

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT  
BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE  
REGULAR MEETING  
JUNE 13, 2016**

**ATTENDANCE:** Scott Burns, Co-Chair; Denese Taylor-Moye, Co-Chair; M. Evette Brantley, Anthony Paoletto, Jose Casco, Council Member AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia (6:10 p.m.); Aidee Nieves (6:20 p.m.)

**OTHERS:** Council Member Eneida Martinez, Ken Flatto, Finance Director; Nestor Nkwo, OPM Director; Thomas Gaudett, Mayor's Office; Council Member Milta Feliciano; Council Member Richard Salter

**CALL TO ORDER**

Council Member Burns called the meeting to order at 6:08 p.m. A quorum was present.

**APPROVAL OF COMMITTEE MINUTES**

**Approval of Committee Minutes: March 16, 2016 (Regular Meeting); April 07, 2016; April 11, 2016; April 12, 2016 (Special Budget Hearings); April 13, 2016 (Public Hearing); April 14, 2016 (Special Budget Hearings); April 19, 2016 (Public Hearing); April 20, 2016; April 21, 2016 (Special Budget Hearings); April 21, 2016 (Public Hearing); April 23, 2016; April 25, 2016 (Special Budget Hearings); April 25, 2016 (Special Meeting); April 27, 2016 (Public Hearing); April 28, 2016; April 30, 2016; May 3, 2016; May 4, 2016 (Special Budget Hearings); May 4, 2016 (Public Hearing) May 5, 2016 & May 7, 2016 (Special Budget Hearings).**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF MARCH 16, 2016 (REGULAR MEETING); APRIL 07, 2016; APRIL 11, 2016; APRIL 12, 2016 (SPECIAL BUDGET HEARINGS); APRIL 13, 2016 (PUBLIC HEARING); APRIL 14, 2016 (SPECIAL BUDGET HEARINGS); APRIL 19, 2016 (PUBLIC HEARING); APRIL 20, 2016; APRIL 21, 2016 (SPECIAL BUDGET HEARINGS); APRIL 21, 2016 (PUBLIC HEARING); APRIL 23, 2016; APRIL 25, 2016 (SPECIAL BUDGET HEARINGS); APRIL 25, 2016 (SPECIAL MEETING); APRIL 27, 2016 (PUBLIC HEARING); APRIL 28, 2016; APRIL 30, 2016; MAY 3, 2016; MAY 4, 2016 (SPECIAL BUDGET HEARINGS); MAY 4, 2016 (PUBLIC HEARING) MAY 5, 2016 & MAY 7, 2016 (SPECIAL BUDGET HEARINGS).**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO SECONDED.**

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

**GENERAL DISCUSSION RE: REVIEW OF MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT**

Mr. Flatto distributed copies of the April 2016 Monthly Report, which had already been filed with the City Clerk.

*Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia joined the meeting at 6:10 p.m.*

Mr. Flatto said that the City had reduced the amount of debt, and listed a number of different items, including the recent sale of some land to Sacred Heart. He said that the financial picture was better than it was five or six months ago, He reviewed the key variances and noted that they were included in the Executive Summary. The administration has been working to keep the expenses down and increase the revenues.

Council Member Taylor-Moye asked if some of the money from the Sacred Heart sale would be used for the Youth Summer Program. Mr. Flatto said that any new revenue that comes in over the summer would be booked in the next year's budget. Mr. Nkwo agreed.

Council Member Brantley asked where the funding was coming from for the Second Change program. Mr. Nkwo said that it would be coming from the current year's budget.

*Council Member Feliciano joined the meeting at 6:16 p.m.*

Council Member Burns asked about the where the revenue from the Sacred Heart would be entered. Mr. Flatto said that it would be entered into the line item for sales of City owned property. Mr. Nkwo agreed.

Council Member Burns asked about the amount that would go to the fund balance and the amount that would be left in the General Fund. Mr. Flatto said that at least half would go to the Fund Balance. He said that some of the funding would also go towards other deficits. Mr. Nkwo said that the reasoning behind the process, it was done this way to prevent spending of the unanticipated revenue. He reviewed the details about the accounting process. Discussion followed.

*Council Member Nieves joined the meeting at 6:20 p.m.*

Mr. Flatto informed the Committee that the closing on the Sacred Heart land sale is expected to happen in the next week or so.

Council Member Burns asked about the Month Actual Column on the report and wanted to know why it was not included on the report. Mr. Flatto said that he had taken it out because it allowed the columns to be a bit larger. Council Member Burns said that he would like it to be included. Mr. Flatto said that he would include it in the next report.

Council Member Burns asked about the anticipated Birth Certificates revenue. Mr. Nkwo said that it was a projection and added that the projected revenue had never fallen short. He explained that now the office was accepting credit cards and the sales increased by about 35%. Previously, they would only accept cash.

Council Member Burns asked about the anti-blight fines, which were projected as zero. Mr. Nkwo said that he would have to check with OPED to find out where the funding was being allocated. Mr. Flatto said that the revenue was coming in very slowly, so he reduced the projected amount. Mr. Nkwo said that currently, the funding was going into the General Funding, but after June 30th, the money will be going back into the Special Revenue Fund for

Demolitions. This will prevent the funding from being moved into the General Fund at the end of the fiscal year.

Council Member Brantley asked for clarification on the Anti-Blight Department, which was moving to the Housing Code Department. Mr. Gaudett said that their offices were next to the Health Department, but they were not necessarily collaborating on projects. Mr. Nkwo said that two of the positions were being paid out of OPED and others were being paid out of Public Facilities.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked about the Police Overtime Expenses and said that there were no specifics listed for items such as the swearing in ceremonies or the Arena parking. She said that they should be listing some of the reasons why the overtime was being accumulated. This should also be done for Fire and Public Facilities.

Council Member Burns asked about the Fire and Police Overtime. Mr. Nkwo said that the Police Overtime should be close to what had been projected when the new administration started. There were a number of factors, such as the Arena only pays for two officers, but when there is a major act, it can run to \$15,000 for one night. When the Presidential Campaigns came for the rallies, it cost the City \$70,000. The parades also cost the City money.

Council Member Brantley asked what could be done to insure that the political campaigns pay the city for the services. Mr. Flatto said that legally they cannot charge for it because they have the right to have an assembly. Discussion followed about how the officers are chosen for overtime duty. Mr. Nkwo pointed out that it was a contractual issue.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia noted that the Police Contracts are up at the end of the month. While the Council Members cannot sit in with Labor Relations, they can ask questions when the item comes to Contracts.

Council Member Taylor-Moye asked about the status of the booting program. Mr. Flatto said that residents are being notified by letter in advance that their vehicles may be booted. Council Member Taylor-Moye said that she thought that there already was a remedy because the City would not allow the vehicle to be registered if the taxes are not being paid. Discussion followed.

Council Member Casco asked about the cost of the parades and wanted to know if the various groups had given any contributions to the City for the services. Mr. Nkwo said that he was suggesting that when the group comes for a permit an additional amount be added for the Police overtime. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that this had been tried in the past and it did not work since most of the groups are non-profits.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia suggested that the City consider quarterly payments for taxes. Mr. Nkwo said that it would increase the amount of administration work. If there are four payments, people tend to forget which payment they have already made. He added that most of the payments have been coming from banks. Mr. Nkwo said that he had been encouraging a friend to just pay extra whenever he had the extra funds because that way, the money is already on deposit. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that Mr. Nkwo should let the Council Members know about this.

Council Member Burns said that between the revenue and expenditures, it looked like there was around \$7 million dollar deficiency. Mr. Flatto said that it was right. He added that this was a significant improvement over the \$15 million that the City had in December.

**144-15 Proposed Approval of Tax Anticipation Notes (TANS) To Pay Current Expenses and Obligations of the City.**

Mr. Flatto introduced Mr. Frank Cleary of Pullman and Comley to the Committee. Mr. Flatto explained that the City had been doing some short term borrowing to offset the cash flow due to timing. He said that he had been hoping to reduce the borrowing in the spring, but that was not possible. This request is for \$15 million for one month. Mr. Flatto said that there were some large payments that have to be made before the end of the year and proceeded to explain the details of those issues, such as bond payments, and teachers' summer payments.

Mr. Flatto explained that he had gone directly to the bank's rather than working through the Wall Street firms, which would increase the costs. The vendors are bidding at under 1%, which is good news for the City, because it would only cost the City about \$16,000 in interest.

Mr. Cleary gave a very brief overview of the change in the legal language and said that he had no legal concerns at all about this proposal. The terms are very good.

Council Member Burns asked if the City would need to do TANS next year. Mr. Flatto said that he believed that the City would need to have a TAN in the fall because the start up costs for the schools have the expenses come in early in the school year. He said that he hoped that the amounts would be lower next year. Mr. Nkwo said that if the Fund Balance was able to get up to \$25 million dollars, then the City might not need to take a TAN.

Council Member Taylor-Moye asked what the rate would be. Mr. Flatto said that it would be .85%. Mr. Nkwo pointed out that there would not be any underwriting fees because they were not going to Wall Street for bids.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO MOVED TO APPROVE THE TAX ANTICIPATION NOTES (TANS) TO PAY CURRENT EXPENSES AND OBLIGATIONS OF THE CITY.**

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

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

**GENERAL DISCUSSION CONT'D**

*Council Member Salter joined the meeting at 7:09 p.m.*

Mr. Flatto said that he would like to update the Committee on a potential resolution regarding the monthly review forecast. The City has been working with UI and UI has a project that they are required to do. The catenary lines on the railroad need to be strengthen and these will require new poles. Due to this, UI needs temporary easements on five parcels and permanent easement for the installation of the poles. The City Engineers have said that there would not be any impact on the properties. Negotiations with UI have started. This may be coming before the City

Council before the end of the month. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked if the property owners had been notified. Mr. Flatto explained that the City has nothing to do with the privately owned parcels and UI is actually the one responsible to do this. Council Member Nieves said that she had heard from a business owner who also would be affected and UI is already negotiating with him.

### **118-15 Municipal Suspense Tax Book**

Mr. Flatto said that the Council is required to approve the Suspense Tax Book and list the items that have to be written off because the personal property and vehicle tax bills are not collectible. Usually, it is about \$100,000 a year, but this list is larger. Should the Assessor or City Attorney find an account, they have the legal right to collect the back tax liens.

Council Member Brantley asked about the items that were on the list. She pointed out that there were items on the list from 2000 through 2014. Mr. Flatto explained that each year, the Council votes on a portion of the list. It is still legally a tax that is owed. If there are assets, then the City can collect from them. Discussion followed about the details. Council Member Brantley said that the Tax Collector needs to do more due diligence because she recognized some names on the list.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked if the City works with Probate to see if there is anything that the City can collect. Mr. Flatto said that he would check into this.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 118-15 MUNICIPAL SUSPENSE TAX BOOK.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY SECONDED.**

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

**135-15 Proposed Budget Transfer to FY 2016-2017 General Fund Budget From: State Contingency B Account #01610000-57017 (\$905,000) To: Board of Education Account #01800000-51000 (\$905,000).**

Council Member Burns said that this had been discussed at the full Council Meeting.

Council Member Martinez asked if the BOE was making the Lighthouse Program pay \$500,000 for the use of the schools. Mr. Nkwo said that the BOE was requiring this payment. She asked where the balance was. Mr. Gaudett said that the question was a very good one. Mr. Flatto said that the \$905,000 was ECS funding given to the City to give to the BOE. The Alliance funding has been cut, which was a direct cut to the BOE. Mr. Nkwo said that it was an obligation that the City owes the BOE and will be used to meet the Minimum Budget Requirement.

Council Member Martinez asked if this would prevent the closing of the Edison and Hall schools. Mr. Gaudett said that the BOE had already decided not to close the two schools.

Discussion followed about the details of this transfer.

Council Member Taylor-Moye said that she was very sad to hear that the BOE was making the Lighthouse pay for the space for the program. There are many parents who are employed and they depend on these programs. It also harms the children.

Council Member Salter asked what the total that the BOE would get from the City. Mr. Nkwo said that it would be \$242 million, not including grants. He said that the State did cut the transportation grant funding reimbursement by \$1.4 million dollars. The Council did not reduce the City's appropriations.

Council Member Burns said that the City was obligated to meet the MBR. The District is fighting over a small pie. Everyone wants to do well for all the children. Most of the Council Members are not happy with what is being done to the Lighthouse Program.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED TO APPROVE THE PROPOSED BUDGET TRANSFER TO FY 2016-2017 GENERAL FUND BUDGET FROM: STATE CONTINGENCY B ACCOUNT #01610000-57017 (\$905,000) TO: BOARD OF EDUCATION ACCOUNT #01800000-51000 (\$905,000).**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO SECONDED.**

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

**145-15 Proposed Budget Transfer to Fiscal Year 2016-2017 General Fund Budget to Establish a “2016” Summer Youth Initiative Program From: State Budget Contingency Account #01610000-57017 (\$250,000) To: Parks and Recreation “Other Services” Account #01350000-56180 (\$250,000).**

Mr. Gaudett distributed copies of a document titled “Request for Proposal Mayor's Summer Youth Program Draft” to those present.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED TO ENTER DOCUMENT REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL MAYOR'S SUMMER YOUTH PROGRAM DRAFT AS EXHIBIT 6-13-16-1**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO SECONDED.**

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

Mr. Gaudett said that the Mayor had been hearing from people that the youth need to have a program during the summer. The money is targeted at young people from ages 14 to 21. This is an RFP that will go to the community groups. Once the applications are returned, the Committee will select certain programs that would work with youth. Mr. Gaudett said that the amounts allocated will be determined by the Committee. He said that this funding was not for existing programs. However, an established program that could expand the program. The funding would come from the Contingency B account.

Council Member Taylor-Moye said that she would like have the recipients come and talk to the Council Members. She said that there were some issues to consider such as providing transportation to the various locations. She suggested giving each District \$50,000 to allocate to the existing programs. Mr. Gaudett said that the administration wants the organizations to come to them and present the needs and the scope of the programs. Council Member Taylor-Moye

expressed a number of concerns centered around the fact that the various Districts are not working together and focused on using their own resources. Mr. Gaudett said that the Committee would look at different types of programs. Council Member Taylor-Moye said that this proposal did not sound like it was based on "Each one teach one." She said that she would make sure that the groups that she knew about would apply and that she would be the watchdog. Then she quoted Mr. John Marshall Lee's favorite saying that "Time will tell."

Council Member Feliciano asked what administrative office would be managing this process. Mr. Gaudett said that it wouldn't be under any particular office. He said that a Committee would be set up to oversee it and both he and Ms. Papa would be involved. Other than that, they were looking to the Council for direction. This program was purposely not included with the Lighthouse Program because they did not want to send the message that the administration was trying to supplement the Lighthouse's funds.

Council Member Feliciano asked when would the Committee be selected and who would have that ability to choose the members. Mr. Gaudett said that the Committee and the Council would be giving power to the administration to the executive branch to administer a program, so he believe that the Mayor would have the authority to select the Committee members. Obviously, the Mayor would take input from the Council.

Council Member Feliciano asked when how long it would take for the Committee to be put together. Mr. Gaudett said that it was not particularly formal, so the Committee could be assembled the next day if approved.

Council Member Feliciano pointed out that various organizations like the YMCA's get sufficient funding, but many of the smaller agencies don't, so by sharing the wealth with the smaller organizations, everyone would benefit. Her concern was the amounts that would be given out and suggested a cap on the allocations. Mr. Gaudett said that the Mayor's interest was in spreading the wealth as much as possible. Initially, a cap of \$25,000 was suggested with the possibility of going as high as \$50,000. He gave an overview of how the money could be allocated.

Council Member Taylor-Moye said that she wanted Mr. Gaudett to know that she was in favor of the program, but felt that there were programs out there that have been doing good work and shouldn't be ignored. Mr. Gaudett said that he thought the confusion came with the word "new". If an established program came to the Committee with a new proposal for the targeted age group, it would be considered.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked how the amount was chosen. Mr. Gaudett said that Mayor had chosen the amount as an initial amount. The discussion then moved to where the line item would be included in the budget.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that the document is a draft and wanted to know who had already knew about the program. She pointed out that there was no Committee in place and this would have to go out to the full Council for approval. The funds would be allocated from contingency. Discussion followed about all the details.

Council Member Brantley asked if this was for salary for youth. Mr. Gaudett said that there was a summer youth employment program that was different. This is for programs for the youth. Mr. Gaudett said that Ms. Papa had worked on the document with him. This funding would not go to the Lighthouse program. He listed the various reasons why this was decided.

Council Member Brantley said that it would be important to be mindful of what the youth are being subjected to in the community. She said that it would be important to make sure the Lighthouse Program is up and running. Human traffickers are targeting the children in the foster homes because they are vulnerable.

Council Member Nieves asked for clarification on the established organizations and the introduction of new programs. She gave examples of the various types of organizations such as churches that might have a short term program. Mr. Gaudett said that as long as they can demonstrate the program will help the targeted age group, and it is a new or expanded program and they can responsibly handle the money by providing receipts and time sheets.

Council Member Casco asked if there would be any oversight to see if the program is being run properly. Mr. Gaudett said that in the summer, the youth in the 14 to 21 age range are the most vulnerable. He then explained how the funding will be dispersed to the various programs.

Council Member Martinez said that in the City, there were a number of organizations that receive significant allocations from Hartford and CDBG funding. She said that it would be important to give others the opportunity to benefit from this money. She asked what statistics that the administration was looking for in terms of enrollment and how the outreach would be done. Mr. Gaudett said that the questions that the administration would be asking were listed on page 2 of the application. He said that the Committee would be giving to organizations that aren't traditionally getting money but added that the administration would also be checking to make sure the money was well spent.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked if it would be better to put the money into the parks so they could employ more young people. She said since the City was so cash strapped, they should enhance the resources and programs that are already in place. She wanted to know why the City was starting something new. She said that the City should just enhance the existing programs. Mr. Gaudett said that he knew that the Parks Department hires youth and various other programs are available. Discussion followed about having a new entity created rather than enhancing the employments for the youth. Mr. Gaudett said that the administration seemed to be trying to reach into communities and the youth that have not been given services.

Council Member Nieves said that it would be important to make sure that this was a Bridgeport-centric program. There are people who bring their nieces and nephews into Bridgeport for the programs.

Council Member Taylor-Moye said that the age range was a good thing. She pointed out that there were about 3,000 job applications submitted for 300 Connecticut Works jobs. Because of this, she was concerned that the programs would be overrun. Mr. Gaudett said that the City was basically was dispersing findings. Council Member Taylor-Moye said that the City was asking existing programs to present a new program for the targeted age range.

Council Member Taylor-Moye asked how long the organizations would have to apply. Mr. Gaudett said that he expected to send it out tomorrow after the Mayor reviews the document. Council Member Taylor-Moye asked how the organizations would find out about this application. Mr. Gaudett said that the administration was distributing it to the Council Members and also would be sending it out via email to other groups.

Council Member Nieves said that she heard what everyone was saying but her concern was the Committee did not fund more sports organizations because there are already enough of them. Mr. Gaudett said that someone had suggested that some funding be given to a group that does college tours.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that the process shouldn't start until after the 20th. She said that it wasn't fair to the Council to hand this out with no time to consider it. It has to go through Committee first and then to the Council to be approved. She said that it could not be approved until after the 20th. Mr. Gaudett said that the Committee was simply approving was the transfer of funds. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia pointed out that it was a resolution.

Council Member Burns said that this had not been included in the budget. He added that the City was not in the business of bestowing grants. He pointed out that this was a rush job, which is happening frequently. He said that this was a cynical use tax payer's funding. He stated that he was opposed to it and there were numerous organizations in the City that have outside funding. While he appreciated the input and the discussion, there were too many questions that were left unanswered.

Council Member Feliciano said that there was a question as to where the money was coming from, which the Committee was told was the Contingency fund. The second question was whether this would be an annual grant. Council Member Burns reiterated that it was a grant.

Council Member Martinez said that another compartment of this was that the Mayor had rushed into this because of the recent violence in the City. He's looking for something that would be done quickly to get the youth off the street.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED TO DENY AGENDA ITEM 145-15 PROPOSED BUDGET TRANSFER TO FISCAL YEAR 2016-2017 GENERAL FUND BUDGET TO ESTABLISH A "2016 SUMMER YOUTH INITIATIVE PROGRAM" FROM: STATE BUDGET CONTINGENCY ACCOUNT #01610000-57017 (\$250,000) TO: PARKS AND RECREATION "OTHER SERVICES" ACCOUNT #01350000-56180 (\$250,000).**

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

**\*\* THE MOTION TO DENY PASSED WITH FOUR (4) IN FAVOR (VIZZO-PANICCIA, NIEVES, BURNS AND BRANTLEY) AND THREE OPPOSED (PAOLETTO, TAYLOR-MOYE, AND CASCO).**

**ADJOURNMENT**

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

S. L. Soltes  
Telesco Secretarial Services