the students didn't have updated computers, and money not available for beautifying the school property. The Committee has the ability to make a decision that will affect the students positively. Don't disappoint the students.

Ms. Joanne Kennedy said that she would not be repeating what others said, but reminded everyone that they knew children. This shouldn't be turned into a situation of haves and have nots. People have come forward and tried to be cordial. The residents shouldn't have to sue the Council over the funding. She said that she didn't know why the Committee was looking at the residents differently. This is disrespectful to the residents, particularly when people just sit there and listen to the people but do whatever they want. She said the Committee members should think about what they love and what they could lose because they will be held accountable.

Mr. John Marshall Lee came forward and said that he had been to many of these different meetings through the years. He encouraged the public to come to the Education and Social Services meeting. He also asked about the Lighthouse program funding and whether the Council would reduce the Council stipends. He said that there were 90 ghost positions in the City and removing these things from the budget would fund the shortfall. Mr. Lee said that he had gotten a copy of the final report and said that the public needed to review the CAFR report. He said that the public could help and need to be involved.

Mr. Steve Karjens, of 473 Washington Avenue spoke next. He said that he was a social worker for 20 years in Bridgeport Public Schools. The budget for Bridgeport is completely inadequate. New Haven's budget is almost twice the amount and has the same demographics. The

Superintendent suggested that a lawsuit would be in order after the budget is passed. He asked why the State representative and Senators from Bridgeport were not present. He also asked where the Mayor was. He said that the City was conspiring to deny the Bridgeport students a fair education and was creating an educational holocaust. He then requested that the Superintendent to ask for a Federal investigation of misappropriation of funds and cronyism. Education costs money, but so does ignorance. The City is failing the students. He suggested that the Committee go back to the drawing board and work harder at finding the money for the schools.

A parent of a Harding student then came forward and said that there had been shortages since 2007. Mayor Finch had informed the residents that the taxes were being increased to fund the schools, but only 4 million was used for the schools. The City is required by State law to fund an additional 3.3 million in cash, not in kind services. As of today's date, the District has not been paid one penny of that 3.3 million, which is required by law. She said that anything less than what is required is unacceptable. She said that payments to the Internal Service Fund or in kind services are not acceptable. The residents will be noting how everyone votes for the budget and informing parents how everyone votes to under fund the schools. The children should not have less than what the students in Westport, Wilton, Trumbull and Stratford have.

Ms. Karen Jackson came forward to address the Committee. She said that she was a Bridgeport parent and a social studies teacher. She said that she is letting her students know what the City Council is doing. Her school is being defunded and she can't even take children to the library. Many of the parents of the students do not speak English. She said that there had been a flyer sent to Marin about this issue. She said that there was an area where there was no sidewalk but now that there is a corporation that is coming to Bridgeport, a sidewalk was put in. She said that it made her feel bad that a corporation was more important than the school children. There are parents who are not involved in their children's education. She asked the Committee to go back to the original budget and fully fund the schools.

Dr. Rabinowitz, the Interim Superintendent of Schools came forward and said that this was a passionate display and commitment by the parents of the students. She said that she was in partnership with the parents. The budget is inadequate for the District. She said that she looked carefully at other cities in Connecticut and the City is funding the schools at a lesser amount than other communities. She reminded everyone that she had been in Bridgeport 20 or 25 years ago and the same issues were being discussed. It is heartbreaking for her as a superintendent to have less money while having more students. She then asked the Committee to do whatever they could for the schools. The City of Bridgeport is only as good as the schools and the schools bring people to the City.

Mr. Ethan Book came forward and said that he was a candidate for the 131st District and said that he had met with Mayor Bill Finch back in 2005. He then described his meeting with Mayor Finch about various illegal police activities including his false arrest in 2006. He then spoke about Mr. Tiago being recently hired for a City position and possible conflicts of interest. He concluded his remarks by referring to Ben Franklin's comments on political issues.

Mr. Mustafa Salahurder came forward and said that for the past six years he was seeing line items in the school budget that were cut because there was not enough funding in the budget. He said this needs to be addressed by the Federal government and the State government. This is one of the States with the highest taxes. He then asked that when the Committee gets up in the morning and looks in the mirror, they like what they see. He said that the Committee needs to leave a legacy and do the right thing, If the Committee was not working with the BOE, then they will become their adversaries and no one needs.

Council Member Martinez-Walker joined the meeting at 7:02 p.m.

Mr. David Gordon came forward and thanked the Council Members for attending. He said that it was important to follow the law and meet the MBR for Bridgeport education. People have told him that it was a disgrace and a shame not to meet the legal requirement. He said that the Council Members would have to live with their decisions.

Mr. Steve Karjerns, who is a Social worker from Blackham School came forward and said that two SPED teachers with many years of teaching left in the middle of the school year. The staff is leaving because the conditions are so bad.

Ms. Valerie Salahurder said that she was involved in PAC. Her children come home every day with photo copies from a book. She said that she didn't understand what happened and where the break down happened. Why are the children's schools are so under funded. Trumbull and Stratford have lap tops and full computer labs. Bridgeport's students don't have tablets or laptops. She said that she didn't understand why the Council couldn't increase the budget.

Council Member Brannelly asked if there was anyone else present who wished to address the Committee. No one came forward. Council Member Brannelly asked if there was anyone else present who wished to address the Committee. No one came forward.

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA MOVED TO ADJOURN.
** COUNCIL MEMBER TAYLOR-MOYE SECONDED.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services

City of Bridgeport
Budget and Appropriations
Public Hearing
May 6, 2014

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET & APPROPRIATIONS
BUDGET HEARINGS
MAY 7, 2014**

ATTENDANCE: Susan Brannelly, Co-chair; Michael Marella, Co-chair; Patricia Swain, Lydia Martinez, Denese Taylor-Moye, Howard Austin, Council President McCarthy; AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia (6:55 p.m.)

OTHERS: Thomas Sherwood, OPM Director; Rev McBride-Lee, Jack Banta, Richard Salter, Rick Torres, Robert Halstead, Milta Feliciano, Michelle Lyons, Richard DeJesus, Alfredo Castillo

CALL TO ORDER

Council Member Brannelly called the meeting to order at 6:50 p.m. A quorum was present.

Council Member Brannelly then gave a brief overview of the budget review process to date. Other than Property taxes, the largest source of revenue is from the State.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia joined the meeting at 6:55 p.m.

Council President McCarthy passed out a document from CCM (Connecticut Coalition of Municipalities) that had the Governor's proposed budget and the actual adopted version. The ECS funding was increased by approximately 2 million dollars. The MRSA (Municipal Revenue Sharing) funding remained constant.

Council Member Lyons joined the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Council President McCarthy said that he thinks that there was a very slight increase from the State. Mr. Sherwood commented that the good thing was that the State would be giving the City more funding in terms of the PILOT payment for colleges and hospitals. Mr. Sherwood said that the State was giving the City approximately \$380,000 more than expected.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ MOVED TO ENTER THE DOCUMENT LISTING THE FY 15 GOVERNOR'S/ FY 15 ADOPTED AS EXHIBIT #1-05.07.14**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER TAYLOR-MOYE SECONDED**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Council Member Brannelly then reviewed all the figures that had been previously discussed. Mr. Sherwood gave a brief overview of the Fund Balance policy and how the funds are allocated 8% of the Operating Budget should be allocated to the Fund Balance. Constant movement towards the 8% will keep the interest rates low and negatively impact the bond rating. This means that the City cannot use the Fund Balance for Operating Expenses.

The discussion then moved to the potential revenues. Mr. Sherwood said that the PILOT payments and the ECS are items the Council has no control over. They are strictly allocated by the State. He then distributed a document titled Environmental Health Licensing that Mr. Blunt had compiled and a second document from the Building Department titled Permit Fee Building Department.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA MOVED TO ENTER THE DOCUMENT TITLED ENVIRONMENT HEALTH LICENSING AS EXHIBIT #2.05.07.14.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARELLA SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARELLA MOVED TO ENTER THE DOCUMENT TITLED PERMIT FEE DEPARTMENT AS EXHIBIT # 3-05.07.14.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Council Member Brannelly asked if a comparison of the fee scheduled had been done. Mr. Sherwood said that the Department was working on it, but it would not be ready by Monday.

Mr. Sherwood then directed everyone's attention to the Permit Fees - Building Department document. He said that he would need to check to see if these fees were limited by State statute.

Council Member Lyons said that she thought that the City should do this frequently. Mr. Sherwood said that the financial group examines the local region, the State and then New England in terms of comparing fees every few years. Council Member Lyons said that she had heard that Bridgeport doesn't charge enough for non-residents to use Seaside Park. Mr. Sherwood said that the Council had increased the park fees last year and the Parks Commission had increased the suggested amount for non-residents even more.

Council Member Halstead asked if the new schools were exempt from the building permits. Mr. Sherwood explained that the State does not reimburse the contractor for the permits, but the City ultimately pays the fee since the City pays the contractor for the construction and it is built into the overall costs.

Council President McCarthy said that the last Council had discussed creating a new fee for apartment inspection between renters. Council President McCarthy said that ultimately it was agreed that this type of inspection fee would hurt the small property owner.

Mr. Sherwood said that if the Building fees were increased by 10%, it could potentially work against the City since people might start doing work without a permit. Council Member Torres said that if another employee was added to work on shutting down illegal construction, it could potentially raise more revenue. Mr. Sherwood reminded everyone that a building inspector would be hired through the contractor to be on site.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that she would like to see an increase for temporary vendors because they are becoming more permanent. She said that she would like to see the Food Handler's Certification license increase also.

Council Member Halstead said that there should be more inspectors hired for plumbers and electricity. Mr. Sherwood said that there were only four inspectors, but cautioned everyone that there have been some problems with a contractor calling up and saying the inspector was needed, but when the inspector arrived, the sub-contractor had not completed the work. Council President McCarthy said that he would like to see another inspector added on.

Council Member Lyons said that there were numerous commercial vehicles in residential areas. She said that she would be in favor of having another Zoning inspector. If these vehicles were tagged, it would bring in more revenue. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that commercial vehicles in residential areas have to go through the Police Department.

Council Member Taylor-Moye asked if there was a way to raise the late fees on the Environmental Health Licensing. Mr. Sherwood said that it would have to change the ordinances.

Council Member Brannelly reminded everyone that the Council members needed to find 5.5 million and that discussing the licensing fees could be done during the year.

Council Member Martinez asked about daycare licensing. Mr. Sherwood explained that it did not matter how large the daycare was, it was the same fee.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that it would be important to make the cuts on the administration. Otherwise it would be an increase in taxes, which means that it was affecting the taxpayers. She said that CCM had offered to supply whatever figures the Committee might need as quickly as possible.

Mr. Sherwood distributed three more documents to the Committee members.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA MOVED TO ADD THE DOCUMENT TITLED LEAGUES/TEAMS AS EXHIBIT #4-05.07.14.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA MOVED TO ADD THE DOCUMENT TITLED PUBLIC FACILITIES EXPENSE BY FACILITY AS EX. 5.05.07.14.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARELLA MOVED TO ADD A DOCUMENT WITH THE TRAINING SERVICES LISTED AS EXHIBIT 6-05-07-14**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Council Member Brannelly said that she had asked about the down payment for the Jewish Home. Mr. Sherwood said that Ms. Kelly-Lenz was out of town on a family matter and that he had emailed her, but not heard back.

Council Member Martinez asked about the transfer station. Council Member Brannelly explained that the proposal would not be enacted this year and therefore would not affect the '14-'15 budget.

The discussion then moved to the various costs of operating the various City buildings. Council Member Swain asked if everyone knew where all the buildings were. She said that she would like to know more about what happens in the various building. She suggested that the Council Members should be sure that the various buildings were worth what it was costing the City. Discussion followed.

Council Member Banta asked what would happen if the City sold a number of buildings. Mr. Sherwood explained that there were numerous things to factor in. If a developer buys it and doesn't bring it back onto the tax rolls, it doesn't help the City. The best thing would be to sell it to a developer who brings the parcel back on the tax rolls and is a benefit to the City. He explained that the City had originally been working on moving City Hall into another building, but the real estate market fell apart. In order to vacate the Morton Center and Lyon Terrace, the City would have to build a new City Hall.

Council Member Brannelly asked how the police contract settlement might impact the budget. Mr. Sherwood said that there was no raise for the police included in potential budget. He said that it was his job to make the budget work and stay within the budget when things like this happened. Council President McCarthy said that the major police expense was with overtime. He pointed out that the department had worked hard to contain those costs.

Mr. Sherwood said that the Zoo had gotten the subsidy of \$360,000. Discussion followed about additional revenue sources.

The Committee then reviewed the Fire Department on page 134. Mr. Sherwood reminded everyone that there was a class of firefighters that the City had an obligatory commitment to. He went on to explain that the Council could not touch the personnel because of mandatory manning requirements. Mr. Sherwood also pointed out that with Fire, there was the Pension A debt. Council Member Brannelly pointed out that on pg. 142, there was Safety Equipment decreased. Council Member Feliciano said that in Public Safety, the Fire Department had received a very large grant. Council Member Brannelly said that she would like to ask for clarification on this. Mr. Sherwood said that every department enters their own request. Discussion followed.

Council Member McBride-Lee asked what the status of the BOE allocation. Council Member Brannelly said that the City needs to find \$600,000 as agreed by the City, the State BOE and the BOE for the upcoming year. Council Member Brannelly said that the City needs to work with the BOE to confront the State regarding the ECS allocation. Mr. Sherwood said that the State is aware that the funding is not balanced. Council Member Brannelly said that the City gives the

BOE a set amount of funding and the BOE allocates the funding however it wants. Council Member Swain said that the BOE wants all the cash and the services. Council Member McBride-Lee said that the BOE was asking for 3.3 million they were owed. Council Member McBride-Lee said that they want the cash and to spend it as they see fit.

Council Member Martinez said that Hartford had gone to court and sued the State. Council Member Swain said that she had been contacted by Board members and they do not want the in-kind services, they want the cash.

Council Member Austin left the meeting at 8:55 p.m.

Council Member Swain said that the State has a perception that Bridgeport under funds the Board of Education. The BOE said that they do not benefit from the Lighthouse program.

Council Member Taylor-Moye said that everyone cares about the education for the students. She said that on one hand, the BOE, the State and the City came to an agreement, but the residents and parents are saying something else.

Council Member Taylor-Moye said that if the BOE got the increase, it would cause the taxes to increase again. There are many elderly residents whose children who have long ago left and the residents are on a fixed income. She said that the property owners also need to be represented.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia commented that when the BOE receives funding for books or supplies, the BOE is not obligated to tell the agency, whether it is the City, the State or the Federal Government, where the funding was used. So while the public may complain about the lack of books, computers, and other supplies, the Council has nothing to do with the purchase of those items. Council Member McBride-Lee said that if the BOE brings a suit against the City, she would be in the middle.

Council Member Torres said that he would be inclined to just give the BOE the money, but that will make them responsible for plowing and also do their own payroll, purchasing, snow plowing, providing crossing guards and tipping fees. He pointed out that the City of Bridgeport is able to provide services at a lower cost because of the degree of volume.

Council Member Castillo joined the meeting at 9:09 p.m.

Council Member Torres pointed out that there had been a vote taken about the agreement and it passed 5 to 4. This was reported in the newspaper and the resolution has been passed.

Regarding the issue about school supplies, Council Member Marella commented that his son was graduating from one of the local high schools in June and that he didn't have any books. All the testing was verbal.

Council Member Swain said that she agreed that the City had been short changing the BOE. Mr. Sherwood pointed out that the Commissioner of Education would be obligated by law to notify

Bridgeport if they were short-changing the BOE. If the City had in fact short changed the BOE, there would be a cut in the ECS funding and the City would have to pay the amount to the BOE.

Council President McCarthy said that the Connecticut Post reported that the BOE Committee passed the resolution with a 3-1 margin and the full Board had passed the resolution 5 to 4. He said that there was probably no one in the room who thought the BOE was getting enough funding. He said that the property tax was an unfair system. If the taxes aren't contained, it will end up with people leaving Bridgeport.

Council Member Halstead said that he was new to the Council and his perception may be wrong. He pointed out that the City has been supplying the services on a yearly basis. Mr. Sherwood agreed and said that the City had been doing some services since 1979. The various services the City provides were listed on Audit Schedule 1. These lists of services that the City supplies to the BOE were audited by the State of Connecticut and the auditors approved them. Mr. Sherwood said that in '12-13 fiscal year, the BOE had a 13 million dollar gap, and the City picked up the crossing guards and the garbage to help close the gap.

Mr. Sherwood stated that the BOE accounts for more than 50% of the total budget for the City. He added that there was 18 million in school construction debt service, but this can not be considered as part of the MBR. Council Member Torres pointed out that one of the schools has an electron microscope for a high school. He was told that the BOE had the discretion on how to spend the money.

Council Member Lyons said that the Interim Superintendent had come before the Committee after the vote on the resolution and the Superintendent had not said a word about the vote. She added that if the Lighthouse program is cut, the parents who work and count on the Lighthouse program would be affected. If the parents can't work, they can't pay their taxes. Council Member Lyons said that when Mr. Mustafa Salahurder had told Ms. Peirera during the public hearing that she was wasting her time going after the City Council when she should be confronting the State of Connecticut, he was correct.

Council Members McBride-Lee; Banta and Taylor-Moye left the meeting at 9:30 p.m.

Council Member Brannelly said that Council members have to discuss about the reval at 5:30 p.m. on May 8th. The vote on the reval will affect the grand list. The Committee must vote on whether to accept the reval delay before voting on the budget. She explained the ramifications if the Council moves to go forward on the reval. Council President McCarthy said that if reval delay issue passes out of Committee it will be voted on Monday in Council. He explained the voting process and when the vote on the Budget would happen. He added that police officers would be delivering summons for the upcoming Council meetings on Monday and Tuesday to the individual Council Members tomorrow night.

Council Member Brannelly said that Ms. Kelly-Lenz and others will be speaking to the Committee on the reval and the impact of this on the taxes. Council President McCarthy said that this was a State ruling, all 169 municipalities were affected. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that it would be important to focus on what was right for Bridgeport.

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARELLA SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED WITH FOUR IN FAVOR (BRANNELLY, MCCARTHY, MARTINEZ, AND SWAIN)
AND ONE OPPOSED (VIZZO-PANICCIA).**

The meeting adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET & APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
BUDGET HEARINGS
THURSDAY, MAY 8, 2014
6:00 PM**

ATTENDANCE: Co-chair Brannelly; Co-chair Marella
Council members: Lyons, Taylor-Moye, Swain, Vizzo-Paniccia

OTHER(s): Council President McCarthy; Council member DeJesus

CITY STAFF: T. Sherwood; Director of OPM

Co-chair Brannelly called the meeting to order at 6:21 pm.

General Budget Discussion

Mr. Sherwood gave an update for the following budget items:

- Jewish Home - \$25k per year with an escalator down the road. There will be one payment now of \$125k and subsequent payments of \$25k.
- Building permits have been pulled for the \$5 million house located on Grovers Avenue.
- Building permits for Achievement First have been pulled.

There was open discussion pertaining to whether or not the costs for the permits will be included in the budget this year or next year.

Co-chair Marella questioned if every department knows what was spent at year end. Mr. Sherwood said no; he explained that they give the departments the allocation and they hope all of it is spent to make it easier to balance at year end. He noted that he would like to see an audit from 2012 for comparison purposes, noting that they will take out the Board of Education and Library.

Mr. Sherwood stated that when an allocation is approved at the appropriation level, he determines if the money was moved and applied to a particular line item. He then goes through the list and resorts the line items by department. However, if he goes the route of details by account, all the documentation has to be devised for submitting.

Council President McCarthy mentioned that they are making a cut without hurting service. Mr. Sherwood said that could be done.

Council member Swain referred to page-179 of the budget. She said she reviewed the line items that she recommended for a decreased allocation. Mr. Sherwood explained that they need to understand that they are jumping from the audit done in 2013 and they have to review what was allocated in 2014; they need to look at the year-to-date allocations.

Council member Swain commented that she made her recommendations based on looking at where they can reasonably cut back without hurting more crucial line items. Council President McCarthy stated that there are some items that couldn't be cut, such as the police department and fire department. Mr. Sherwood agreed. He clarified that even if they strip away all the other recommended cuts, the bottom line number still won't be exact. He said the maximum could be between \$600k-\$800k; noting that would be a stretch. He further noted that it's not possible to make percentage cuts because they have to go through the data.

Council President McCarthy asked Mr. Sherwood if he would have something more to work off of by tomorrow. Mr. Sherwood said yes.

Council member Taylor-Moye had a question about some of the positions not being filled. She asked if they have to be filled and if they can let it go another year. Mr. Sherwood said the positions are in place and they aren't ghost positions as it's been claimed. He recalled that the Mayor has eliminated (225) positions to date, since his term began and the matter gets reviewed annually.

There was a brief discussion regarding labor unions renegotiation.

Council member Vizzo-Paniccia asked about United Illuminating costs and if anyone was doing anything in the Public Facilities Department to check streetlight outages. Mr. Sherwood said the department advertises and the police department calls in the pole number if they observe an outage. He added that the department then has a certain amount of days to correct the problem; but overall it's a United Illuminating issue.

Council member Vizzo-Paniccia asked if the storm cleanup is coming out of the budget and if so, what is the guess-estimate. Mr. Sherwood said they put it into the revolving fund and they already closed the books for the time period. They took the approach to put the money into an account to charge things off in case of a storm and if they get anything back, it will go into the general fund.

Council member Swain commented that the taxpayers already paid for what was actually spent. Mr. Sherwood clarified that wasn't necessarily the case because the matter pertains to what was already paid for a previous storm. He explained that the taxpayers are only paying for the budget that's current, not for any occurrences in the future. Co-chair Brannelly clarified that it relates to an increase in service and not a savings.

Council member Swain asked about the vacancy position, noting that there wasn't a vacancy identified in Public Facilities budget and Mr. Cottrell's position isn't in the report. Mr. Sherwood explained that technically there isn't a vacancy due to the shift in positions. He said that up to the time that Mr. Cottrell actually left the position, every person was assigned a position number and they can't move someone up until a person is officially hired. Council member Swain stated that she didn't get a feel that all the positions were listed.

Council member Lyons stated that in the past when they did the budget, they went through each department that indicated to the committee what they needed and what they didn't need. She said now they are saying that it took months to put the budget together based on what the requests were. Mr. Sherwood said based on that number, they will need to make a decision whether or not they can deviate from the plan from the Mayor's perspective. Then upon the city council's deliberations, they will then need to determine what they do in comparison to what the Mayor does.

Mr. Sherwood stated that he will request that each department look at their budget needs again to determine where they can make possible cuts, as suggested by the committee.

Co-chair Brannelly asked if the committee wanted to go through the departments tonight or take another direction.

Council member Swain asked about Citi-Stat under the CAO (Andrew Nunn's) office. Mr. Sherwood explained what was involved and the process related to specific programs such as the gun-buy-back program, noting that research has been conducted.

Council member Taylor-Moye asked if they were going to review all the points with Mr. Sherwood for additional feedback.

Co-chair Brannelly gave an update that the proposed Board of Education allocation will be \$3,650,000. Mr. Sherwood noted that they were asking them to find an additional \$1 million, which he said would equate to either a reduction in the cap or an increase in the mill rate.

Council member Lyons asked about the BOE deal. Mr. Sherwood said they settled the issue on the current year between the state, city, BOE, and OPM and the \$3.2 million is good for this year and next year. And through adopting that amount, the state is giving them \$1.2 million for this year and another \$700k; so the split will be \$700k from the state and \$500k from the city.

Council member Taylor-Moye asked when they vote on Saturday, will they be voting on the entire budget in five separate parts and then vote the budget in five parts on Monday. It was stated that the committee's majority vote will include: a) revenue increases b) revenue decreases c) appropriation increases d) appropriation decreases.

Co-chair Brannelly asked if the in-kind cash contribution to the BOE will be \$2.3 million of new cash, noting that the total cash contribution to the BOE isn't known. She posted the break down on the board as follows:

- \$8.2 million in-kind services –*includes \$1.2 million for 2015/state contribution to the MBR*
- \$8.2 million in-kind services – *includes \$700k for 2014/state contribution to the MBR*
- current year allowance \$1,019,400 workers compensation/city paid out of the budget, but not budgeted in the BOE
- \$1.6 million additional appropriation year 2015
- \$500k city difference of the MBR year 2015
- \$100k compliance differential of the MBR

It was noted that the Debt Service is \$16,200,000 that isn't part of the in-kind services for 2014/2015.

Mr. Sherwood explained that for each year, they have to sustain what's put in and the amount always goes up as it pertains to the MBR.

Co-chair Brannelly reviewed the \$2.2 million in new cash they will contribute.

Co-chair Marella asked what the number would be for this year. It was noted that \$9.2 million in-kind services wasn't part of the \$79.6 million which is the total BOE operations that includes the \$2.2 million City of Bridgeport – *this takes into account nutrition, ECS, adult education etc. and when it's all added up amounts to \$79.6 million.*

Council member Vizzo-Paniccia asked about the private sector concerning time and attendance. Mr. Sherwood stated that there is a log in and log out component, noting that it can be made uniform and done across the board. He added that a report is generated weekly for every department, but the BOE has a different software reporting system.

Council member Swain went back to the matter of Citi-Stat personnel outlined on page-112 of the budget. Mr. Sherwood stated that personnel salaries are broken out to see operational budgets for Citi-Stat and the CAO office.

Council member Vizzo-Paniccia asked if all the personnel was listed in the proper departments. Mr. Sherwood said yes, every department has a code.

Council member Swain submitted two letters from: 1) Benjamin Barnes, Secretary Office of Policy and Management and Sada Baracka, Chair Board of Education – *entered into the record.*

**** COUNCIL MEMBER SWAIN MOVED TO ENTER TWO LETTERS FROM BENJAMIN BARNES, SECRETARY OFFICE OF POLICY AND MANAGEMENT AND SADA BARACKA, CHAIR BOARD OF EDUCATION AS EXHIBIT-1-5-8-2014**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER TAYLOR-MOYE SECONDED**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

Co-chair Marella asked what was settled between the state and the Board of Education. Mr. Sherwood recalled that when former superintendent Ramos left, former superintendent Vallas came in and cuts were discussed. The city asked what they could do help and it was discussed that they would pick up the budget items for school crossing guards, snow plowing, recycling sanitation and workers compensation indemnity. They made a budget provision, but the state said that \$3.3 million appropriation was given based on the in-kind values. However, it didn't pass, but the city will still be in compliance even though they will probably have to do the same thing again next year.

The discussion moved to an open discussion regarding the Board of Education and the City of the Bridgeport.

Co-chair Brannelly asked the committee to get back on track and she asked if there were anymore items to discuss. Mr. Sherwood recapped that he would dig through the budget tonight and pull out personnel services and any expenses that have been

increased that didn't need to be budgeted to determine if they can be scaled back. He said he would check the figures that were historically reported to compare this year against next year.

Council President McCarthy emphasized that it would be important to find ways to make cuts that don't impact services.

Mr. Sherwood explained that a list of items were suggested to make potential cuts, such as; the print shop and other items as they were outlined on the listing that was submitted.

Co-chair Brannelly mentioned the matter of police car detail related to overtime. It was noted that there could be an additional police cost that would equate to a potential reduction of \$10k.

Council member Taylor-Moye asked about the revenue increases and decreases. Co-chair Brannelly recapped that Mr. Sherwood would be working on identifying potential cuts tonight for reporting at the meeting scheduled on Friday.

Co-chair Brannelly referred to the report that outlined potential percentage reductions:

**** COUNCIL MEMBER TAYLOR-MOYE MOVED TO ENTER THE LINE ITEM LISTING OF POTENTIAL PERCENTAGE REDUCTIONS INTO THE RECORD AS EXHIBIT-2-5-8-2014**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER SWAIN SECONDED**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

Co-chair Brannelly cautioned the committee to say that whatever the city council and committee comes up with in terms of the final budget will be what it is. However, she made it clear that if it's voted against as a council; the Mayor's proposed budget will be adopted that equates to a \$5.8 million increase, which will result in a higher tax increase.

There was some open discussion regarding the impact of a higher mill rate vs. a lower mill rate and the effects it could potentially have on the homeowner and businesses.

ADJOURNED

**** COUNCIL MEMBER TAYLOR-MOYE MOVED TO ADJOURN
** COUNCIL MEMBER SWAIN SECONDED
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Graham
Telesco Secretarial Services

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET & APPROPRIATIONS
BUDGET HEARINGS
MAY 9, 2014**

ATTENDANCE: Susan Brannelly, Co-chair; Michael Marella, Co-chair;
Denese Taylor-Moye, Patricia Swain, Council President Thomas
McCarthy, AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia (6:40 p.m.); Lydia
Martinez (6:47 p.m.)

STAFF: Thomas Sherwood, OPM Director; Council Member Jack Banta,
Council Member Robert Halstead, Council Member Richard DeJesus
(6:43 p.m.), Council Member Milta Feliciano (6:43 p.m.), Council
Member Eneida Martinez-Walker (6:43 p.m.); Council Member Alfredo
Castillo (6:54 p.m.)

CALL TO ORDER

Council Member Brannelly called the meeting to order at 6:24 p.m. A quorum was present.

BUDGET DISCUSSION

Council Member Brannelly said that Mr. Sherwood had been asked to review the budget for more savings. Mr. Sherwood distributed a document titled "Org Description - 2015 Proposed, 2015 Approved Analysis" to the Committee members.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARELLA MOVED TO ENTER THE DOCUMENT AS ORG DESCRIPTION - 2015 PROPOSED, 2015 APPROVED ANALYSIS AS EXHIBIT #1-05.09.14**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER SWAIN SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mr. Sherwood then reviewed the various changes that had been made to the budget and were listed in Ex #1-05.09.14. He said that he analyzed the FY 2012 and 2013 audits and also the 2014 proposed budget and also showed it to all the department heads. The total for all the changes Mr. Sherwood made was \$819,163. The Board of Education will have 2.2 million in new aid.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARELLA MOVED TO ENTER THE SPREADSHEET WITH THE 2013 ASSESSMENT AS EXHIBIT # 2-05.09.14.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER TAYLOR MOYE SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia joined the meeting at 6:40 p.m.

The changes would mean the average commercial increase would be \$127.53 rather than \$308.04.

Council Members R. DeJesus, E. Walker, and M. Feliciano joined the meeting at 6:43 p.m.

For Motor Vehicles, the average increase of \$4.08 was reduced to \$1.69. Personal property decreased from the estimated proposed amount of \$110.60 to \$45.79.

Council Member Martinez joined the meeting at 6:47 p.m.

Council Member Brannelly asked about the unfilled positions. Mr. Sherwood reviewed the requests for personnel hires. Council Member Marella said that he remembered a request for a Fire Inspector and a request for a Typist 1 in the City Clerk's. Discussion followed.

Council Member Castillo joined the meeting at 6:54 p.m.

Council Member Halstead reminded everyone that there had been a discussion about a building inspector. He added that there had been a Legislative Aide for the Council members. Council President McCarthy then gave a history of how the position had been eliminated the Legislative Aide and moved the position to the City Clerk's Office. Council Member Halstead said that he had not been able to get things on to agendas and he was not receiving the information he had asked for. Discussion followed.

Council President McCarthy suggested that perhaps if the vacant position in City Clerk's was filled, it might be easier for the staff to respond to requests.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked about the unaffiliated positions. Mr. Sherwood said that cutting the unaffiliated positions is difficult because there are always consequences.

Council Member Banta left the meeting at 7:18 p.m.

Council President McCarthy explained that a number of years ago, a major personnel reduction was done across the board, which resulted in all the police clerical staff being cut from the budget. This ended up with the police officers performing clerical staff and working overtime. Discussion followed.

Council Member Marella asked for the percentage of the budget that goes for education. Mr. Sherwood gave the percentage of the City's budget. The total number includes the debt service on the construction of the schools. Council Member Brannelly pointed out that \$9,200,000 of the in-kind services includes Workman's Comp., garbage, payroll, comptrollers, crossing guards, snow removal and other services. Mr. Sherwood pointed out that the BOE will have to set up their own payroll, comptrollers, contract a sanitation service for garbage removal and other services. He reiterated that there had been a vote passing the resolution and he was there along with a number of other witnesses at the meeting.

The discussion moved to potentially approving the City Clerk's Typist 1 position. It was the consensus of the Committee that this would be appropriate.

Council Member Halstead left the meeting at 8:00 p.m.

Council Member Brannelly said that there had been a previous discussion about adding a Building Inspector to locate non-permitted work. Zoning also needs another staff member. Mr. Sherwood explained that when Steel Point or other major projects gets underway there will be inspectors on site daily and that will lighten up the load for the departments. He added that the Zoning Department had just filled a position that would take care of after hours inspections. He said that the new hire had just started three weeks ago. Mr. Sherwood suggested that it would be good to wait and see what happens with the position filled. It was the consensus of the Committee that this is not the time to increase the Building and Zoning inspectors.

Council Member Castillo asked about the vacancies in Public Works. Mr. Sherwood said that last year, the department had nine positions had been cut. This year, they asked to be left alone. Discussion followed.

Council Member Swain asked if there was a new position in the City Attorney's Office. Mr. Sherwood said that there had been a position that was a basic manager for their office, but it had not been filled for a number of years. He pointed out that there was no position listed in that department for a manager.

Council Member Swain asked about the Council stipends. Mr. Sherwood said that the Charter requires him to allocate \$9,000 per Council Member. When there is funding left at the end of the year, it is moved to the Fund Balance. Council Member Brannelly asked if any surplus balance could be carried over to the next year. Mr. Sherwood said that this was listed on page 100 in the Budget book. He said that he could transfer the surplus from the account into a special fund, but would need to research how to transfer the money back into the Council Members' account. He said that the auditors will be here reviewing the '13-'14 budget and it would be a good time to discuss this with them. If they are agreeable, then it could go before the Council for approval and if it is approved, then it could be enacted the following year. Discussion followed.

It was the general consensus of the Council Members present that this would be appropriate if approved by the auditors.

Council Member Brannelly asked about the fee schedule. Mr. Sherwood reminded her that the research would be done on this after the budget was set.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked about Weights and Measures. Mr. Sherwood said that right now, that department only has one and a half employees. The department director will review the fees and send the information to Mr. Sherwood.

The discussion then moved the upcoming votes. Mr. Sherwood explained that in order to pass the revenues portion of the budget, it would require 14 votes regardless of how many Council

Members are present. If the Council Members do not approve the revenue process then the Mayor's Proposed Budget will go into effect, which is \$522,966,587.

Council Member Marella pointed out that the new Council Members need to think carefully about voting for the budget. Without the 14 votes for the Committee's budget, the taxes will go up. He encouraged everyone to be strong and realize that no one wants the taxes to go up, but the Council's budget is less than half the taxes increase that the Mayor proposed in his budget.

Council President McCarthy said that he fully endorsed Council Member Marella's comments. He reiterated that if the Mayor's budget goes through, it will increase the taxes by double the amount the Council is proposing.

Council Member Martinez said that last year she was against a budget increase but by the end of the process, she realized that the City needed to provide services to the residents. After the budget was passed, people dealt with the increases and life went on.

Council Member Castillo said he felt that it was hard to respond to constituents. Council Member Brannelly said that it was hard to remember all the facts and figures. She added that there were rumors flying around that the taxes will increase by \$1,000. In the Connecticut Post, there is an article that claims the Committee is considering a hiring freeze. Unfortunately, the Council does not have the power to do this. The Council did discuss it, but realized that they do not have the power to do this.

Mr. Sherwood said that when the legislative intent with the numbers is voted on, people will tell them it is not the correct number.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia suggested that the Council create a document and take out an ad in the newspaper, rather than having the editorials edited or having the Post putting their own slant on the issue. She also suggested that the Committee explain that the BOE can do whatever they want with the City allocation. She said that it was critical to get the information out. Discussion followed.

Mr. Sherwood said that the Council currently has saved 3.1 million from the Mayor's budget. He also pointed out that 2.2 million will come from the taxpayers, regardless of whether or not it is State mandated.

The discussion moved to the copiers and fax machines in the various offices. Council Member Brannelly said that Mr. Heller is working on compiling the inventory of all the copiers and fax machines. Going forward, Mr. Heller will be negotiating the contracts for all the copiers and fax machines.

Mr. Sherwood reiterated that it was critical to have 14 votes in favor for the appropriations portion of the budget vote. Without that there would be severe financial ramifications for the residents.

Mr. Sherwood also pointed out that when the legislative intent is crafted, it will say that the change reflects the average amount of unspent funds over the last three years. He said that any additional cuts would impact services. Council Member Feliciano said that she would like to have Mr. Sherwood find more cuts. Mr. Sherwood repeated that any more cuts would impact services.

Council Member Martinez-Walker left the meeting at 9:20 p.m.

Council Member Taylor Moye had several questions regarding the figures on the reductions, which Mr. Sherwood reviewed with her.

Council Member Castillo left the meeting at 9:23 p.m.

Council Member Brannelly then subtracted the \$819,000 from the previous reduction total of approximately \$3,640,000 for a total reduction of \$2,821,000.

Mr. Sherwood left the meeting at 9:30 p.m. to prepare the legislative intent.

Council Member Brannelly then reviewed the goals for the Budget and Appropriation Committee for the coming year.

Council Member Taylor Moye commended Council Member Swain for her willingness to join the Board

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL MEMBER TAYLOR MOYE MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARELLA SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 9:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET & APPROPRIATIONS
BUDGET HEARINGS
MAY 10, 2014**

ATTENDANCE: Susan Brannelly, Co-chair; Michael Marella, Co-chair;
Patricia Swain, AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia, Howard
Austin, Council President Thomas McCarthy, Lydia
Martinez, Denese Taylor-Moye

OTHERS: Thomas Sherwood, OPM Director; Brian Lockhart, CT Post;
Council Member Rick Torres (via telephone); Council Member
Robert Halstead (11:02 a.m.); Council Member Michelle Lyons
(11:07 a.m.)

CALL TO ORDER.

Council Member Brannelly called the meeting to order at 10:52 a.m. A quorum was present.

BUDGET DISCUSSION

Council Member Brannelly gave a brief recap of the previous night's meeting. Mr. Sherwood distributed copies of a document titled "FY 2014-2015 General Fund Budget Amendment Resolution" to those present.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA MOVED TO ENTER THE FY 2014-2015
GENERAL FUND BUDGET AMENDMENT RESOLUTION AS EXHIBIT #1-05.10.14.
** COUNCIL MEMBER MARELLA SECONDED.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mr. Sherwood then reviewed all the General Fund revenue increases, the General Fund revenue decreases, the General Fund appropriation increases, and the General Fund Appropriations decreases with the Committee members. He said that this budget is balanced and in compliance with the Charter.

Council Member Halstead joined the meeting 11:02 a.m.

Mr. Sherwood said that he had been asked to review the budget and reduce wherever possible. He said that he looked at every budget line and compared the spending for the last three year's average spending. He said that he had focused on the line items that would not affect services.

Council President McCarthy said that the Committee had asked Mr. Sherwood to do this and thanked him for the major effort he had made.

Mr. Sherwood explained that he had reviewed each line item carefully and compared it to the average spending for that line item for the last two years.

Council Member Lyons joined the meeting at 11:07 a.m.

Council Member Torres said that with respect to all the work that had gone on, he felt that the Committee had not cut enough. He said that it was time to make the City feel the pain, such as cutting the printing department. He said that there were many departments had grown dramatically since 2012 and should be cut. He said that the Committee should give Mr. Sherwood a number and Mr. Sherwood should make it happen. He said that Mr. Sherwood works for the administration.

Council Member Torres said that the budget should be given to Mr. Sherwood and the Mayor with the statement that the residents want a zero tax increase. He said that he had cut the Mayor's Budget by 10% and the Legislative budget by 80% across the board.

Council Member Torres said that he posted a study from the Lincoln Institute that shows Bridgeport as the Number One tax city. He said that he would be voting against the budget and that the Council needs to force the Mayor's hand to reduce expenses.

Mr. Sherwood said that the print shop is a different mechanism and handles all the meters and postage. All the printing is now funneled to the print shop. They print all budget books, the CAFIR report and brochures. All the color printing for the departments is done through them.

Mr. Sherwood explained that one can not make a 10% cut across a department, there are items that are not negotiable have to be deducted. Also 50% of the cost of any employee laid off have to be added back in because of unemployment obligations. He added that 2.2 million of the increase of 2.7 increase was the Board of Education.

Council Member Torres said that the job of the Council was to cut the budget and they should would force Mr. Sherwood to cut the budget. Council Member Torres said that he would be voting against the budget.

Council President McCarthy said that while part of the job was to cut the budget, it was the job of the Council to protect the taxpayer and to deliver the services to the residents. Hundreds of jobs have been cut over the past few years. He said that he understood that Council Member Torres did not believe that the City should be delivering certain services. He mentioned how the shift of the school based nurses were transferred to the BOE. The School based Clinics were transferred to a private vendor. The school dental hygienist teamed up with the University of Bridgeport and all these transfers worked out very well.

Council Member Torres said that when taxes are too high and this discourages businesses. When businesses leave, then it increases the number of people needing services. He said that it was time to stop the downward spiral. Council President McCarthy said that he and Council Member Torres have a different point of view. Discussion followed.

Council Member Torres said that the way the taxes would decrease would be from the growth of businesses. He referenced a statement that Council Member Taylor-Moye made about the fact if

the taxes go up, then the seniors will feel it, not be able to pay their taxes and need more services.

Council Member Brannelly pointed out that it was important to provide services so that businesses will be willing to come to the City.

Council Member Taylor-Moye said that her statement was made in reference to the Board of Education wanting more money. She said that the City needs to provide services to its residents.

Council Member Swain pointed out that the Mayor has requested to increase the budget, but the Council will get the flack for the increase, even though the Committee cut significant amounts. She wondered why the Council had not put pressure on the Mayor to reduce the budget.

Council President McCarthy said that the timing for the budget process was not good. He reminded everyone that two years ago, the Council had tried to amend the budget process by adding more time. He pointed out the administration was union driven.

The discussion then moved to the unintended consequences of cutting various items.

Council Member Swain said that she just realized that if the Council does not approve the Council's budget, then the Mayor's approved budget will go into effect. This means that the tax increase would be much higher than what the Council is proposing.

Council Member Austin said that he was happy with where the budget was at right now. The Committee has done the best they can do.

Council Member Torres said that the Committee has not done the best that they can do since they don't have Mr. Sherwood's staff or the numbers. He said that the Mayor is getting exactly what he wants, since the Mayor gave out a final figure and knew he wouldn't get it. He said that the administration should not fill positions and should have a zero increase.

Council Member Martinez said that part of this was about being elected again and were afraid to face their constituents. She said that the social service department is overwhelmed with the needs in the communities. She said that she understanding the taxpayers will not be happy when the taxes increase, but the Committee alleviated a portion of the tax amount.

Council Member Torres said that regarding cutting, the question is how much the cut is. He said that the Committee has no way of assessing whether a department is working efficiently. He said that his cuts did not touch the social services. The most recent hiring in the Public Works Department should not have happened. He said that if the Committee cut 1% of the budget it would bring it to zero. Discussion followed about the increasing cost of gas, heating oil and other commodities.

Mr. Sherwood said that the Mayor's increase was less than 1% and that .8 of that increase was due to the Board of Education, leaving .2 for the City expenses.

Council Member Torres left the meeting at 12:00 p.m.

66-13(a) - Budget and Appropriations Committee Vote of General Fund Revenue Increases

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARELLA MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 66-13 (a) REVENUE INCREASE AS PRESENTED.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER AUSTIN SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

66-13(b) Budget and Appropriations Committee Vote of General Fund Revenue Decreases

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARELLA MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 66-13(b) GENERAL FUND REVENUE DECREASES AS PRESENTED.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER AUSTIN SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

66-13(c) Budget and Appropriations Committee Vote of General Fund Appropriations Increases

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARELLA MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 66-13 (c) GENERAL FUND APPROPRIATION INCREASES AS PRESENTED.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER TAYLOR-MOYE SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

66-13 (d) Budget and Appropriations Committee Vote of General Fund Appropriations Decreases.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARELLA MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 66-13(d) GENERAL FUND APPROPRIATION DECREASES AS PRESENTED.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

66-13(e) Budget And Appropriations Committee Vote Of General Fund Budget.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARELLA MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 66-13(d) GENERAL FUND BUDGET AS PRESENTED.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER AUSTIN SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Council President McCarthy then thanked everyone for their hard work on this budget. Council Member Brannelly agreed.

ADJOURNMENT

- ** COUNCIL MEMBER MARELLA MOVED TO ADJOURN.**
- ** COUNCIL MEMBER AUSTIN SECONDED.**
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services