

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT**  
**BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE**  
**APRIL 7, 2007**

**ATTENDANCE:** Robert Curwen, Co-chair; Rafael Mojica, Co-chair; Robert Walsh, AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia, Carlos Silva

**OTHERS:** Council Member Leticia Colon, Council Member Elaine Pivrotto  
Council Member Angel dePara, Council Member Thomas Mulligan, Council Member Marie Valle Michael Feeney, Thomas White, Thomas Sherwood, Michael J. O'Neil, McGladrey & Pullen CPA

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Curwen called the meeting to order at 9:23 a.m.

Chairman Curwen then reviewed the Budget Hearing Guidelines for FY 2008, which the Council Members had in their packets. Council Member Pivrotto asked for clarification on the second part of Rule 1. Chairman Curwen explained that this was an attempt to keep the emails to a minimum and ensure that everyone received the information that they requested in a timely fashion. Council Member Mojica pointed out that by writing down the various questions, it is easier to keep tabs on whether the questions were answered or not. Council Member Walsh stated that he had asked Mr. Lupkis about some of the property sales already. Chairman Curwen asked Council Member Walsh to send him a copy of that email. Mr. Sherwood said that a number of questions had already been asked and said that he would forward these queries to Mr. White.

The discussion then moved to Rule 2, which mentions having a stenographer present and the possibility of recording all the sessions.

At the conclusion of the discussion, Chairman Curwen introduced Mr. O'Neil, who is with the public accounting firm of McGladrey & Pullen. Mr. O'Neil greeted the Council Members and informed them that he was not part of the audit team, but works with various cities to help formulate their budgets. Mr. O'Neil stated that he was present as a technical resource. He also mentioned that the Council Members had received the budget in a new format this year.

Chairman Curwen pointed out that the Council Members had received a copy of a report called the "Comprehensive Annual Financial Report" (CAFR) which contains all the financial information from the last year. Mr. Feeney commented that the financial recording needs to be focused on.

Council Member Walsh asked why there was only one public hearing scheduled rather than two. Chairman Curwen stated that he was tired of the public bashing the Council Members at the public hearing, which is what has happened the last six or seven years. Council Member Mulligan said that this was a result of poor salesmanship on the part of the public. He also suggested that the Library be separated from the Board of Education (BOE) budget. Ms. Pivrotto agreed and said that many people felt intimidated by the number of people who support the BOE budget. Council Members Silva and Vizzo-Paniccia agreed.

Mr. Sherwood then directed the Council Members' attention to the CAFR and explained that it was a major portion of the budget. The pension budget, fund balance and debt service, which form major components of the upcoming 2007-2008 budget are all listed in the CAFR. Mr. Sherwood then reviewed the process and commented that the budget binder had been adopted from the International City County Management Association (ICMA). He also mentioned that he was able to compare the City to various other municipalities via the Government Office of Finance Association (GOFA). Mr. Sherwood then reviewed some of the details of this plan with the Council Members.

Mr. Sherwood that a section of the budget binder includes Special Revenues, which is devoted to grants and other similar funds. He suggested that the Council consider having one night devoted to the discussion of grant funding.

Mr. Sherwood then explained that the budget binder had the budget sections set up in the order that the Budget and Appropriations Committee's schedule. He also explained that the line item listing of the budgets for each department were located in the supplement section in the back of the binder. Mr. Sherwood said that he takes the line item budget for each department out and refiles it in the back of the appropriate section as needed. Mr. Sherwood then gave an example of where the information was located for the Health and Social Services budget.

Chairman Curwen asked if there was any savings. Mr. Sherwood replied that when the City moved to zero based accounting, cost containment had become evident. For example, the City now has the oil changes done through an outside company because it is cheaper than doing it in house. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked about savings on electricity. Mr. Sherwood said that the City has previously been locked into buying electricity from United Illuminating (UI). Now there are other companies, such as Constellation, which offer rates such as .08¢ per kilowatt hour (kh) for the street lights.

Mr. Sherwood then reviewed the General Fund section of the binder with the Committee. He also informed the Council Members that the Personnel Services has been broken into categories. Mr. Sherwood also stated that there were three departments that were not included in the binder: Weights and Measures; Public Health Nurses and the BOE. The Public Health Nurses supervisor is on vacation. The BOE chose not to participate and is

developing their own vision goal program. Weights and Measures will be included in the future.

Chairman Curwen asked if a five year plan had been adopted. Mr. Sherwood replied that it had. Council Member Valle asked where the public facilities were listed. Mr. Sherwood directed her to the Special Revenues section.

Chairman Curwen said that he had spoken with Mr. Estrada about the overkill with all the ornamental lights. Chairman Curwen said that he was hoping that Mr. Estrada would be able to turn off some unnecessary extra lights. Council Member dePara commented that there were many lights that were out but the City still pays for the electricity for them. Mr. Sherwood said that this needs to be reported to UI because they need to fix them. Council Member dePara said that he was concerned about the lack of energy savings. Mr. Sherwood said that Next Generation is working on the problem and that Council Member dePara should ask Mr. Cotell when he addresses the Council. Mr. Sherwood also pointed out that the two major users are 45 Lyon Terrace and the Annex.

*Council Member Valle left the meeting at 11:05 a.m.*

Council Member Silva asked Mr. O'Neil when he had received his copy of the budget binder. Mr. O'Neil replied that he had received it earlier in the day. Council Member Silva then asked Mr. O'Neil for his impression of the new budget process. Mr. O'Neil said that he felt Bridgeport was ahead of the curve on this and that there would be real benefit in future years because the Committee can measure the details.

Chairman Curwen asked Mr. O'Neil what other municipalities the firm has worked with. Mr. O'Neil replied that the firm has been working with Stamford and Norwalk, but they have also worked with Norwich and New Haven in the past. Council Member Pivrotto asked how often a municipality should change auditors. Mr. O'Neil replied that it is important to look at the relationship between the firm and the City. He also pointed out that it is good to change auditing firms from time to time to bring fresh vision to the process.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Chairman Curwen thanked everyone who had attended and adjourned the meeting at 11:10 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes  
Telesco Secretarial Services

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Budget and Appropriations Committee  
April 7, 2007  
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**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT  
BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS  
APRIL 9, 2007**

**ATTENDANCE:** Robert Curwen, Chairman; Rafael Mojica, Co-chair; Donna Curran, AmyMarieVizzo-Paniccia,

**OTHERS:** Dr. Marian Evans, Health Department Director, Michael Feeney, Council Member Maria Valle, Council Member Michelle Lyons, Helen O'Brien; Council President Andres Ayala. Patricia McCoy, Assistant Registrar; Barbara Gerrity, Public Health Nursing Supervisor; Kate Grininger, School Based Department, Rosemary Hoyt, Department of Aging

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Curwen called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Mr. Feeney stated that the meeting was recessed from Saturday.

Mr. Feeney referred the Committee members to Dr. Evan's supplemental packet to the section on the Firefighter program, which represents a significant amount of savings. The budget does reflect from the Fire Department at least a 52 million dollar savings with the program that Dr. Evans currently offers. It was stated that the Health and Social Services section of the budget begins on page 47-1.

**SOCIAL SERVICES**

Chairman Curwen asked Mr. Feeney about the fact that there was no category for new positions. Mr. Feeney said that in the budget summary there was a page that highlights the personnel for the entire department. Mr. Feeney pointed out that there was a request for six new positions to be added.

Chairman Curwen and Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked about the mission statement for both the Board of Education and the Health Department. The Committee members were directed to where the Health Department mission statement was located in the binder. Chairman Curwen asked for an employee listing.

Dr. Evans greeted the Committee and reminded everyone that she did not have the same type of budget set-up that the Committee members did. She said that she would be calling various staff members up to speak to the Committee. She also mentioned that some of the Department Heads were at the CDBG meetings also.

Dr. Evans said that the Social Services Department, which the information is located on page 62-1, has no comment. Dr. Evans then quickly high lighted some of the goals and accomplishments for the year. She commented that the Department has successfully saved the WIC program, which has been reorganized under the Social Services Department. Dr. Evans explained that the State is moving towards a competitive RFP process. The RFP program came out this year for the WIC program, which is a grant funded program. The deadline for the application is April 27th and the application has already been submitted. Chairman Curwen asked if the Department was in compliance with the guidelines for filing and such. Dr. Evans said that the City had done such a thorough job that she was informally told that the Bridgeport WIC program would be featured in the fall as a model for successful programs.

Council Member Curran then asked about one of the program highlights. Dr. Evans replied that the many of the departments throughout the City have a problem with providing adequate databases and database infrastructure. This means that frequently things have to be done by hand. In 2006, there was a computer malfunction and the Social Services Department almost lost some Food Stamp data. Additional measures were taken to recapture the data and safe guards were put into place to prevent this from happening again.

Mr. Feeney commented that when the data was being compiled, there was some of the data that could not be captured. Going forward, steps are being taken to correct this.

Council Member Mojica also observed that during the last few years, the manager, Ms. Foleena runs a tight ship. He also said that when requests are made from Social Services, it is usually for office supplies that are needed. He commended Ms. Foleena for doing so much with so little.

Council Member Curran asked about one of the findings from the audit regarding certain grants were not properly identified. She went on to ask how this was being corrected and said that she would like to see the City make this a priority. Mr. Feeney said that this was being worked on as a priority. The City needs to go forward with a management system that administers the grants. Council Member Lyons asked about the grant writings. Mr. Feeney explained that the City does not have the grant writing module yet.

Council Member Walsh asked for an explanations for the supplemental pages called "Relocation" and "Special Services". Dr. Evans then reviewed the information with Council Member Walsh. Relocation covers emergency relocation such as when the Red Cross has to move people due to a fire in the night. The Social Services Department is often called upon shortly thereafter to help place the family in a suitable situation. It was commented that since July 1st, 421 individuals had been relocated in the City with this funding. This also covers hardship, or code enforcement, lead or unsanitary housing. Council Member Curran asked why there was such a large increase in the numbers. The Department is also responsible for problems that arise when there is no heat in the

building and other situations. It was explained that this increased amount was the grant amount.

### **DENTAL HYGIENE**

Mr. Feeney directed the Committee's attention to page 48-1.

Ms. O'Brien came forward and greeted the Committee. *She distributed copies of the Oral Health Initiative.* She commented that there were many uninsured and underinsured residents in Bridgeport and that this was the only care they have. She said that there were about 5,000 children who are referred out. This year, the Dental Hygienist worked on a project with some dentists to help 85 children. Chairman Curwen asked if the group worked with the University of Bridgeport (UB). Ms. O'Brien explained that they do have a contract with UB and the Board of Education. She then gave a brief overview of the interactions with UB. Ms. O'Brien confirmed that Bridgeport was the first city to have dental hygiene because it was the first public health effort.

Ms. O'Brien said that her department had participated in a nationwide survey of third graders to determine the actual dental needs of those students. She said that Bridgeport had been chosen to do the model sealant program in order to help other cities initiate the program. The program findings will be presented at a conference in June. The department was able to get some more chairs and some portable self contained carts in order to this.

Mr. Feeney said that Ms. O'Brien was one of the first ones to present her budget and Mr. Feeney believes that she did a remarkable job in being able to capture data. Ms. O'Brien said that they had unfortunately lost one hygienist in the last year due to the expiration of the one year grant, which will result in the number of children served decreasing. Ms. O'Brien said that her department does bill out and last year, the department did fairly well in recovering the costs. However, this year, the Medicaid is being revamped.

Chairman Curwen asked if the department also services the School Based Health Clinics. Ms. O'Brien said that initially, all the children are screened. Referrals are then sent home if care is needed. During the last two years, this has worked fairly well. About 5,000 students have been identified as not having service. Approximately 47% of those students were able to receive care through the referrals. Council President asked Ms. O'Brien about current legislation that was being proposed in Hartford. Ms. O'Brien said that she was aware of the legislation and would be tracking it.

### **HOUSING & COMMERCIAL CODE DEPARTMENT**

Mr. Feeney announced that the information regarding the next budget could be found on page 52-1. Mr. Feeney pointed out that the re-inspections regarding compliance with the initial inspections.

Council Member Walsh commented that the information states that the department shows doing 2,500 initial inspection and 6,000 re-inspections. He commented that this was more than two re-inspections for every new inspection. Due to the legal constraints, when a new inspection is done, it requires that there are re-inspections done on a timely basis. If the problems are not corrected, then there is a final inspection, prior to an arrest warrant being issued. Sometimes it takes two or three visits to get a property into compliance.

Chairman Curwen asked about the number of people that worked on cases of blight. Joe replied that blight cases usually took numerous visits. Council Member Curran asked about the distribution of the work. Joe explained that one inspectors maybe assigned to job that might only be a two family house, while others may be assigned to a six family apartment complex. There are nine employees in the Housing & Commercial Code Department. Two are clerical staff, six are inspectors, and the department head. Council Member Valle asked how many of the staff members are paid by CDBG funds. She was told that six were paid for from the grant funding and the other three staff members receive their salaries from the City. Council Member Valle asked if the staff was cross trained. The department head replied that because of the shortage of staff, everyone is cross trained.

Council Member Lyons asked about the inspection of condominiums. She was told that a condo was considered to be a one family residence.

Council President Ayala asked about when an anti-blight complaint goes out and the housing code inspectors evaluate the situation, if the fees that are generated from the anti-blight citation go to the Housing Code or somewhere else. Dr. Evans replied that they went somewhere else. Those fees are not appropriated even to the Health and Social Services. They go into a special revenue account. Mr. Feeney commented that this allows other projects related to anti-blight to be done. Council President Ayala asked Joe if his department found an increase in workload since the City had instituted the anti-blight ordinance. Joe replied that the department had lost an inspector that was dedicated solely to this subject. His department makes sure that everyone receives service. It may take some time to do the inspection but it is done. Dr. Evans said that there were about 500 complaints for anti-blight and an initial inspection was done. This year there were between 300-400 initial inspections. Dr. Evans said that anti-blight can only operate based on public health and housing code, but Health and Social Services do not benefit from the revenues directly.

Council Member Mojica said that he wanted to thank the Housing & Commercial Code Department for always being there when he called with complaints from his district.

Mr. Feeney referred Council President Ayala to supplemental page SR (Special Revenue Fund tab) 3, to the line item for the anti-blights for demolition and anti-blight.

## **VITAL STATISTICS**

Mr. Feeney announced that the information regarding Vital Statistics could be found on page 49-1. Chairman Curwen commented that Vital Statistics had not yet been moved from its current location into the Health Department. Ms. McCoy then gave a quick overview of the statistics for the Committee.

Mr. Feeney then reviewed the numbers as listed on page 49-3 of the budget binder. The appropriation categories remain the same but there is an increase of some \$21,000. Dr. Evans commented that there was one position that was not recorded on the information sheet. She went to explain this.

Chairman Curwen then asked Mr. Feeney if he was aware of the Committee's recommendation two years ago to move Vital Statistics department from the vault at the bottom of McLevy Hall. There are no emergency exits in the vault. Although it is fire proof, it is also a firetrap. He went on to list the various problems with the vault. Dr. Evans, Mr. Estrada and Chairman Curwen located a space in the Health Department and recommended this area to the Mayor earlier. Chairman Curwen then reiterated that the Committee recommended moving Vital Statistics to the Health Department.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia then recommended that the Mr. Feeney arrange for the funds on hand at Vital Records to be couriered to the bank. Ms. McCoy said that she only has four staff members and two have been out for some time. She then reviewed the problems that the department was encountering with the shortage. Ms. McCoy also mentioned that a number of residents had been upset to discover that the Vital Records was closed on Thursday now to deal with the mail inquires. Funeral Directors and out of state visitors have access. Council Member Mojica commented that the Vital Records has been understaffed. Regardless of the recommendations, it is difficult to realize how much work is being done by the staff until one is actually there. Council Member Mojica then thanked Ms. McCoy for all her hard work.

Council President Ayala asked if changes had been made to the fee structure. Ms. McCoy replied that at one point, one of the fees had been raised to \$15.00, but it had to be reduced because people couldn't afford it. Council President Ayala then asked when the last time the fees were changed. Dr. Evans and Ms. McCoy agreed that it was over ten years ago. A discussion then followed about the details of the daily operation of Vital Statistics.

### **RECESS**

Chairman Curwen declared a five minute recess.

### **LEAD DEPARTMENT**

Dr. Evans introduced the Director for the Lead Program. The Director then explained due to some granting funding, the Department was able to add another person so now there are four inspectors. Although the funds are there for salary, there are other

problems such as funds to cover travel expenses. The Director then listed all the various inspections that are being done in the City. There are also State mandates regarding reporting findings. Most of the money comes from CDBG, and a smaller grant from the State.

Council Member Mulligan asked if there had been any decline in the number of children affected by lead. The Director said that the threshold had been reduced. The Department is seeing more and more children with elevated blood levels. The Director stated that the department has been meeting the higher level criteria that the State demands, but the funding levels remain the same. Children with lead poisoning turn into adults with health problems because they were exposed to lead as a child. This is true of hypertension and other chronic diseases. Along with the inspections, the department is focused on education.

Dr. Evans commented that although the City receives \$100,000 from the State via the CDBG funding, the amount was cut by \$7,000 last year. Dr. Evans said that her department has told the State that they have created their own lead disparity in the children of Bridgeport because they cut the funding. The additional \$7,000 was used to provide materials to educate the community and staff support.

### **HEALTH PROGRAMS**

Mr. Feeney stated that the next department's budget could be found on page 57-1.

The Department head explained that she was satisfied with the budget request, but she did request \$20,000 to pay a portion of the director's salary. Currently, the director's salary is paid via YFC grant funding. Previously, the director was involved in youth programs but since moving to the Health Department, she is now involved in many more health related programs. Since the Director is now doing events such as the Community Health Fair, the Health Screening program and AIDS Awareness Day, these things can't be justified under the YFC grant, which raises an ethical problem. The Director then reviewed a number of programs that her department had been able to sponsor this past year. There was a discussion about some unspent grant money for the seniors. The Director said that she thought the department may be able to provide transportation for seniors and those with disabilities.

Council Member Mojica asked vehicles that had been damaged while they were parked in the Health Department lot. The vehicle is now parked in the Public Facility lot. The Police Department has informally agreed to allow this vehicle to be parked in a precinct lot.

Council Member Mulligan asked about the amount of money that was from grant funding. Mr. Feeney said that these funds were listed in the Special Revenue section, on SR 4 & 5. Dr. Evans mentioned that she had forgotten to mention that a \$20,000 grant was received for the new East Side Senior Center.

The next item discussed was the budgets for the ADA Act, which used to be a separate position under the Labor Relations budget. The amount listed in the budget reflects the support for the ADA coordinator. The ADA coordinator has requested a sizeable increase, which has been carried forward. Dr. Evans thanked the Committee for that. The Disabilities office is seriously understaffed because there is a lack of good, qualified staff. The department no longer is able to provide the programs that they used to and the numbers of residents served has dropped due to lack of staffing. The other part of the office is direct service to residents such as advocating and assisting with locating programs. There was a request for \$32,000 to hire an additional staff member, but the department would be happy with even a part time person to do the advocacy and case management. Neither of these components currently exist.

Council President Ayala asked whether grant funding had been missed because of the lack of staffing. The director said that she believed that was very likely. The well trained staff members in the office left over the years and this affected the City's ability to have grants approved. A discussion followed about a line item for employees who are disabled. These funds are set aside to help disabled City employees on an individual basis, such as getting a desk at the proper height or gel packs to reduce wrist strain for those who may have carpal tunnel syndrome. Council Member DePara asked for a list of items that have been paid for under this line item.

### **VETERANS AFFAIRS**

This department moved over to the Health Department recently. The director thanked the Committee for the purchase of a bus and said that there are occasions when there are so many veterans that need a ride to the V.A. hospital in West Haven that the staff has to prioritize. The bus actually had a mechanical problem and the computer chip on it was recalled, which slowed things down for many months. Once the computer chip was replaced by Ford, the bus was vandalized. The director explained that she had added a line item for maintenance. The staff can not pick up veterans at their homes. The only stop they make is at Homes for the Brave and occasionally the bus stop. Last year, the budget for diesel fuel was insufficient.

At the end of the last fiscal year, the Veterans Affairs office had seen a total of 500 unduplicated veterans. This year after only six months, from July to December, the office has already seen 520 veterans. The Food Pantry program took care of 200 families. This year, at the six month mark, 197 families have been supplied with food. At the end of the last fiscal year, the VA office had supplied 1,748 rides. Now, at the six month mark, 1758 rides have already been given. This means that the numbers have doubled since moving into the Health Department with the larger space.

Council Member Mojica asked if there was any reimbursement from the Veteran's Administration. The director replied that they receive nothing at all from the Veteran's Administration. Council Member Mojica asked what the price of the bus was at

purchase. The director said that she believed it was \$42,000. She explained that she is in the process of looking for a back up vehicle and this has been advertised in the press.

When asked about the sudden increase in numbers, the director explained that the numbers have doubled for every service, but not the operating expenses. She pointed out that the maintenance and repair of the vehicle was something that was new. The director explained that her salary was now listed under the city and that she is looking to hire a part time assistant, or full time assistant if possible, to help with administrative process. Dr. Evans explained that by transferring Jill's salary into the City fund, this would free up grant funding to hire the extra staff member. The director informed the Committee that she would be transporting 25 veterans up to Hartford to speak with the legislature about veteran's issues. The director then reviewed the financial situation as outlined on Special Revenue Funds page 4.

The Veteran's Affairs director explained that she has been participating in the Connecticut Works Facility Taskforce, which is a means of helping disabled veterans find employment. The Director has also joined the Connecticut Coalition on Homelessness and took part in counting the homeless on the streets. Two veterans luncheon has been sponsored. All the attendees were presented with "Blizzard Bundles", which were blankets that had cans of soup, hot chocolate, hand warmers, gloves, hats and scarves bundled inside. The Director explained that the disabled veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan only have two years to register to receive their benefits.

### **PUBLIC HEALTH**

*Dr. Evans distributed a packet of information to the Committee and explained that currently, all the positions in this department have been filled. This may not be reflected in the packets or the binders. Mr. Feeney said that the information shows that there are two vacant full time positions and one part-time position when the data was collected. There was a discussion about this.*

Ms. Gerrity said that this year's request was for less than they had requested last year. When asked how this could be, Ms. Gerrity said that there is a five tiered pay scale and that the newly hired employees were on the lowest tier.

### **HEALTH CLINICS**

The public nurses rotate to the school based clinics. Some savings were realized by not going through regular pediatric clinics. Immunizations are done in school also. This allows the nurses to avoid having 24 hour coverage, or pay outsiders to cover off hours. Last year, the SBC required \$115,000 but this year the recommended budget is \$25,000. Chairman Curwen asked why there was such a large variance. Dr. Evans explained that by closing the North End Clinic, money was saved. The billing cycle is delayed, so funds were still coming in three to four months after the Clinic was closed. The East Side Clinic used to do billing, but that has been discontinued. The pediatrician left in July,

and this was an additional decrease in costs. There was a discussion about the fees charged for the various vaccinations. The department sponsors three STD clinics a week, two TB clinics and a Refugee Clinic each week. Follow up is being done and also being kept as confidential as possible. There are eight active cases of TB in the city and a nurse is visiting daily to make sure the patients are compliant.

There was some question about the combination of the operating expenses for communicable and regular pediatric clinics. Dr. Evans reviewed this with the Committee.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked about the Refugees Clinic. The director reviewed the process with the Committee. Bridgeport has received 15 applications from Refugees, which is the highest in Connecticut. Dr. Evans also commented that they are the only care provider that will actually take care of a pediatric child with an active case of T.B. There is no other entity or community health care center in the city that will care for a child with active T.B. The only other facility that would care for an active pediatric TB case would be the Winchester in New Haven.

Dr. Evans pointed out that last year, the Health Department had instituted a successful firefighters' health program with one of the nurse practitioners that actually does most of the clinical work in the department. This particular nurse practitioner also covers the pediatric clinic and the STD clinics. Dr. Evans pointed out that Mr. Feeney had mentioned how much money this program had saved the City. Dr. Evans said that she would be happy to review this with the Committee at another time. The PowerPoint presentation contains information on the material costs, the physical exam and the cost of doing business. This does not include the nurse practitioner's salary or time. In May, the Health Department should finish up with all the physicals required by OSHA. Dr. Evans said that she believes that this is a good example of how the Health Department should be working in collaboration and conjunction with other City departments to save the City money.

Council Member Curran asked if the Police Department would be included in this program. Dr. Evans said that a conversation about this has not yet taken place with the Police Department. In the event that this discussion arises, the Health Department would be happy to consider it. Dr. Evans said that the Health Department is interested in doing an Employee Health Unit and the department has spoken to Labor Relations about this.

Chairman Curwen asked about intradepartmental charging for services. Dr. Evan reviewed the procedure with the Committee.

### **SCHOOL BASED HEALTH CLINICS**

Dr. Evans introduced Ms. Grininger, who coordinates the program and review the changes to the program. Dr. Evans pointed out that there was a vacant position listed in

the School Based Health Clinics (SBHC), which is incorrect. This position was filled in February of this year.

Ms. Grininger then reviewed some of the highlights from the year. She mentioned that there has been some proposed legislation within the Federal Government to create a Federal School Based Clinic program. Senator Dodd has been instrumental in this work. This would mean that there would be a branch of the Federal Government that would have funding just for student health centers across the country. Bridgeport would be eligible to apply for that funding. On a State level, currently there are three bills before the legislation. These would increase funding for School Based Centers. This could be another possible source of funding. Several new grants have been awarded to the Clinics. Ms. Grininger then listed the various grants and amounts that the Clinics will be receiving. In addition to this, the clinics continue to operate. There was close to 20,000 visits last year and Ms. Grininger believes that there will be more than that this year.

The revenues have increased by 29% over what they were last year. If the trend continues, hopefully, the requests to the City for funding will be less. Mr. Feeney explained that there may have been a year end adjustment that was not reflected in the budget information because Ms. Grininger said her records show \$146,000 at the end of last year rather than \$155,000, which is in the budget packets. This was followed by several specific questions about the grant funding and the various programs for that funding.

When asked about the students who become pregnant, Ms. Grininger said that the youngest student they ever treated was 12 years old and that had occurred a number of years ago. Currently, there is a 14 year old student who is carrying twins, but the average age is between 16 and 17. Some of this screening is done with DCF funding, but there will be new grant funding that will allow the SBHCs to expand their services.

It was stated that all the services are based from the school, but the school claims that this program is not totally school based. The clinic staff has documentation to back up their claim that all the services are school based. The school administration believes that only 50% of the school based services that the City offers is directly related to education. Ms. Grininger commented that all the services are not necessarily provided in the school. It depends on whether the client attends any of the public schools that have SBHCs. If the program does not meet the minimum requirements for education, then there is a penalty.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked for clarification on whether the SBHCs provide services for the students enrolled in their particular schools or for any Bridgeport student. Ms. Grininger explained that there are two streams of funding. The new grant from the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) gives specific funding to work with pregnant and parenting students. Those funds do not necessarily have to be in a SBHC. This allows the nurses to work with young women who are not necessarily in school. The funding that is provided for the SBHCs from the Department of Public Health from the City goes directly to the SBHCs and the services they provide from the schools.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked if a legal opinion was provided regarding the difference in percentile between how the City claims the funding is used as opposed to how the school administration claims the funding was used. It was stated that every year an independent auditor that gives a ruling on what is binding and then the information is submitted to the State for their evaluation. A discussion about this issue followed.

Chairman Curwen commented that the City Council had traveled to Washington, D.C. and discussed this funding provided by Senator Dodd's proposed bill with other legislators. The Council is trying to do its due diligence in attempting to provide for the youth and children. Dr. Evans said that she appreciated that support from the Council on the SBHCs that currently exist. Bridgeport is a national model for SBHCs and Bridgeport has a program that everyone can be proud of.

Council Member Mulligan asked Ms. Grininger if she has noticed any improvement in the various problems. Ms. Grininger said that she had worked in this area for seventeen years and that there has been a decrease in teen pregnancy in the City. However, Bridgeport is still three times higher than the State wide rate. Ms. Grininger said that Bridgeport's rate is comparable to New Haven, and just slightly lower than Hartford's rate.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES**

The information on this department is located on page 51-2. Dr. Evans stated that environmental health is one of the largest regulatory licensing sections. The department has had a severe personnel shortage over the last few years. Dr. Evans said that the department is actively working to correct that shortage. Previously, there was a decision made that the department would only hire registered sanitarians, and this hampers the department's ability to find adequate personnel. Currently, there are two applicants that could fill the positions.

Dr. Evan also pointed out that under Personnel, during the past two years the department has requested that the Needle Exchange Outreach Worker, which is a paid position for an HIV/AIDS woks, be changed to transfer this position to the Health Clinic under Communicable.

Council Member DePara asked about the revenue stream for the upcoming year. Dr. Evans explained that these were inspections for new businesses like ice cream shops, tattoo parlors, coffee shops, etc. If licenses are required for tattoo shops, liquor stores and caterers, that would provide additional revenue. When asked if the department could visit all these business, Dr. Evans replied that with the two new inspectors, it would be possible. Some of the stores only require a once a year inspection; others require more frequent inspection.

Council Member DePara asked how aggressive the department has been regarding inspecting the other four categories: vendor licenses, restaurant licensing, poultry

inspections, barbershop inspections and swimming pool inspections. Dr. Evans said that the department concentrates on categories three and four of the restaurants because they are more hazardous. Category three holds the food for more than three hours and category four holds the food longer. Those restaurants are inspected three and four times a year depending on the category. Nail salons or barbershops only require one visit a year. With the addition of two more staff members, an overall plan for inspection can be utilized.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked about the hair braiding salons and the tattoo parlors. Dr. Evans said that before this can actually be instituted, there were no ordinances that dealt with hair braiding or tattoo parlors. The department is working on getting the ordinances, and the fees and license structure in place. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia stated that this was discussed last year. Dr. Evans agreed, but pointed out that the department took a slower approach because of the lack of staff. Now that the department is close to adding two more staff members, the process will speed up.

Dr. Evans also pointed out that the City was working on an ordinance regarding trash and litter. When her department read the ordinance, they realized that the temporary vendors, like ice cream carts, were not included. These vendors often move from location to location and do not have trash receptacles, which then causes litter.

Council Member Curran asked about the four known locations of massage parlors and said that she did not see them included in the information. Dr. Evans explained that depending on the business's title, they are technically not something that the Board of Health monitors. Council Member Curran said that spas are supposed to be monitored as a shared responsibility. She went on to say that according to the ordinance she was aware of, the State, the Police Department and the local and State Boards of Health were to be monitoring these facilities and providing licenses. These businesses are supposed to be inspected a minimum of twice a year. Dr. Evans said that her department will look into this, but also said that in the past, the Health Department has worked with the undercover Vice Squad many times. There are Public Health Codes that allow the Health Department to go in under certain conditions. There are other issues where the Vice Squad addresses and the Health Department does not have jurisdiction. Dr. Evans then reviewed the various categories for this type of business. When asked what she would recommend regarding these businesses, Dr. Evans said that she believes in enforcement with fines. Dr. Evans also explained that under the Public Health Codes, if the Health Department has a reasonable suspicion, the Health Department can go in without a search warrant. A discussion followed about this issue.

### **ADMINISTRATION**

Dr. Evans said that her budget did not have any changes, but that she would be happy to answer any questions that the Committee might have. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked Dr. Evans about the Department of Aging. She replied that the Department of Aging was an independent agency and she was not sure why their budget was included

with the Health Department. Mr. Feeney said that the Administration budget was page 47-2 in the binder.

Dr. Evans then distributed a small packet of information to the Committee at this time. This year the Bridgeport Health Department has been designated as “medical reserve corps” (MRC) which is directed by Homeland Security. There had been a question about whether a volunteer who was working under an emergency situation could be compensated if they were injured. By having the various people become part of the MRC, this covers the liability issues. There is both special funding and training through this program. The information about this program was in the packets passed out. Elizabeth Rodriguez is the new Public Health Emergency Preparedness Coordinator. Community Health Assessment will also be addressed with the program. A newspaper article appeared locally about the results of the first citywide Community Health Assessment last week. There was a question about the Citizen’s Corps. Dr. Evans explained that the Citizen’s Corps was a different program and was listed under a different category.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that she had mentioned this to the City Council regarding the Council Members receiving some training to respond to their constituents. She said that if there was an emergency, she would not know where to direct her constituents where to call. Dr. Evans said that they do work with Mr. Appleby and she would be happy to share the upcoming training sessions.

Dr. Evans then asked the Committee to consider a security position, which is listed under the Personnel. This position is listed as vacant but right now is in transition. There were some job description issues with the State and Federal government. Dr. Evans said that she had a candidate in mind and would be submitting their resume for the application process. Council Member Mojica asked if the position was still under grievance. Dr. Evans said she did not know and Mr. Feeney said that he would check into it.

### **DEPARTMENT OF AGING**

Mr. Feeney then directed the Committee to page 59-2. There were no changes to the department budget under consideration. Council Member Mulligan asked whether the Department was under the Health Department or not. Ms. Hoyt replied that it was a surprise to her to hear Dr. Evans said that they were an independent department. Ms. Hoyt also said that she had been told they were under the Health and Human Services Department and receive all their email. Ms. Hoyt went on to say that Dr. Evans was told this emphatically last year by Mr. Sherwood. Mr. Feeney said that two years ago, Mr. Williams had been working directly with the Department of Aging. Due to surgery, Ms. Hoyt was out and the department was supervised by Parks and Recreation. Chairman Curwen asked who Ms. Hoyt would report to. Mr. Feeney said that he believe it is a stand alone agency and that she would report to the Chief Administrative Officer.

Ms. Hoyt said that she had six full time on the City budget and three part time staff members. There are also two full time staff members and five part-time staff members on grants. Those part time staffers also include the chore and transportation grants and the CDBG grants.

Chairman Curwen said that he did not understand how the Department of Aging could be a stand alone department. He went on to say that as Budget Chairman for the last nine years, this was the first time he remembered this being segregated. Mr. Feeney said that the Mayor could change around the work charge. He also pointed out that there were other departments that were not satisfied with the organizational charts, also. Mr. Feeney concluded that he will look into the situation. Chairman Curwen thanked Ms. Hoyt for her patience. Ms. Hoyt replied that she had a pacemaker, was on Coomadin and had surgery on her back a year ago and did not need this.

Chairman Curwen asked Mr. Feeney to pass along any requests to Mr. Sherwood. He also requested that the supplemental sheets be imbedded inside the various departments.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER MOJICA SECONDED.**

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

The meeting adjourned at 10:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes  
Telesco Secretarial Services

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT  
BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS  
APRIL 17, 2007**

**ATTENDANCE:** Robert Curwen, Co-chair; Rafael Mojica, Co-chair; AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia, Donna Curran, Robert Walsh (7:45 p.m.)

**OTHERS:** Thomas Sherwood, OPM Director; Janet Finch, Benefits, Ned Winterbottom, Labor Relations; Rich Weiner, Grants and Benefits; Thomas Mulligan, Council Member; Elaine Pivirotto, Council Member

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Curwen called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m.

**LABOR RELATIONS/BENEFITS**

Mr. Sherwood directed the Committee members' attention to page 15-1 and supplemental page 16. He then reviewed the Mayor's recommendation with the Committee. When the current year is ended, Mr. Sherwood said that it would be important to check with the health care providers for evaluation as to how the program is working. Mr. Sherwood then explained how the various amounts are transferred from the General Fund into the specific accounts. He stated that 2.6 million will be for the increase in cost for health care. He informed the Committee that usually the health care costs increase between 7 or 8 % annually.

Chairman Curwen asked Mr. Weiner about the Mission Statement. Mr. Weiner reviewed the Mission Statement, which statement is found on page 15-1 of the Budget binder, with the Committee. Chairman Curwen then asked how the City was doing with the HealthNet system. Mr. Weiner stated that while the cost of the health care comprises 57% of the entire budget, the average increase has been under 6%. He felt that the City was doing well in this respect. Mr. Weiner also pointed out that Labor Relations has been able to increase the level of co-pays, which translates to about half a million dollars in savings. There has also been a change in that the City now pays a flat per employee fee for all medical tests rather than being charged various amounts for the different tests. Another cost reduction will happen when all of the employees re-enroll in the insurance plan and the files are updated accordingly. Mr. Weiner also went on to speak about possible plans for forming a coalition with 13 other municipalities for greater purchasing power.

Chairman Curwen asked if all the union contracts have been settled. Mr. Winterbottom said that the Fire Department and one of the smaller unions, which is comprised of social workers had not been settled yet.

Mr. Sherwood then directed everyone's attention to pages 15-3 and 15-4, which lists the service indicators. He encouraged everyone to examine the facts and figures on these pages closely because they indicate some of the savings and cost cuttings that have occurred over the last year. Chairman Curwen acknowledged that he could see some of the areas where costs had been contained. Mr. Weiner assured the Committee that if some of the projects that had been planned were not carried out, the cost to the City would have been an additional 6 million dollars or more.

Mr. Sherwood explained that the Internal Service fund provides a short summary of how the entire health care program looks for the entire City, including the Board of Education. When the Committee looks at the Board of Education, the Nutrition account actually has decreased.

Chairman Curwen asked about the status of the co-pays for the Board of Education. Mr. Sherwood said that within the budget, there is no longer a revenue account for anyone's co-pays. The co-pays are netted against the expense in the line item. Supplemental page 15 illustrates this. It lists a negative 8,351,000 under the recommended column. This is the effect of the co-pays for next year for all the grant and city side people. Mr. Sherwood said that this process is still being worked on and there are retirees that now have co-pays. Mr. Sherwood said that if this could be applied to the bargaining units, there would be even more savings. This program is off to a good start.

Chairman Curwen asked why the re-enrollment had not been done yet. Mr. Weiner said that the department is planning on doing this but it has not been done yet. An internal audit was done, but no one has been hired to do a complete re-enrollment. Chairman Curwen asked what the cost would be. Mr. Weiner said that the price four or five years ago from McGladrey & Pullen was between \$65,000 and \$70,000. Mr. Sherwood pointed out that there were 13,000 enrollees to verify. Council Member Mojica asked what the savings to date would be if this were done. Mr. Winterbottom said that a ballpark figure could be between \$300,000, \$400,000 or \$500,000 and depending on which fund, the number could go up to 1 million.

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

Mr. Weiner said that the average cost of health care insurance for a family is about 12% of the cost of insurance, which works out to about \$30.00 per week. The Fire Department pays \$12.60 per week. A single firefighter would pay just over \$1.00 a week. Mr. Winterbottom commented that for every day that the City does not get a co-pay of over \$10.00, the City loses money. He then reviewed the various details about retroactive repayments for various items such as salaries, etc.

Council Member Curran then asked about auditing services. Mr. Sherwood then reviewed the two line items, which will include a full review of the health care

enrollment and an actuary report when the fiscal year is closed. Council Member Curran then asked for an explanation of contract and prescription benefit management. Mr. Weiner explained that a prescription coalition had been used to do an RFP for prescription benefit manager. This resulted in a prescription savings of about 1 million dollars. The contract expired on December 31, 2006. The coalition went back to MedCo, the prescription manager, and asked for a requote on services, which resulted in additional savings to the City of some \$200,000. He then provided the Committee with the details of this type of program. Mr. Weiner said that the City has about 15 million in prescription costs. With the coalition purchases and the requote, the cost may be reduced to 14 million. He also explained that there is now a three-tiered co-pay system. Mr. Winterbottom then reviewed the details of that three tiered co-pay system with the Committee.

Council Member Mulligan then asked about details on the Internal Service Fund and Mr. Sherwood directed him to Supplemental page 17 and reviewed that information with him.

Mr. Weiner then explained that the MedCo mandatory mail order program for chronic prescriptions had saved the City about 1 million. In 2006, he said, the Medicare subsidy for group plans had resulted in an actual Federal check for the City. Mr. Weiner then went on to say that next year, he was hoping that the City would receive a stipend rather than a subsidy.

Workers Compensation comprises the third largest cost area, which accounts for about 12 million dollars. 5 million is allocated to fixed administrative costs. Mr. Weiner then reviewed the various amounts that the City is required to pay the State, including \$45,000 monthly for worker's compensation. There is also a "second injury fund" that the City is required to pay into, along with the heart and hypertension laws for the Police and Fire Departments. Mr. Winterbottom pointed out that worker's compensation has a long tail and payments have gone on for years. He said that approximately half of the cost of Workers Compensation is in payments and the other half in medical costs. Chairman Curwen asked if the Committee could get a break down of the worker's compensation cases for the last three years. Mr. Weiner agreed, but said that almost 60% of the claims are from injuries in the past. Council Member Mulligan asked if some of the cases could be settled. Mr. Winterbottom said that they could but the City simply does not have the funds to do so.

Council Member Mojica asked about yearly physicals and yearly training to avoid injuries. Mr. Weiner said that the department does training and that they hoped to do more in the future. A discussion about the procedure for sick and injured managers followed.

Council Member Curran then asked about the grants and appropriation information on page 15-4. She said that the City needs to make a concerted effort regarding health awareness, weight loss and strength training. Mr. Weiner said that he had participated in

a wellness telephone conference with other municipalities. One municipality offered its employees time off if the employee maintained their body mass.

Mr. Weiner also commented that the department is having a number of experts observe various jobs. All of the departments have been inspected except for the Police Department. Once this is finished, the report will be given to St. Vincent's to use as a standard for evaluating injuries and accidents.

Mr. Winterbottom informed the Committee that Police Chief Norwood has moved a number of the disabled officers back into the work force, while others have taken disability retirement.

Mr. Winterbottom then reviewed the details of the Board of Education Worker's Compensation plan. A discussion then followed about Berkley and the dental plan.

Council Member Walsh asked about the COBRA plan income on page 15-3. Mr. Sherwood explained that the income is located in the contributions. Mr. Weiner pointed out that most of the COBRA is dental and vision because the full plan runs about \$1,000 a month. Dental and vision are not covered by retirement.

### **RECESS**

Chairman Curwen called for a recess at 8:55 p.m. The Committee moved back into session at 9:05 p.m.

### **LABOR RELATIONS**

Mr. Sherwood explained that all the contracts are in the book. He then said that Mr. Winterbottom has worked on staggering the negotiation timetables, so that the contracts do not all come due at once. By doing this, Mr. Winterbottom has saved the City money and also given the administration some relief.

Chairman Curwen asked about a centralized employee office. Mr. Winterbottom explained that the Mayor has decided that all future employees will be civil service employees. Mr. Sherwood commented that he has excellent collaboration with Mr. Jacobs and Ms. Finch.

Council Member Curran asked where the Grants Personnel were listed. Ms. Finch replied that those figures could be found under "Non Civil Service Payroll". She went on to say that since the Mayor made the announcement about all the future employees, she has been working and meeting with Mr. Jacobs on a weekly basis. Ms. Finch also informed the Committee that eight people have been hired provisionally and reviewed the steps needed to do this administratively. Chairman Curwen commented that last year, Mr. Jacobs had asked for 1.8 million dollars for civil service testing, but this had not been

allocated to him. Therefore Mr. Jacobs is working on the testing piecemeal. Ms. Finch agreed and said that both she and Mr. Jacobs were working towards a unified office, but they are still in two different offices and have two different payrolls. Mr. Sherwood reminded everyone that the job classifications need to be consolidated before the testing can begin.

Council Member Curran then complimented Mr. Weiner for saving all the money he did by having the medical tests reviewed. She then asked about an open position at the Golf Course. Ms. Finch replied that the seasonal workers were about to come back, but that she was not aware of any other open positions. She then reviewed the details regarding seasonal workers.

Council Member Walsh asked how an Acting Chief of Police would be able to collect overtime. Mr. Winterbottom said that he believed one of two situations would apply there. First it would have to be done when acting in a non-bargaining position or secondly, under a contracting union agreement.

Mr. Sherwood commented that although Mr. Jacobs was not present, it was imperative to note that moving the department towards consolidation is important, but that Mr. Jacobs is so busy with other tasks, he has very little time to work towards this. Chairman Curwen said that it behooves the City to moved forward to a Centralized Human Relations Department. A discussion then followed about the procedure.

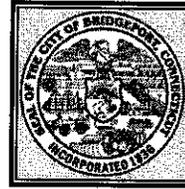
### **ADJOURNMENT**

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

The meeting adjourned at 9:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes  
Telesco Secretarial Services



CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF BRIDGEPORT  
CONNECTICUT

MINUTES

Budget & Appropriations

COMMITTEE

Meeting Date: April 19, 2007 (Capital Budget Discussion)

Meeting Convened: 7:10

Adjourned:

Attendance:

Members:

Present

Absent

Robert Curwen Co-Chair

Rafael Mojica, Co-Chair

T. McCarthy

C. Silva

R. Walsh

D. Curran

A. Vizzo-Pariccia

Also Present:

RECEIVED  
CITY CLERKS OFFICE  
07 APR 20 AM 11:57  
ATTEST  
CITY CLERK

Capital

4-19-07

No.:

Subject:

Adam Heller

Votes:

Vote to amend: Motion by: \_\_\_\_\_ Seconded by: \_\_\_\_\_

the amendment was: Approved \_\_\_\_\_ Denied \_\_\_\_\_ Tabled \_\_\_\_\_

Vote to act upon: Motion by: \_\_\_\_\_ Seconded by: \_\_\_\_\_

the above item was: Approved \_\_\_\_\_ Denied \_\_\_\_\_ Tabled \_\_\_\_\_

Those in Favor: \_\_\_\_\_

Those Opposed: \_\_\_\_\_

Abstentions: \_\_\_\_\_

Item amended: YES NO (Circle one)

Place on Consent Calendar: YES NO (Circle one)

Remarks and/or amendment details:

- ITS explained request in Capital
- Libraries Roof Burroughs 2 million Addition
- Fire Rescue Fire Truck #5 Replace
- Pub Fac Senior Center Vital Stats Shelter - Totex Museum
- City Clerk, Furniture, Voting
- Request For Narratives on Projects
- OPE.D - Demolition, Beautification, Acquisition
- Seaview Ave Corridor. West/South Improvements.
- Blight Camera's Costs.

RECEIVED  
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ATTEN: 57  
CITY CLERK

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT  
BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE  
APRIL 18, 2007**

**ATTENDANCE:** Robert Curwen, Chairman; Rafael Mojica, Co-chair; AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia; Carlos Silva, Donna Curran, Robert Walsh (6:40 p.m.); Thomas McCarthy (7:00 p.m.)

**OTHERS:** Thomas Sherwood, Brian Feeney, CAO; George Estrada, Public Facilities Director; Ted Grabarz, Public Facilities Deputy Director; Paul Catino, Budget Analysis; Andy Kennedy, Equipment Mechanic Foreman; Joseph Savino, Harbor Master; Stephen T. Hladuz, Parks & Recreation; LuAnne Conine, Parks & Recreation; Barry Skinner, Engineer; Michael O'Neil, McGladrey & Pullen CPA; Charles Carrol, Administration; John Ricci, Airport; Bobby Kennedy, Field Operator; Tony DiPirimo, Field Operator; Greg, Beardsley Zoo Director; John Cottell

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Curwen called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m. and announced that there was a quorum present.

**GARAGE**

Mr. Sherwood directed the Committee members' attention to page 34 of the budget binder. He said that there were increases in the budget but that some of this was due to salaries. He also commented that what the staff does at the garage with the City vehicles is unbelievable. Mr. Kennedy reported that by simply recapping the tires on the vehicles, the cost had been reduced by \$200,000.

Mr. Estrada explained that the City has an aging fleet and there has been a program in place to replace those vehicles. He also explained that the Department of Transportation (DOT) has begun to dispense a liquid form of calcium fluoride that is put on the roadways by the snowplows. The City's plows have been modified to dispense this new material. Also, the new trucks have GPS devices installed that can help the main office determine the location of any individual truck and whether or not a street has been plowed. This also adds to driver safety in the event that a driver has a mishap and is injured, someone can be dispatched to check on the truck if it is not moving along the route as it should. When asked about this system, Mr. Estrada explained that next year there will be a capital request to expand the system in to the entire City fleet. Currently, there are four new snowplows, with two additional ones on order. Mr. Estrada said that the cost of the GPS system is an additional \$500 per unit. The units will be hooked up online and linked with the GIS system. There were some concerns about possible subpoenas being issued in the event of an accident. Mr. Estrada explained that this had

been considered, but the overall feeling was that the benefits of the system outweighed this possible problem.

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

There were some questions about Worker's Compensation. Mr. Sherwood directed everyone's attention to page 22, which outlined all the data for worker's compensation.

Council Member Curran asked about the figures for the auto parts. Mr. Grabarz explained that there was a new inventory system to track the parts. Previously, the City was not able to purchase parts in bulk quantities but the new system makes this possible. Barcodes on the various parts also help with determining whether the warranties on the parts are still in effect.

Mr. Catino then directed the Committee's attention to page 222, which listed the figures from last years budget.

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

Council Member Mojica stated that he felt that Public Facilities had done a phenomenal job. Mr. Kennedy explained that if more preventative maintenance (PM) is done, there are fewer breakdowns. He also explained that there are checklists for the mechanics and the drivers now have a daily checklist to complete. Mr. Kennedy said that Federal Law requires the drivers to fill out the daily checklist. Mr. Grabarz explained that the largest source of repairs is neglect of the vehicle. Disciplinary actions are now being taken to prevent this. Mr. Kennedy also said that when Public Facilities moves into their larger headquarters, he will need more mechanics. Right now, the garages are being utilized to the maximum and there is no room for additional staff or equipment. Council Member McCarthy commented that the Public Facilities crew performs outright miracles.

Council Member Walsh had a number of questions about the figures for gasoline on supplemental page 34. Mr. Catino explained that OPM had persuaded the department to revisit those numbers. He also pointed out that with the fluctuation in gas prices, there was no real way to project the amount reliably. Mr. Estrada also stated that while this was true, the actual consumption of fuel remained pretty stable. Mr. Sherwood commented that when the new fleet joins in, they will be part of the Santa consortium.

Chairman Curwen asked about bulk buying with other municipalities. Mr. Estrada explained that a dispensing point is then necessary and would have to be located within the City limits to make it economically feasible. When the new facility is completed, there will be a fueling station and the City will be able to purchase in bulk quantities and have it delivered. Mr. Estrada said that while this is a good plan, it is also important to realize that pre-buying can be risky. This is why there is a half million in the contingency fund.

When asked about the composition of the fleet, Mr. Estrada reported that currently, the City has three vehicles that run on natural gas/gasoline and four vehicles that run on electricity/gasoline. However, these vehicles are still new and an evaluation has not yet been possible.

Council Member Walsh then asked if a study had been done regarding the vehicles that are removed from service. He also asked about possible reimbursing for mileage on private vehicles. Council Member Walsh also wished to know if the City reimbursed those private vehicles at the IRS rate per contract. Mr. Sherwood said that he would have to defer those questions to Mr. Lupkis.

### **AIRPORT**

Mr. Sherwood then announced that the information regarding the airport could be found on page 27-2 and supplemental page 30.

Mr. Ricci was asked about his Mission Statement. He replied that Goal Number One had been achieved the previous night at the Stratford Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting when the airport had received permission to construct T-hanger buildings. He explained that the ground lease needs to be drafted and suggested that all the leases on the hangers be done immediately to provide revenue. Mr. Ricci said he fully expected the new T-hangers to be finished by September and he will update the Committee with new figures.

Goal Number Two for the Airport is in the most favorable position it has been for years because the State of Connecticut is more receptive to relocating Main Street than ever before.

Regarding the demolition of the old terminal, Mr. Ricci reminded the Committee that the Council had passed approval on both the demolition of the old terminal and the construction of a new one. However, Mr. Ricci said that he was not sure where that proposal was in terms of the Town of Stratford.

*Mr. Ricci then passed out copies of the revenue statements to the Committee members.*

Mr. Ricci explained that there is \$743,000 of guaranteed income. The annual fuel flow can increase. He said that the new hanger and the office building may break even on the \$150,000 deficit. When asked about profit from the airport incurring tax payments to Stratford, Mr. Ricci said that any "profit" can quickly be reinvested into the airport in any number of needed projects. When asked about the airport certification specialists, he also explained that airport certification specialists inspect the runway lights, the runway itself, and insure that the fire truck is operational.

When asked about the recent news articles about the Town of Stratford purchasing the airport, Mr. Ricci said that by federal law, if the airport sells an asset or service, the money from that sale must remain at the airport. He said that the State would have to come in and maintain the airport. Mr. Ricci then reviewed the various leases for the various holders with the Committee.

### **SANITATION/RECYCLING**

Mr. Sherwood directed the Committee members' attention to page 37. He said that he believed there were savings on condos and also with the tipping fees.

Mr. Estrada explained that there are 12 sanitation crews and 4 routes. The department has exactly the right number of staff members to cover the routes, but if anyone is out with illness or injury, it leaves one of the routes open. Mr. DePrimo then juggles the staff to cover the open route. If Mr. DePrimo can not cover the route from the other Sanitation crews, then they will often draw someone from the roadway crews.

Mr. Estrada also informed the Committee members that Mr. DePrimo is on the Public Safety Committee. There is daily maintenance done on the sanitation trucks. Currently the department has 10 new trucks and 2 additional ones on order. Five years ago, the department started to replace the fleet. Old vehicles are put out to bid or used for parts.

When asked about what is done with the tires that can not be recapped, Mr. Estrada explained that he had met with a company that recycles tires in to aggregate for roadway paving. There will also be some investigation into a chipping method to create berms.

Mr. Estrada then reviewed the Toter program and said that it was not added into the Capital budget schedule. He then reviewed the distribution plan with the Committee. Each Toter unit costs \$91.00 per unit, which is not the lowest bid. However, each unit comes with an 18 year warrant and a no questions asked replacement policy if the unit becomes cracked or unusable. Mr. Sherwood stated the information for this could be found on page 22-3.

Chairman Curwen asked about Worker's Compensation and commented that the Department had a significant drop from 23 cases to 3. Mr. Estrada replied that the department had started to investigate the various incidents to determine the causes of the injuries and also train the crews. When the crewmembers received the training the first time, they are required to sign off on it. Another preventative measure has been the purchase of new safety equipment, including steel-toed shoes and reflective vests.

Mr. Estrada also explained that the steel blades in the body of the new garbage trucks require cleaning 1 or 2 times a week. This means that one of the crewmembers has to climb into the back container area and manually clean the blade. To prevent accidents, a "Lock Out, Tag Out" system has been instituted to prevent anyone from being injured

during this process. Mr. Estrada commented that OSHA has been particularly helpful in establishing the safety policies regarding this procedure.

Chairman Curwen then recommended to the CAO and OPM that they establish model safety standards. Mr. Feeney replied that there has been work by the various departments in this area, including monthly safety reviews and each department now has a safety committee. The two departments that have significantly reduced their accidents and injuries are Public Facilities and the Fire Department. Mr. DePrimo commented that having a Transitional Work Program (TWP) has helped with this. Mr. Estrada commented that while it was helpful to call OSHA to help identify problem areas, it is important to remember that OSHA expects the various municipalities and departments to correct the problems that OSHA finds.

Council Member Walsh asked about the Bulk Trash pick up. Mr. Estrada reported that the pick up in the 138th District took about a day and a half and went well. Currently the department is staying within its internal budget. Mr. Estrada also informed the Committee that conversation has begun with CRRA about trash and Mr. Estrada will also be talking to Whelabrator in the hopes of reducing or eliminating tipping fees. Mr. Sherwood said that he cringes when it rains because that means that the garbage that is being picked up is now wet, which adds to the tipping fees. Mr. Estrada also mentioned that the department is considering subcontracting some of the bulky waste runs and said that the department has been using seasonal workers to handle the extra pick ups. The bulk waste has increased because of the two instances of recent flooding.

Chairman Curwen asked about fiber optics being installed while the East side is being dug up for the WPCA pipes. Mr. Estrada reviewed the two possibilities for this with the Committee.

There were some additional questions about the Combined Sewer Overflow project (CSO). Mr. Estrada pointed out that working on the sewer pipes is a major inconvenience and there is never a good time to do it. When asked about the capacity of the pipes, Mr. Estrada reviewed the situation and the procedure. He pointed out that there are pipes in the East side that are over 100 years old. When there is a storm, the storm water can flow into the sewer pipes, where it then goes to the sanitation plant. Processing all the extra water drives the cost up. The increase in flow also can cause a backup with untreated sewage. Mr. Estrada pointed out that the North end sewer work has been completed and work has begun on the East side. He estimated that about 70% of the sewer lines remain to be done.

Mr. DePrimo said that he would like to see the recycling participation increase. The State can enforce the statute, but the crews can also refuse to take the co-mingled garbage. Mr. Estrada said that Greenwich has a model project. A discussion followed about way to increase participation in recycling. Council Member Curran personally thanked Mr. Estrada for dealing with a constituent's recycling problem.

## RECREATION

Mr. Sherwood announced that the information regarding this department could be found on pages 38-2 and supplemental page 44.

Mr. Estrada commented that Recreation is not just for the children and that the resident participation has been climbing in the existing programs. Ms. Conine reported that there are seven schools that have night recreation programs. Currently, 503 children are registered at Thomas Hooker. She commented that she would like to add Batilia to the roster. At Blackmum, she had to split nights for soccer and basketball. Ms. Conine then reviewed the various program and their related costs.

At Seaside Park there are summer programs for about 100-125 children from ages 5 to 14. Last year, the registration fee was \$75 per session. The Tennis Camp at Glenwood is a morning program from 9 a.m. to 12 noon. The children enrolled in this particular tennis program have been seen to be playing despite the rain or out there after a rain, with a squeegee, cleaning the water off the courts in order to play.

One new program has been the introduction of Safety. Two paramedics came and gave a brief course. There also will be training for the counselors along with the lifeguards this year.

Mr. Hladun then said that the basketball program was a huge success. Every child received a trophy and intra-school playoffs were scheduled. This year, there will be two championships, one for 9-12 years old and another one for 13-14 year olds. Mr. Estrada informed the Committee that the Board of Education cancelled their after school basketball program as a cost cutting measure. Now Recreation and Parks offers it. Ms. Conine commented that Marin has a drill team come in for half time during the basketball games. They also had cheerleaders for the various teams.

Mr. Hladun said that the department was looking to bring back Twilight adult softball leagues. They are planning to have ten teams with playoff and championships. Because of lighting issues, it will cost \$650/team to be part of the league. This fee will cover the cost of lighting.

When asked about how the program is arranged to prevent the older children from dominating the basketball court, Mr. Hladun said that they have a schedule, which gives the 6-9 year olds an hour and a half of crafts while there is an hour and a half of basketball. The final hour and a half is for the older children to have pick up basketball games.

Concerns were expressed about the fees charged by the Board of Education for having a janitor there from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. Mr. Feeney said that he has spoken to Mr. Henry

about this issue. Ms. Conine said that they have had to cut one night of using the swimming pool at Kennedy also.

Ms. Conine commented that some of the children are in the school all day, then in the Lighthouse program and participate in the Recreation programs at night. Mr. Estrada explained that there was some security present along with the school janitor. Ms. Conine then said that the programs have a strong policy regarding disruptive students. Each student gets three strikes and then a call is made to the parent, guardian or family member and the student is not allowed back for the remainder of the year.

*Ms. Conine then displayed a photo album with pictures from the various programs that they have run for the seniors.*

She then reviewed the various programs that the department has been able to sponsor. Ms. Conine also commented that last year Council Member Silva had suggested that one pool table be resurfaced and consider acquiring other pool tables for Eisenhower Senior Center. The department approached a local business about resurfacing the table and the business also donated two new tables to the Center. Since then, the tables have been fully utilized to the point where the participants are reluctant to have a tournament because they do not want to give the table time.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia commented that the University of Bridgeport (UB) to see if the lost swimming pool night could be regained by using their facility. She also mentioned that UB has a marital arts program and gym that might have possibilities for the Recreation Department.

### **HARBOR MANAGEMENT**

Harbor Master Savino then came forward and greeted the Committee. Mr. Sherwood announced that the budget information regarding the Harbor would be found on page 35 of the budget binder and supplemental pages 31 or 35.

Council Member Curran asked about the funding for the new 17 foot boat. Harbor Master Savino replied that half of the funding had come from the Harbor Management funds and the Bridgeport Ferry had paid for the other half because they had been involved in the damage to the boat. Harbor Master Savino then explained that the Harbor Management Fund comes from the mooring fees, docking fees and some State reimbursements. This particular fund supports everything but the Harbor Master's salary. Mr. Grabarz explained that Bridgeport is the secondary landing point in the event of a problem in New York City. Harbor Master Savino commented that during the 9/11 crisis, there was only two ways off Long Island and those were the ferries in Bridgeport and New London. He also invited all the Committee members to come and tour the harbor to see the new security measures.

Council Member Curran asked about the CSO sewage overflows into the storm water system. Harbor Master Savino said that this was a problem for the water quality.

Harbor Master Savino said that 27 security cameras have been installed with motion detectors, and an additional 10 at the Maritime Center. The police are working with Harbor Master Savino on this so that when motion is detected, the situation can be assessed. Mr. Grabarz explained that this is innovative strategy. Customs and Border Patrol and the Police will have monitors.

When asked how he felt about the upcoming Steel Point development, Harbor Master Savino said that he felt it would be a big benefit. He also commented that the harbor is under utilized and that it also needs to be dredged.

### **RECESS**

Chairman Curwen declared a recess at 9:50 p.m. Ms. Conine and Mr. Hladun ordered pizza and soda for the Committee and the department members present. Chairman Curwen called the meeting back to order at 10:05 p.m. and thanked Ms. Conine and Mr. Hladun for their thoughtfulness.

Chairman Curwen took this opportunity to ask Mr. Estrada what had been done regarding moving Vital Statistics into the Health Department. Mr. Estrada replied that he had done a walk through with Dr. Evans and made a list of the areas that need to be remodeled. He also explained that this had not been included in the Capital Budget.

### **ENGINEERING**

Mr. Sherwood announced that the information for this section would be found on page 29-2 and supplemental pages 31 or 34. Mr. Skinner then greeted the Committee. Mr. Skinner said that the Traffic Signal replacement plan is progressing. Three intersections will have new lights over the next few years. This program will be funded with Federal dollars. Mr. Skinner then gave a very brief overview of the Brewster Street Bridge and said that the design type study had started for the Congress Street Bridge. The cost of replacing the bridge will come to over 30 million in today's dollars.

When asked about the Ox Brook flooding, Mr. Skinner replied that an application has been submitted for a 3 million dollar grant. A decision about this application has not yet been reached, but the project would cover design and upgrading of the dam at Elton Rodgers Park.

When asked about Parking meters, Mr. Skinner said that approximately 500 meters have been replaced in a swap out program and the old meters will be used elsewhere.

The department is trying to implement intelligent design traffic control and parking for the Arena area. Mr. Estrada explained that there was a recent major event at the Arena, which was without major traffic problems because the police sent in their top Arena traffic control officers. Mr. Estrada explained that the union contract has forced rotating police teams for assignments. Unfortunately, some of the teams do not have the same experience as others.

Mr. Skinner said that the Cleveland Avenue Bridge bids will be opened on the 19th. He estimated that it will take four to six weeks to award the contract and one year to complete the project.

Council Member Walsh asked about parking meters being installed on decorative sidewalks. Apparently the workers just drilled down into the decorative brickwork, inserted the pole and poured in concrete.

This was followed by a brief discussion about the Arena area parking problems.

Another area of concern was that there was a disconnect between the Engineering Department and the WPCA regarding new construction. Mr. Skinner said that he had compiled a new list of requirements for both the WPCA and the Engineering Department. Mr. Grabarz also commented that the larger picture of the permitting process is needed. The Building Department has 30 days to respond to a design, while the Fire Marshall has 60 days. Mr. Grabarz also commented that frequently the submitted designs are incomplete and lack measurements or orientation. Time lags often occur when the departments are waiting for the developers to respond. Mr. Skinner commented that the department has begun to date each letter and request with the dates the department received it and the date that the department responded.

Council Member Silva asked what was being done about the flooding on Boston Avenue. One of the businesses in the neighborhood pointed out that Chase Street was 12-14 inches higher than Boston Avenue and offered to mill down the Chase Street in order to allow the water to drain. Mr. Estrada pointed out that Boston Avenue is owned by the State. He added that the City needed to be very careful about how it drained water from that area because it was important not to create flooding in other areas of the City. A discussion about the factors contributing to the flooding on Boston Avenue and the Chase Street drainage proposal followed.

Council Member Walsh asked about flooding issues on the Rooster River. Mr. Skinner said that funds are needed to create the design for that area. He also pointed out that the tide has a direct impact on flooding that area.

## **BEARDSLEY ZOO**

Mr. Sherwood announced that the documentation for this site would be found on page 41-2. The Zoo Director came forward and greeted the Committee. He said that when the Zoo was turned over from the City to the Society, a number of major capital projects had been started. The Zoo Director informed the Committee that the new Wolf Observation area was now open.

The Zoo Director also mentioned that there was a bill in Hartford with 5 million dollars of funding, which has passed Finance with only 1 million, but needs to be put on the bonding schedule.

The picnic grove area is now ADA accessible. The pathways are made of material from recycled tires. The Zoo will be up for accreditation in 2008. Warthogs, guinea hogs and peccaries will be visiting the zoo during June, July and August. The Zoo Director also announced that a new Education Director has been hired. The new programs will add to the revenue stream.

The Zoo Director reported that he had had a good meeting with the Environmental Group. He also informed everyone that on May 12th, the State DEP, led by Gena McCarthy will be sponsoring a new program called "No Child Left Inside", which is an attempt to encourage people to visit some state parks and the Zoo. The target enrollment is 1,000 families. The Zoo has also joined in with other groups to form the Pequonnock Watershed Group to protect the water quality of the river.

Currently the Governor has eliminated all line items in the budget regarding the various parks and other tourism locations. Many of the legislators want the line items restored because the current system means that each tourism location competes with all the others for funding. The Zoo Director said that he would like to have the Zoo put in the same category as the State Parks since the Zoo is distinct from other venues like the Maritime Center or the Goodspeed Opera House. He then informed the Committee that last year, the Zoo had 260,000 visitors and 1 million dollars in gate receipts.

### **GOLF COURSE**

Mr. Sherwood announced that the information regarding the golf course could be found on page 42-2. He then explained that there had been a major capital expense in upgrading the irrigation system. Mr. Grabarz pointed out that the course was unique in that it has 36 holes. Last year, he claimed that 50,000 rounds had been played on the course and there was the potential to double this as improvements are made. Some of the recent improvements are the leasing of new golf carts, and a point of sales (POS) system installed. The First Tee program introduces students to golf. The staff now has uniforms, customer service is being improved and the pro shop is being renovated. All these measures will generate more revenue. Students at Housatonic College are designing a new webpage. There has also been some work on getting easements for the wetland setbacks.

*Mr. Estrada then passed around one of the newly designed staff shirts and the updated player identification cards for the Committee to examine.*

Mr. Estrada commented that has stepped up as a partner in revitalizing the course. He explained that the First Tee Board of Directors, all of whom are serious golfers, have come out to the course to examine various problems on the fairways and make suggestions. First Tee had committed to \$12,000 in capital improvements on the course, but Mr. Estrada estimated that the actual amount was probably closer to \$70,000. This program has involved some 9,000 youth over the year. The Lighthouse program has also participated in golfing. A discussion regarding the restaurant on site then followed.

Council Member Curran then asked about a possible job opening at the golf course. Mr. Estrada explained that the current greens keeper is in an “Acting” position. All of the other positions at the course are seasonal. Mr. Estrada said that because the early winter weather had been so mild, he had retained a number of seasonal workers almost into February rather than laying them off in mid December. A discussion about the seasonal workers and the amount of funds allocated for this followed. Ms. Conine explained that when the course reopens, the Recreation Department is planning a major celebration event.

### **PARKS ADMINISTRATION AND MAINTENANCE**

Mr. Sherwood announced that the information for this department could be found on pages 39-2 for the Parks Administration and 40-1 for Maintenance. The supplemental pages were page 40 or 45.

Mr. Estrada said that the department was developing a new procedure to distribute stickers and they were looking for senior citizens to fill the slots. He then reviewed how the cash handling procedure will be different. Mr. Estrada also pointed out that the workers will have orientation training.

Council Member Curwen asked how many stickers had been handed out to seniors. Mr. Estrada estimated about 1,100.

The discussion then moved on to the Parks Maintenance. Council Member Curran asked about the landscaping services. Mr. Estrada explained that line item was for trees.

Council Member Mojica asked whether the department has enough Port-o-lets for the season. Mr. Estrada explained that the City now owns 26 units. When events are scheduled, the vendor is required to provide additional Port-o-lets to the site.

### **BULDING MAINTENANCE**

Mr. Sherwood directed everyone's attention to page 30-2 in the budget binder.

Mr. Grabarz explained that the Public Facilities Department manages over 1.3 million square feet of buildings. He pointed out that there was a significant increase in electrical costs. He also commented that bidding on some of the building renovations had not proved to be cost effective, so many of the projects are now done with in house staff.

Mr. Cottell came forward and introduced himself to the Committee. He explained that United Illuminating (UI) had offered to pay various companies for reducing their kilowatt usage during peak periods. By doing simple things such as turning off the escalators at the Annex and asking the various facilities to use their back up generators, the City managed to reduce their usage and earned a \$32,000 rebate for Phase I of the program from UI. Mr. Cottell also said that it was important to test the generators periodically to insure that they will work when they are needed.

Mr. Cottell said that one key point is realizing that if the City can not measure the usage of a resource, then it can not be tracked. All five of the key buildings are now on Next Generation tracking. He also explained that other than the Annex, all of the buildings were undergoing renovations. UI has a Phase 2 program, which Mr. Cottell plans on participating in this year. He has already staged a lighting sale.

During the past year, Mr. Cottell said that he has been focused on taking care of all the City's electricity needs. When asked about the fact that the schools are often lit up after hours, Mr. Cottell replied that he does not handle any of the Board of Education facilities or the WPCA. In the coming year, Mr. Cottell will be assuming responsibility for other resources such as gas, water and sewers.

Mr. Sherwood said that the City was currently involved in swapping out all the air conditioning units and HVAC units for more efficient models. Mr. Cottell informed the Committee that the water bill was mostly for fire prevention. He mentioned that one building on the list had been demolished in 1995 and the Water Department had signed off on the demolition, but the City was still being billed for the service. Mr. Cottell said that he contacted the Water Company and has received approximately half of the funds back to date. A discussion about possible future savings then followed.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO PANICCIA MOVED TO CANCEL THE CAPITAL BUDGET MEETING SCHEDULED FOR FRIDAY, APRIL 20TH, 2007 AT 6:30 P.M. IN THE ANNEX DUE TO THE FACT THAT A FEW ITEMS HAD BEEN LEFT OUT OF THE CAPITAL BUDGET CALCULATIONS AND RESCHEDULED THE MEETING FOR APRIL 28TH.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER MOJICA SECONDED.**

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

**RECESS**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA THEN MOVED TO DECLARE A RECESS UNTIL APRIL 19TH TO CONCLUDE THE PUBLIC FACILITIES PRESENTATION.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER CURRAN SECONDED.**

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

The meeting was recessed at 1:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes  
Telesco Secretarial Services

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT  
BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS  
APRIL 30, 2007**

**ATTENDANCE:** Robert Curwen, Chairman; Donna Curran, Robert Walsh, Keith Rodgerson, Council President Andres Ayala (7:50 p.m.)

**OTHERS:** Ann Kelly-Lenz, Acting Tax Collector; Brian Williams, Michael O'Neil, McGladrey and Pullen LLC; Michael Lupkis; Michael Feeney; Joe Gambruska. Bern Tardy, Acting Purchasing Agent

**CALL TO ORDER**

Council Member Curwen called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**FINANCE DEPARTMENT**

Mr. Feeney directed the Committee members' attention to pages 3-1 and 3-2 of the budget binders. Mr. Lupkis commented that overall, his department budgets have remained status quo. One exception has been the Tax Collector's Office where actuary reports and the auditing work is done. He also said that using internal service fund for the insurance payments was working well.

Comptrollers has been short staffed. Mr. Lupkis said that auditor's recommendations have been taken reviewed and steps have been taken to correct the problems. Mr. Lupkis said that the policy manual is outdated and the updating of it is an ongoing process. Mr. Lupkis also said that there have been some ongoing issues with the new processing procedure with Advantage and proceeded to outline the problem.

Council Member Curwen pointed out that there had been four or five instances of departments having to hold their revenues simply because they did not have time to deposit it. Mr. Lupkis replied that all the departments have received instruction on how to make a proper deposit. He said that holding the funds in the department has been done on a decision from the individual department heads, not from his department. He added that when incidents like this are discovered, it is investigated and dealt with. Council Member Curwen said that the cash receiving department needs to have policies about this rather than letting the money build up in individual departments.

Mr. Lupkis then reviewed the seven areas that had been cited in the audit report from McGladrey and Pullen: Account Policies; Student Activity Funds; Outstanding Checks, HUD, Grant Identification; Subreceipts and Internal Audit Function with the Committee members.

Council Member Walsh asked about a request for a reduction in salaries on page 3-2. After checking the figures, Mr. Lupkis said that the number was a misprint. Council Member Walsh asked about electronic purchasing. Mr. Lupkis assured him that the City does this and reviewed the process. He also stated that the City now maintains good payment records. A discussion about the cash payment procedure then followed. Mr. Lupkis said that he regularly reviews the revenues looking for variations in the patterns that could indicate a problem.

Council Member Curran pointed out that the City currently listed 109 bank accounts and asked if these could be consolidated. Mr. Lupkis explained that previously, the City was found to have over 400 separate accounts and Ms. Kelly-Lenz had been busy consolidating them down to the current 109. He also pointed out that some of the grant funding requires separate accounts for administrative purposes. Other accounts are dedicated to investments.

When asked about the number of checking accounts, Ms. Kelly-Lenz came forward and explained that some accounts like the insurance accounts are set up like a checking account but there are no actual checks. This allows the City to deposit money and the insurance company to regularly withdraw it for payments. Other than the CDBG funds, all checks must be signed by Ms. Kelly-Lenz and Mr. Lupkis. Council Member Walsh asked if the City regularly checks for City of Bridgeport accounts that are opened in various banks. Mr. Lupkis said that the auditors check this when they gather information from the banks.

Council Member Curran asked about the Comptroller's Special Services account. Mr. Lupkis and Mr. Feeney reviewed the auditor's fees, management services and the Gasby nonpension retirement reserves, which are required by federal law. Mr. Lupkis commented that the City is looking to reduce its liability by pre-funding.

Mr. Gambruska came forward and informed the Committee that the revenue accounting department is dunning the department heads for not making deposits in a timely fashion.

Mr. Palumbo from the Printing Department came forward to answer the Committee's questions about his department. Council Member Curwen commented that Mr. Palumbo does major printing work for the Board of Education.

Mr. Palumbo said that his department is now part of a mail consortium with others to mail thousands of pieces out at one time, which results in major postal savings.

Council Member Curwen asked about printing the tax bills and the mailing of them. Mr. Palumbo explained that the State gives the department an address list that is very incomplete. Recently, the Printing Department staff attended a workshop on postal mailing and discovered that by reformatting the envelope template, they could reduce the

number of returns. The IT department assisted with the reformatting of the envelope templates and the returns dropped dramatically.

Council Member Curran asked about a recent incident where the Printing Department had to do the student report cards twice. Mr. Palumbo said that the BOE had chosen a five-part form that is difficult to run.

Council Member Curran then asked about a staff position for a mail courier. Mr. Palumbo said that a retired senior had occupied this position, but that it has been vacant for some time. He said he did not know why this position had been included in the budget listings.

Council Member Walsh asked about a particular situation where the tax bills had not arrived at a given address. Mr. Lupkis said that the Tax Collector's office had heard about this and Ms. Kelly-Lenz personally did a second mailing. These bills did not arrive at the address either, so the mail clerk came to the Tax Collector's office to pick up the bills. Ms. Kelly-Lenz said that often people do not update addresses. Her office focuses on the real estate properties as a priority in updating addresses.

Council Member Curran asked why the bills were postmarked Stamford. Mr. Palumbo explained that the Bridgeport processing center had been closed. All mail goes to Stamford to be sorted.

Mr. Feeney then announced that the next department for review would be Public Purchasing, which is found on page 6-2. Mr. Tardy came forward to answer any questions that the Committee had. Mr. Lupkis said that the department had started electronic purchasing and had recently begun participating in an RFP depot. Three staff members have been recently certified and three more are in the testing process.

Council President Ayala said that one of the reasons that the City had chosen to use the Advantage system was because they were told there would be tremendous savings to the City due to the detailed reporting. Mr. Tardy said that was not what he had found regarding his department. Mr. Lupkis said that when the system was purchased, they were told the City would be able to track the number of pencils that were used, but discovered that the protocol for doing so was too cumbersome. Mr. Tardy said that he had done some bulk purchasing with the system but most of the time, it was not helpful. Mr. Lupkis commented that they were in the process of looking for a new system and are planning on putting out a new RFP and an RPQ. He explained that the Advantage parent company, AMS, has become increasingly difficult and the program is now obsolete.

Mr. Lupkis then informed the Committee that the RFP Depot has saved the City quite a few dollars. Mr. Tardy explained that the RFP Depot was originally a clearinghouse for RFPs but they have now broadened their scope of service. He said that usually the City saves between 10%-15% on an RFP.

The discussion then moved back to the problems with Advantage. Mr. Tardy said that the City had used AMS for about 20 years and that the Advantage package was a level up. The City has used it for the last four years. Prior to that, there was a customized system in place. After a number of years, it is not possible to use plug in modules.

Council Member Walsh said that he believes that the City has a dysfunctional purchasing process. He said that when a project goes to bid, the City should be saving at least 10% on the bid. Mr. Tardy said that the new system with the RFP Depot would help with that.

Council Member Curran pointed out that the Committee had been asked to approve the digitalization of the Town Clerk's office. She said that she had been told that five bids were received, four of which were not applicable. The one acceptable bid was from the company that has worked with Bridgeport for the last 10 years. Mr. Tardy replied that the bid that was placed was poorly worded and the other four companies did not understand the scope of what needed to be done. Mr. Feeney added that there was a requirement for past municipal experience. He explained that there was not a large pool of contractors to draw from for this type of work and that the company has a monopoly on the type of work.

### **TREASURER**

Mr. Lupkis stated that this information would be found on page 7-2. Ms. Kelly-Lenz came forward to answer any questions the Committee had about the department.

Mr. Lupkis stated that Ms. Kelly-Lenz had been with the City for two years and had been busy reducing the number of bank accounts as previously mentioned. Ms. Kelly-Lenz also is one of the two people required to sign City checks. Mr. Lupkis pointed out that now the cash flow accounts are accurate because the policies and procedures have been put into place. This also deals with security issues.

Ms. Kelly-Lenz pointed out that various accounts there has been an increase in the interest rates. Ms. Kelly-Lenz said that she has been evaluating what the office needs in terms of staffing and procedures. Presently, she is paying a temporary employee to fill the office manager position. This resulted in a discussion about where the funds for paying this employee were being drawn from and the 1099 practices. Mr. Lupkis pointed out that the line item number of 1099 just happened to be the assigned line item and is unrelated to a 1099 tax category. Council Member Curwen said that this type of financial change should have been presented to the Council rather than being implemented by the Department.

Council Member Curran asked about the WPCA charge services. The details of this arrangement were then reviewed with her.

Council Member Curwen asked about the Appropriations Summary. Mr. Lupkis explained that the City had accounts with Fleet Bank, who gave the City very favorable bank charge rates but when Bank of America took over the Fleet banks, this changed. Mr. Lupkis said that he expected the bank fees to remain in the same general area in the future. Council Member Curwen then asked if the City was required to do the banking for the WPCA. Ms. Kelly-Lenz explained that both the WPCA and the City benefit from this arrangement.

### **TAX COLLECTOR**

Council Member Curwen asked Ms. Kelly-Lenz how aggressive the Tax Collector's office was. Ms. Kelly-Lenz said that when the City Attorney's Office is involved in a real estate transaction, it is very aggressive. She also informed the Committee that one of the attorneys had recently brought in a check for \$500,000 last week. Mr. Lupkis pointed out that the City was actively pursuing the recovery of capital assets by foreclosing and then auctioning off the properties.

Ms. Kelly-Lenz reported that the delinquent car taxes booting program has gone well, also. 91 cars were recently booted during a three-day period. The volume of the vehicle taxes was very strong. An RFP has been put out for an arrears collection agency. When asked, Ms. Kelly-Lenz said that the forecast collection rate was 96.33%.

Mr. Lupkis then said that the department was looking to enforce the personal property taxes. This will increase the collection rate.

Council Member Silva asked if the City was collecting on vehicle registrations from other states. Mr. Lupkis said that the RFP was out for a company to do assessments. The department has already collected significant amounts and billed out over 2 million dollars in the last 18 months.

Council Member Walsh asked who had come up with the 96.33% collection rate forecast. Mr. Lupkis explained that every year there is a review and this is used to create the forecast. Council Member Walsh pointed out that Mayor Bucci increased the tax collection rate. Mr. Lupkis replied that the Financial Review Board had required that a three-year average be used as a forecast. When there are substantial increases, as the City has experienced recently, a three-year average become inaccurate. Therefore, Mr. Lupkis has been using a two-year average. Council Member Walsh commented that with the number of foreclosures, there will eventually be a slow down in revenues. Mr. Lupkis agreed that there would be a deficient eventually when a downturn happens. This will impact the tax rate. However, the collection rate is increasing even with the prices of gas and oil increasing, so Mr. Lupkis felt that the forecast of 96.33% was a prudent number.

Council Member Curwen asked about the new revenue created for special projects such as Captain's Cove and the Arcade. Mr. Lupkis said that some of the deals involved assessments at different rates, such as \$1/sq ft, which created a nightmare for the Tax

Assessor and the Tax Collector. These special rates had to be separated out to prevent confusion.

When asked, Ms. Kelly-Lenz explained that the Special Services account covered outside attorneys for foreclosures and collection services.

Council Member Walsh asked about the Miscellaneous Pilots line item. Mr. Lupkis said that he believed that this referred to the UI substation, but he would verify this and get back to Council Member Walsh. He explained that this facility would not be taxable until October.

Council Member Curwen asked about CRRA and Wheelabrator. Mr. Feeney explained that the contract expires in December of 2008. Currently, Wheelabrator and CRRA are in court. The City is looking to be reimbursed for the taxes on the property, which would be about 6 million. Mr. Feeney expected a decision in May.

Council Member Curran asked about the bulk trash pick up and expanding the pool for contract bidding. Mr. Lupkis explained that unless the City can deny a contractor's bid as irresponsible, the City must allow the contractor to give a low bid. However, if excessive change orders are processed, the City notes this.

### **TAX ASSESSOR**

Mr. Feeney announced that the information on this department would be found on page 9-4 of the finance binder. Mr. O'Brien then came forward to greet the Committee and answer any questions that they might have.

Mr. O'Brien said that regarding out of state plates, the students can actually keep the plate on the car, but needs to pay a personal property tax. The Tax Assessor needs to assess the situation. If the car is in the driveway, the Tax Assessor can do it, but if it is on the street, the police department must do it. Mr. O'Brien then reviewed the procedure.

Mr. O'Brien explained that the Tax Assessor's office does not receive revenue, but does generate revenue. He also reported that he has been working on documenting policies and procedures for his successor.

Mr. O'Brien then informed the Committee that he has installed a new computer GIS version of the Computer Assisted Mass Appraisal program. This program will give a 96% accuracy reading. The GIS module will compliment the OPED office. Mr. O'Brien said that he plans to incorporate personal property into the system, also. Another module that Mr. O'Brien said should be incorporated is the aerial oblique photo telemetry, which will allow the Tax Assessor to detect and locate illegal construction. He also reported that the tax assessment records have been moved off the main server and are now on a stand alone server.

The Tax Assessor's office is taking an aggressive policy towards unregistered cars because they decrease property values. He stated that the City has filed a complaint with the Freedom of Information Office because the Department of Motor Vehicles has been singularly unhelpful in this area.

Mr. O'Brien informed the Committee that he had reorganized the department and stopped a hemorrhage of revenue by updating the records. The Pilots have also been reviewed to optimize payments. The Grand List is now sent to the office electronically. Previously, the removal of vehicles from the tax list was done carelessly, now the residents must prove that the vehicle has been taken off the road. Mr. O'Brien said that the Low and Moderate Income Tax Break proponents had been defeated last year, but that the group has come back in an effort to further its cause again this year.

Council Member Curwen asked about the Grand List growth. Mr. O'Brien replied that the list had increased by 1.5%. Other communities have been under 1.5% growth. He also pointed out that the number of vehicles on the Grand List decreased, but the valuation of the vehicles has increased.

When asked about the assessment ratio, Mr. O'Brien explained that it should be about 70% as required by law. He also reminded everyone that there will be a reassessment in 2008.

Regarding court cases, Mr. O'Brien reported that previously the City had lost between 25-26% of the cases. Now the City loses only about 6%. This is a significant improvement.

### **FINANCE DEPARTMENT**

Mr. Feeney informed everyone that the information on this department was located on page 4-2 of the Budget binder

Mr. Lupkis was asked what his department goals were. He replied that it was to keep the finances and credit ratings of the City high.

Last year, Mr. Lupkis reported that the City had been able to save 4 million dollars. He said that there would be a bond sale in 6 or 8 weeks and that the City would be looking to do some refunding. A discussion about the Gasby policies and the budget then followed.

### **DEBT SERVICE**

Mr. Feeney directed everyone to page 64-1 of the Budget binder.

Mr. Lupkis said that six million dollars had just been approved and will be in the new bond sale. He also informed the Committee members that the City can delay the

principle payment out 18 months. He then reviewed all the details outlined on Supplemental page 62.

Mr. Lupkis said that on April 28th, the Committee had requested two items. One was the schedule of repayment and for an overall debt picture. *Mr. Lupkis then distributed copies of repayment schedule and a spreadsheet outlining the City's debt to all the members of the Committee present.* He then reviewed the debt service analysis with the Committee members. Mr. Lupkis also took this opportunity to point out that there had been a 7-8 million dollar increase with the school projects.

### **FUND BALANCE**

Mr. Lupkis said that the fund balance is tracked from the monthly financial statement. At the end of 2006, there was 24.7 million. The audited surplus of 4.2 million was applied to the fund balance. He then reviewed the use of the fund balance for 2007.

The City has foreclosed on and added 5.5 million properties to the inventory. These properties will be auctioned off to recover the value. Mr. Lupkis then reviewed the process for foreclosing and the calculation of the value with the Committee members. He informed the Committee members that the properties that have been auctioned off have been selling at close to the appraisal values.

### **OTHER FINANCING**

Mr. Lupkis then reviewed the information on page 65-1 of the Budget binder with the Committee.

Council Member Curran asked about Tax Anticipation. Mr. Lupkis replied that the City had repaid both draws. He also stated that resolutions will be presented for July and December.

As there were no further questions for Mr. Lupkis about the Finance Department, Council Member Curwen thanked him and his various department heads for their time.

### **CENTRAL GRANTS OFFICE**

*Ms. Bakalar came forward and distributed a packet of information about the Central Grants Office to the Committee members.*

Mr. Feeney announced that the Grants Office information could be found on page 2-3 of the Budget binder.

Ms. Bakalar explained that her office does not deal with funds that are automatic formula funds. These are the funds that the City receives on an annual basis and the amounts are calculated in Hartford or Washington. The Central Grants Office is seeking new, alternative competitive funding. She then introduced two of her staff members, Dawn Twistol and Richard Yao. The Central Grants Office also tracks legislation that could produce new grant funding in order that the City will be in a position to take advantage of these new programs.

Ms. Bakalar said that in the past, the failure to complete projects has hurt the City. When she arrived in 2001, the Grant Department staff had started to run the programs rather than pursuing the funds. This has changed and the appropriate department staff are now running the programs with the funds that the Central Grant Office has secured.

*Ms. Bakalar then distributed copies of a spreadsheet containing a financial analysis of the various grants.* She then reviewed the facts and figures of the grants with the Committee members. Renewal work is not tracked through her office because that needs to be done through the department receiving the grant. She also pointed out that some grants take a long time before an award is made. Her office generally considers the job completed when the application is submitted. However, if the grant is denied, the staff will follow up to determine what went wrong and how it might be corrected in the future. When asked what the department generated for 2006/2007, Ms. Bakalar said that she did not know because they haven't been tracking the grants by the date that the funding was awarded. She said that her staff would start working on this immediately.

When asked if her department works with the Board of Education, Ms. Bakalar reiterated that the Office does not work on formula grants or their oversight, but they will collaborate with the Board of Education if needed.

Council Member Walsh asked if there were grants for capital projects. Ms. Bakalar replied that there were some grants for capital projects but they are very, very competitive. She then gave an overview of the various grants.

Council Member Walsh then asked if an analysis is done when funding is denied. Ms. Bakalar replied that it was and that her staff works on strategies for success.

Council Member Silva asked if the Central Grants Office helps other municipalities. Ms. Bakalar said that her department will give some advice, but they only write grants for Bridgeport.

Council Member Curran thanked Ms. Bakalar for the list of grants. Council Member Curwen also thanked Ms. Bakalar and her department for all the hard work. He also informed the Committee that in a recent conversation with Representative Christopher Shays, Rep. Shays had told Council Member Curwen that Bridgeport was very lucky to

have Ms. Bakalar writing grants for the City. Rep. Shays also advised Council Member Curwen the City should take pains not to lose Ms. Bakalar.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER SILVA MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER CURRAN SECONDED.**

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

The meeting adjourned at 11:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes  
Telesco Secretarial Service

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT  
BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS  
MAY 3, 2007**

**ATTENDANCE:** Robert Curwen, Donna Curran, Carlos Silva, Thomas McCarthy, Rafael Mojica (7:05 p.m.); Robert Walsh (7:30 p.m.)

**OTHERS:** Tom White, Legislative Office; Tom Sherwood, OPM; Michael O'Neil, McGladrey and Pullen

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Curwen called the meeting to order at 6:55 p.m.

**LEGISLATIVE OFFICE**

Mr. Sherwood announced that the financial information would be found on page 19-2 of the budget binder. He stated that currently, the job titles have been adopted by Civil Service but have yet to be presented to the Ordinance Committee and the City Council.

When asked about a particular allocation for \$1,000, Mr. White explained that \$900.00 of that allocation was for the Sister City program. A discussion about the details of that program then followed.

*Council Member Mojica joined the meeting at 7:05 p.m.*

Mr. Sherwood pointed out that the Council Members could redistribute the funds as needed, but currently the breakout was done in order to learn the spending pattern. Chairman Curwen said that it is important to professionalize the office. Mr. Mojica commented that some of the budget should be allocated to food during the budget process and other special events. He also said he would like to see some funding for special training. When Mr. White pointed out that this was the function of the stipend, Council Member Mojica said that the stipend funds are taxed and that the money is needed for necessities like the cell phones. Council Member Curran pointed out that Bridgeport is the only municipality that taxes the Council stipends. Mr. White commented that New Haven has a staff of seven and a centralized Legislative Office. A discussion about the stipend then followed. Mr. Sherwood said that he would recommend getting an independence counsel opinion about the use of the stipend.

Council Member Curran thanked Mr. White and Chris for their help in starting the office up. Council Member Silva agreed, saying that it was nice to know that someone could do the legwork while the Council Members were at work. He also thanked the leadership for having someone in the office and commented that the office was now being utilized

much better. Chairman Curwen also agreed but observed that the office still had a way to go. Chairman Curwen then informed the Committee that both co-chairs had asked Mr. Sherwood to realign Mr. White's salary and submit the change to Ordinance.

*Council Member Walsh joined the meeting at 7:30 p.m.*

Council Member Walsh said that it is important to have a plan and justification for the projects. He then asked about the mil rates and how it was determined. A discussion about this then followed.

When asked about the outstanding requests, Mr. Sherwood went over the three-year plan with the Committee. He directed their attention to the Comparative Tab section in the binder but cautioned them not to link this information to the CAFR because these items predated the Charter Revision. He said that the information reflected the past practices rather than what the Charter currently requires.

Council Member Mojica then asked Mr. O'Neil to comment. Mr. O'Neil then said that after looking at the past records, the information most likely refers to the Financial Review Board, which existed from the 1980's to 1997. He felt that this information should not be included because the Charter is now pre-eminent. Council Member Mojica then asked if the City was compliance. Mr. O'Neil said that he believed the City was. A discussion about the auditing practices and the CAFR then followed.

Council Member Curran asked about the investment earnings. She expressed concerns about real estate incomes. Mr. Sherwood then reported that the overall collections have increased and so have the revenues. Council Member Curran then asked about the overtime spending. Mr. Sherwood explained that most of the overtime was in the Police Department and that the amount has been decreasing. Council Member Curran then asked about the increases in the salaries for those in the Mayor's Office. Mr. Sherwood explained that the union had settled and that the staff was receiving three years back increases.

Chairman Curwen explained that he would be asking for three votes to be prepared. One vote on the budget increases, one vote on the budget decreases and a final vote on the overall budget.

Council Member Silva asked if the Council had received monthly financial reports from the Board of Education. Council Member Mojica reminded everyone that last year, the Council had asked for a full accounting for the consultants but no reports were received until June. Chairman Curwen said that the budget currently allocated 12.4 million to the Board of Education and there was an additional possibility of 2 million from the Mayor's proposed budget. It is also expected that the Board will receive money from the State. Mr. Sherwood reminded everyone that the City had helped the Board out two years ago.

He suggested that the Legislative and Administrative branches meet with the Board about possible financial overspending.

Council Member Mulligan expressed concerns about the BOE exceeding their budget this year. Mr. Sherwood replied that the Mayor had asked Dr. Ramos about overspending in February. Dr. Ramos had told the Mayor then that the situation was under control. A question was raised about how to absorb any possible overspending. It was then pointed out that if the BOE overspends its budget, it is a violation of the statutes.

Chairman Curwen said that previously, each municipality had to pay for Special Education for their students even if the education was out of town. The law has changed and now out of town placements are being paid for by the town of placement.

Council Member Walsh then asked about formula grants system. A discussion about this then followed.

Mr. Sherwood pointed out that the Central Grants Office and the Tax Collector's Office had increases this year. He commented that the more aggressive the Tax Collector is in collecting back taxes, the more revenue that generates for the City.

There was a question about the Registrars of Voters Office. Mr. Sherwood reported that that State has not assembled the training packet for them as of yet.

Another question was raised about Parent Training Classes that are given in the schools. Mr. Sherwood explained that these programs were for students who decided to carry their child to term. The classes help these young parents learn parenting skills.

Council Member Silva pointed out that there are seven parochial schools in the City and they receive no help or support from the City. He added that the parents and the students are residents and that the parents pay taxes and tuition. He then indicated a line where the parochial schools could order their textbooks with the Board of Education in order to get a better discount.

Council Member McCarthy said that he would like to address the issue of the proposed salary increase for the Legislative Office. He stated that he felt that a \$31,000 increase for a two man department was wrong. Therefore, he would be voting against this. Council Member Mojica agreed.

Council Member Walsh stated that he had been told that the Council only approved the salary line, not the position or the amount. Mr. Sherwood said that this was so. A discussion then followed regarding the funding and allocation of positions for budget purposes.

Chairman Curwen said that Mr. Jacobs had been responsible for determining the salaries for the two unaffiliated positions. Council Member Mojica asked that a line time be included for these unaffiliated positions. Mr. Sherwood then explained that by ordinance, the staff positions must start at the bottom of the salary grid. There was a further discussion about this issue.

Council Member McCarthy said that if the Ordinance Committee and the full Council approves these positions, he would go along with it. It was also stated that Central Grants, part of Tax, part of OPEd and the Legislative Department will be moved to the contingency fund for transfer upon approval of the Ordinance Committee and the full Council.

Council Member Mojica asked Mr. O'Neil about his opinion on this budget. Mr. O'Neil said that he felt the Committee had done a great job. He said that one area that needed more detail was the Board of Education and said that there could be some potential problems with their budget.

Chairman Curwen said that he and Co-chair Mojica had asked Mr. O'Neil to compose a letter with his findings, recommendations and suggestions.

### **RECESS**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER MOJICA MOVED TO HAVE A FIFTEEN MINUTES RECESS.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER CURRAN SECONDED.**

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

The meeting recessed at 9:30 p.m. and reconvened at 10:00 p.m.

Mr. Sherwood then handed out updated versions of the Budget Amendment Resolution for the Committee to consider.

**\*\*COUNCIL MEMBER SILVA MOVED TO APPROVE THE AMENDED VERSOIN OF #113-06A - THE CITY COUNCIL BUDGET AMENDMENT RESOLUTION – GENERAL FUND INCREASES.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER MCCARTHY SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED WITH FOUR IN FAVOR (SILVA, MCCARTHY, MOJICA, AND WALSH) AND ONE OPPOSED (CURRAN).**

**\*\*COUNCIL MEMBER SILVA MOVED TO APPROVE THE AMENDED VERSOIN OF #113-06B - THE CITY COUNCIL BUDGET AMENDMENT RESOLUTION – GENERAL FUND DECREASES.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER MCCARTHY SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED WITH FOUR IN FAVOR (SILVA, MCCARTHY, MOJICA, AND WALSH) AND ONE OPPOSED (CURRAN).**

**\*\*COUNCIL MEMBER SILVA MOVED TO APPROVE THE AMENDED VERSOIN OF #113-06C - THE CITY COUNCIL BUDGET AMENDMENT RESOLUTION – GENERAL FUND BUDGET**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER MCCARTHY SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED WITH FOUR IN FAVOR (SILVA, MCCARTHY, MOJICA, AND WALSH) AND ONE OPPOSED (CURRAN).**

Chairman Curwen then said that both he and Co-chair Mojica had spoken with the Mayor and they hoped to go deeper into the monetary costs. He warned everyone that it would not be fiscally prudent to depend on the State's money, which might not arrive. Chairman Curwen said that the Mayor had committed to give any additional aid that the City receives other than Board of Education funding to resident tax relief.

Co-chair Mojica said that the Committee members had worked hard during the budget process to achieve the budget. He then thanked the Committee for their efforts.

Mr. O'Neil said that he appreciated the opportunity to work with the Committee through this process. He felt that the budget presentation was very good. The Board of Education has fewer details, but the Committee scrutinized it thoroughly. He said that he would be preparing a letter with recommendations in the near future.

Co-chair Mojica thanked Mr. O'Neil for his participation, and also thanked the Mayor for his cooperation, despite the disagreements.

Council Member Curran said that her vote was not an indication of how she felt about this process. She said that the meetings were well run and kept on track. Both the Co-chairs and the Committee members did an excellent job. In conclusion, Council Member Curran said that there have been improvements.

Mr. Sherwood commented that this had been an unbelievable task for his office because of the accountability factor. He strongly encouraged the Committee members continue to build on the budget system. He said that he hoped to have monthly statistics and updates for the Committee members throughout the year. Mr. Sherwood also informed the Committee that the BRBC was given three copies of the budget and Mr. Sherwood's office received no comment from them about the budget. An additional six copies were given to the editorial boards and no feedback has been received from them, either.

Council Member Curran commented that next year's budget will need to be consistent with this year's budget in order for the Council to compare the figures. Mr. Sherwood agreed.

Council Member Silva thanked the Council Members who are not on the Committee but attended the meetings. He also thanked the Committee for the past four years that he has been on it. Council Member Silva then said that in the event that he is not reelected, he knows that he can say serious efforts were made to move the City forward.

Mr. Sherwood stated that some of the departments and staff members were less than responsive to his requests for budget information.

Council Member Walsh stated that the budget process is a shell game.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER MCCARTHY MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER SILVA SECONDED.**

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

The meeting adjourned at 10:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes  
Telesco Secretarial Services

CITY of BRIDGEPORT  
BUDGET and APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE  
MAY 14, 2007  
6:30 P.M.

**ATTENDANCE:** Council members: Mojica, Silva, Walsh, Curran, \*Ayala  
*\* denotes – sat in to make a quorum*

**ABSENT:** Council members: Curwen, McCarthy, Vizzo-Paniccia

**OTHERS:** Mike Lupkus, Director/Finance; John Strafstrom, Pullman & Comley

Co-chair Mojica called the meeting to order at 6:55 p.m.

Approval of Minutes: May 14, 2007

-Tabled-

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER CURRAN MOVED TO TABLE THE MINUTES  
\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER SILVA SECONDED  
\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**111-06** Authorization for Accountant Consulting Services to assist the Budget Committee with FY07/08 Budget Formulation

Council member Mojica stated this matter pertained to the approval to pay the Accounting firm McGladrey & Pullan.

Council member Curran stated that she would have liked to see the invoices before approving the payment, to review the hours and amounts.

Council member Mojica said if the committee felt comfortable tabling the matter, they could do that and wait to see the invoices.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER CURRAN MOVED TO TABLE  
\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER WALSH SECONDED  
\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**138-06** Approval of Additional Capital Project Authorization to the 2008-2012 Capital Plan – WPCA Capital Project (\$1,510,000)

Mr. Lupkus stated he had a copy of the three resolutions on the agenda. He said that item 138-06 was a request to modify the capital plan, per a prior discussion and request from the WPCA to add items. He explained there was an effort to look at the budget on the WPCA side to reduce costs.

He further noted that certain items were paid for on an annual basis and all the items had a life of ten to twenty years. He pointed out the request was to pay the amount over a duration of time. He noted that the WPCA took over the debt service for bonds that were issued. So there was a two-part item to modify the plan and to approve the borrowing. He referred to item 140-06 that outlined modifying the capital plan and adding \$1,510,000. He went on to say there was some recouping of the debt service to the city from the WPCA.

Council member Walsh asked why they couldn't issue the debt. Mr. Lupkus said because they weren't their own entity, they are only an enterprise of the city. Council member Walsh didn't feel that left any control over the WPCA then. Mr. Strafstrom explained they had to assess the tax exempt market; but they aren't the agency authorized to bond. However, when they look at the bonding agreement, it will be between the city and WPCA. Also, if they could go into the market and bond, it wouldn't make sense to go in for just a year, it's better to put all the bonding programs together and address them as one issue.

Council member Curran asked the time frame for the bonding. Mr. Lupkus said there was discussion of having it for ten years (*he referred to a document indicating the life spans*) and noted that they may look at the matter as a separate package and devise a debt schedule.

Mr. Strafstrom said the schedule of repayment will track when the bond is issued.

Mr. Lupkus noted that the 10-year duration referred to the structure of the deal per Council member Curran's question. And they will add in \$500k over the first 10 years.

Council member Walsh asked if this matter was addressed in the ordinance that established the WPCA. Mr. Strafstrom said he thought the ordinance was silent on the matter, but many municipalities that have the same reimbursement agreement system in place.

Council member Walsh questioned if the WPCA was formed as a separate entity. Mr. Strafstrom said that was correct. Council member Walsh asked if that caused a separation between them and the city. Mr. Strafstrom said they were formed as a separate entity in July 1998. The consent decree came down to say that they had to have a separate entity to track user fees and make sure support was going into the sewer system to cover upgrades. Mr. Peter Harris, WPCA stated that currently they had less than \$60 million remaining for that purpose.

Council member Mojica asked about the items listed and what the improvements were for. Mr. Harris reviewed the projects using clean water fund monies. He noted that the east and west side facilities were rehabilitated, but equipment on the west side was starting to wear out, noting it has been in place for at least ten years; he further noted that the east side facility was also rehabilitated four years ago. He pointed out that when they treat waste water, the material is highly corrosive with grit. He said they didn't have all separate sanitary sewers, so that's why the equipment wears out faster. So certain kinds of equipment need to either be replaced or overhauled. If not, the parts of the system will start to fail. So they are required to put together a list of priority items that need to be replaced over the next three years. As a result, they put together a package with them in

conjunction with the priority costs. And by doing that, they will incur the cost of \$60k that will provide savings on the user fee.

*Mr. Harris reviewed the list of items. He highlighted how each piece of equipment functioned:*

- **Grit removal system** – removes sand and sediments
- **Variable frequency drives** - maintains the electrical equipment to run at optimal levels
- **Odor control system** - functions to control emission of odors
- **Gravity belt discharge pump** - removes sludge out of the holding tanks
- **Main pump** – the pump where material comes in and gets dispersed into the tank
- **Flights & chains** - moves soils that settle into the tank and pumps them out
- **Bar screen** - equipment that captures floatables that come in through the system
- **Settling tank mechanism** – part of the chains & flights mechanism to keep the system going to move solids along
- **Oxygen probes** - functions as a digestive process to maintain a certain level of oxygen

Mr. Harris emphasized that all these items break down over time and wear out.

Council member Silva asked what amount replacing these items would ultimately save the homeowner per the user rate. Mr. Harris said if it's not included in the rate, there might be a reduction of only .3 or .4 cents that could equate to 120-units, resulting in a savings of \$4.00 or \$5.00 per year.

Council member Curran mentioned the 10% rate increase. She noted the bonding only runs four years and would be paid back over ten years. She pointed out the bad conditions at Captains Cove Marina with untreated matter and she questioned what will be done. She further pointed out the situation regarding the oysters dying. She went on to question the performance level of the plant and what could be done in the future to avoid issues with the Black Rock Harbor. Again, she questioned the fee increase to taxpayers. She said she had a problem approving the funding without seeing a amortization schedule. She didn't feel the information presented tonight was sufficient to authorize approval, especially if the plant wasn't functioning at federal standards.

Mr. Harris said the treatment plan was rated at 29 million gallons per day. And with the recent rainfall, 100 million gallons of flow came in, but the plan wasn't equipped to handle that and they had to go into overflow. He pointed out that treatment plant was designed for a flow that was in place when the facility was rehabilitated.

Council member Curran said that with the new developments in the city, the plants will be inadequate to handle all the flow.

Mr. Lupkus spoke about the 4-year amortization and clarified that the matter being discussed applied to a 10-year duration. They are taking money in the first 10 years and allocating it to the WPCA; he noted this was an effort to reduce the 10% increase to the taxpayer. Mr. Harris said the 10% increase points out the major cost increases, such as electrical that saw a big increase.

Council member Curran asked if the WPCA can shut off a resident's water service for nonpayment. Mr. Harris said no, that authorization would go through Aquarion Water.

Council member Curran asked Mr. Harris to recap the reason for the authorization. Mr. Harris recapped what was previously mentioned above.

Council member Walsh stated he had a concern about changing the way they do things and the long term impact. He noted that if they were able to finance out of the general revenues in the past, he would prefer to do it that way, rather than creating more debt.

Council member Walsh asked how much time was left on the Aquarion Water contract. Mr. Harris said they had a 10-year contract with a 5-year renewal clause, so they had five years left.

Council member Walsh asked about details regarding an executive on-loan contract. Mr. Lupkus said that information was confidential and couldn't be discussed.

Council member Walsh asked why people weren't able to pay their WPCA bills on-line. Mr. Harris and Mr. Lupkus responded that they were looking to switch over to allow that option. They were told the system was going to change, but there were delays in switching companies to set up the on-line system.

Council member Walsh asked if there were other alternatives, such as doing a straight loan to the WPCA. Mr. Strafstrom said they will borrow money and set a 10-year amortization that states they agreed to pay back the city, so in effect it is a loan. He explained that doing it this way doesn't put the city at risk because they aren't spreading out the cost of capital over 10 years; they are just paying it over the course of 3 years.

Council member Ayala said in looking at the 3-year roll out, they're not doing the bonding all at once. He felt this was a way to have the capital items spread out, so the ratepayer isn't being hit all at once.

Council member Ayala asked what the process would be to pack it back. Mr. Lupkus said when the debt service was due, the WPCA account is hit and then it gets paid.

Mr. Harris went back to Council member Curran's question regarding the process of removing sludge. He noted that the process can take 10 to 15 hours or longer before it settles down and solids are formed; but the final result for the digestive process is time consuming. Council member Curran questioned if there were any plans for modernization. Mr. Harris stated that sludge is removed daily by tanker trucks. *He offered to take Council member Curran on a tour of the treatment plant so she could view the process.*

Council member Curran stressed that she would like to see modernization plans to expand capacity at some point. Council member Mojica agreed, but he noted that for now, they had to maintain what they had.

Council member Walsh mentioned the problem of bad odor emitting from the plant. He noted that he recently observed this problem at Captains Cove. He stated that the cove was a popular attraction, but the odor is a real distraction that causes gagging. Mr. Harris said he never hears about the odor problems, but he said he would pass the information along to the right department.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER SILVA MOVED TO APPROVE**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA SECONDED**

**\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**139-06** Approval of General Obligation "Tax Anticipation Notes" – to pay current expenses and obligations of the City (\$75,000,000)

Mr. Lupkus recalled that a year ago, he went before the city council to request a short term borrowing tax anticipation notes. This was done last July and December and they need to do it again this year. The notes need to be paid off in the current year and the current resolution dies as of June 30, so this approval would be for fiscal year 2008 beginning July 1. He said he anticipated roughly \$20 million again this July. He noted that last December they had a shortfall, but he anticipated \$40 million this fall that for a total \$65 million. He said they had to demonstrate to the bond council the need for the amount to indicate due diligence. So the request was for July 2007 through June 30, 2008.

Council member Ayala likened the payment process to a pay-day-loan. Mr. Lupkus said it was similar, in that it's a short term loan. He further noted that the first couple of weeks in July was where the basic shortfall was. He said this authorization will cover payments to vendors.

Council member Ayala asked if it was customary to do it this way. Mr. Lupkus said the accounting standards changed and they couldn't have the funds until they indicated the need.

Council member Walsh asked if they were raising cash reserves by \$10 million. He questioned whether or not they were going in the wrong direction per the agreement with the bond increase. Mr. Lupkus said this was money they had at the beginning and there will be a money savings at the end. Council member Walsh thought it should be increased then by \$10 million. Mr. Lupkus said that \$10 million was in the account that has been spent and this made it hard to borrow additionally, so now they have to pay it back.

Council member Walsh questioned why they were borrowing the aggregate amount. Mr. Lupkus said that once they use the authorization and borrow \$20 million in July, the open authorization reduces down to \$55 million. And if they borrow \$45 million that will leave \$10 million still open and not used. But they need flexibility if the cash flow changes and if taxes don't come in or if escrow is delayed. Council member Walsh said he didn't understand this. Mr. Straffstrom explained that they

borrow twice per year, but it's not revolving. So the committee was giving total authority to borrow on a short term basis for that amount.

Council member Curran asked the conditions that were producing the short fall. Mr. Lupkus said they had a kitty that went back into the budget, but it took away the excess pool of money. So what happened last year is that they borrowed three years from the capital projects. But upon review by the bond council, it was deemed inappropriate, so it was loaned from the capital budget account to the city for on a short term basis and then reimbursed to the capital project funds.

\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER AYLA MOVED TO APPROVE

\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER SILVA SECONDED

\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

**140-06** Approval of General Obligation Bonds – WPCA Capital Projects (\$1,510,000)

Mr. Lupkus stated this was an authorization for borrowing for modifying the capital plan. He referred to the typical language on page 4 of the document that read it will be paid by the WPCA based on any user fees they receive.

\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER SILVA MOVED TO APPROVE

Council member Silva withdrew the motion

Council member Walsh referred to page 5 of the document. He questioned what was meant by the language that was denoted. Mr. Lupkus explained that any future use would have to go through the city to assure it is appropriately used in regard to the tax laws etc. Council member Walsh questioned if bonding was solely for the WPCA, why was there any excess bonding proceeds. Mr. Strafstrom said they could run into a situation where they bonded \$500k, but the project comes in at \$450k, so that will leave a question of what to do with the additional \$150k, noting the unused portion should be used for the WPCA, but the information didn't outline that. He asked if the language should read:

"To allocate the unused bond proceeds to the WPCA capital projects". Mr. Walsh said absolutely. Mr. Lupkus said he was comfortable with the modified language.

\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER SILVA MOVED TO AMEND THE LANGUAGE ON PAGE 5, SECOND TO LAST RESOLVE TO READ: "TO ALLOCATE THE UNUSED BOND PROCEEDS TO THE WPCA CAPITAL PROJECTS"

\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER WALSH SECONDED

\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER SILVA MOVED TO APPROVE AS AMENDED

\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER WALSH SECONDED

\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

ADJOURNED

\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA MOVED TO ADJOURN  
\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER SILVA SECONDED  
\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

The meeting was adjourned at 8:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Graham  
Telesco Secretarial Services

CITY of BRIDGEPORT  
BUDGET and APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE  
JUNE 11, 2007  
6:30 P.M.

**ATTENDANCE:** Council members: Curwen, Mojica, Silva, Walsh, McCarthy,  
Vizzo-Paniccia

**ABSENT:** Council member: Curran

**OTHERS:** Tom Sherwood

- \*\* COUNCIL MEMBER MCCARTHY MOVED TO RECONVENE THE MEETING AT 7:14 P.M.
- \*\* COUNCIL MEMBER SILVA SECONDED
- \*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

**157-06** Budget Transfer to balance FY 2007-08 General Fund budget per financial forecasting

Mr. Sherwood stated that in accordance with the charter, when they identified line items within the departments. They went to the March and April forecasts to review and expand the items to keep the budget in balance for the year. He reviewed the listing *distributed (see attached)* and noted that when they adapted the budget, it covered police overtime, so the amount will be at \$3.4 million when it's complete.

Council member Walsh asked why they don't address these matters when they arise. Mr. Sherwood said that historically they did that once a year, but he thought they could do 60% of the items more frequently. However, they need to be aware of the collection rate. He further noted that when contracts are settled, they need to move money into the MERF account, but they don't generally have that information available when they need it.

Council member Walsh questioned why they go through the budget process and then there are adjustments. Mr. Sherwood explained that many of the items were provided for next year, but for work that was done in-house, that information gets reported later. He did agree that they should probably report quarterly, noting he was behind that idea.

Council member Curwen mentioned the current tax collection rate. Mr. Sherwood said last year it was 95.5%, but he expected it to be higher next year. He relayed it was currently at 96.3%. Council member Curwen commented he wanted it to go up to 96.3%. He added that if they recommended the budget given at 95.5% and they were generating tax dollars, but if they were collecting say \$15 million, then they have to look at how it affects the collection rate.

Mr. Sherwood reiterated he would look into having a quarterly review and budget transfer collection.

\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA MOVED TO ACCEPT THE BUDGET TRANSFER TO BALANCE FY 2007-08 GENERAL FUND BUDGET PER FINANCIAL FORECASTING  
\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER SILVA SECONDED  
\*\* MOTION PASSED WITH FIVE VOTES IN FAVOR AND ONE VOTE IN OPPOSITION (COUNCIL MEMBE WALSH)

*\*Council member Curwen stated that the committee met prior to the meeting at Aquaculture School at 6:30 p.m. for the purpose of getting an update from the Board of Education on teacher contract negotiations.*

Council member Curwen stated there was a request from the Budget & Appropriations Committee to review the capital budget and de-authorize some items, so he reminded everyone they will see the request come through shortly.

Mr. Sherwood stated that the city council didn't authorize anything new, but they will seek de-authorizing some items.

Mr. Sherwood updated that one transfer dealt with unemployment. He noted that a new statute policy applied as far as unemployment limitations. He further noted they receive a massive list from the state, but it doesn't identify where the people are employed, so this causes delays in updating unemployment information. He noted they were considering hiring a coordinator to track that information.

Approval of Minutes: May 14, 2007

\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER McCARTHY MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES  
\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER MOJICA SECONDED  
\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

- o Council member Mojica updated that he meeting scheduled for Thursday was never referred, so they needed to refer it first - *he noted the city clerk would be notified.*

ADJOURNED

\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER McCARTHY MOVED TO ADJOURN  
\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA SECONDED  
\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.  
Respectfully submitted,

Diane Graham  
Telesco Secretarial Services

City of Bridgeport  
Budget & Appropriation Committee  
June 11, 2007  
Page 2 of 2

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT  
BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE  
SPECIAL MEETING  
JUNE 27, 2007**

**ATTENDANCE:** Robert Curwen, Chairman; Thomas McCarthy, Robert Walsh, Donna Curran

**OTHERS:** Michael Lupkis, Finance; Richard Hewitt, Board of Education Finance; Laura O'Malley, Nutritional Center; Jack Bupkes; Mr. Waring, School Security; Raoul Dupree

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Curwen called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

**175-06 -- 2008 - 2012 Capital Plan Modification - Board of Education's 2007 - 2008 Capital Projects**

Mr. Lupkis gave a brief overview of the Board of Education's request for a modification to the Capital Plan for 2008. Mr. Lupkis said that the City's Capital Plan had modified a few months ago, but the Board of Education had not made a submittal at that time. It was determined at that time to remove the Board of Education figures and address them at a future date. The authorization for borrowing will be presented for discussion at a future date.

Mr. Lupkis directed the Committee's attention to the second page of the packet, where some school projects listed and the additional capital requests listed on the next page of the packet.

Chairman Curwen said to Mr. Lupkis that the Committee wished to have copies of the entire list of all the items that are currently on the capital plan for the Board of Education because the Committee is currently reviewing all the authorizations of the items on the capital plans for the City and would like to do this for the Board of Education. Mr. Lupkis said that he had spoken with Mr. Sherwood about this issue for both the City and Committee. He suggested that this project be held off until the future. Chairman Curwen replied that he did not have a problem with that suggestion but pointed out that the Board of Education had a history of not submitting their items for the Capital Plan. He then asked if someone could be present at the next meeting when the Committee begins to de-authorize capital projects that are not being funded.

Mr. Hewitt said that it had been a year or so since he had seen the capital projects list and it was his understanding that except for some construction projects, that most of the small projects were in process or being completed. Mr. Hewitt said that his request for 2006-2007, which was approved by the Council, had not been funded as far as Mr. Hewitt was aware, other than some modest portions for buses and another project.

Chairman Curwen asked Mr. Hewitt to review the current document. He indicated that the first page contained information about the Wilber Cross School and the JFK campus. There was a discussion about the fact that the Board of Education requires new commitments for the grants from the City. The other four grants that were mentioned at the recent Council meeting would be covered by the \$500,000 allocation that was put into the 06-07 budget as grant matching funds. The \$500,000 has not yet been borrowed. In order to move the projects forward, it would require verification that they have been approved for bonding and then the borrowing would be applied for through OPM. Chairman Curwen then stated that the Committee amends the Capital Plan and authorize the bonding, but the actual bonding is handled strictly by the Mayor's Office. Mr. Hewitt said that he wished to insure that the requests before the Committee are added to the capital plan but also authorize the bonding. Chairman Curwen replied that historically that requires two separate meetings. Mr. Hewitt replied that historically bonding has three steps: being listed on the capital plan, authorization for bonding and then the actual decision to bond by the Mayor and OPM. Mr. Hewitt said that he was requesting that the first two steps be completed at this meeting. Chairman Curwen said that in the twelve years he has been on the Council, both changing the capital plan and authorizing the bonding has never been done in the same meeting. Mr. Hewitt said that he recalled two or three years ago where projects for the School Building Committee added projects to the capital plan and were authorized at the same time that they were added to the plan. There may have been two votes involved, but the outcome was that when the capital plan was published, the projects were listed in the authorized column.

Mr. Lupkis said that there have been instances in the past where there have been authorizations at the same time as the modifications to the capital plan. Mr. Lupkis pointed out that the authorization would require a separate item being listed on the agenda and that this was a special meeting, which does not allow the agenda to be amended. He also said the bond counsel and the City Clerk need the requests to be presented as two items. Mr. Lupkis suggested that if there was a need for the authorization in the near future, the documents could be drawn up and presented at the next Council meeting. He also said that there were some technical adjustments that needed to be made. Chairman Curwen asked if projects had been both added to the plan and authorized on the same night. Mr. Lupkis said that it had been done in the past but there has been a conscious effort to authorize project by project.

Chairman Curwen asked if there were time sensitive issues involved in these projects. Mr. Hewitt said that since these were brand new applications, there was some time to

schedule a separate meeting for authorization. He also stated that the projects might require cash from the \$500,000 grant matching funds from the previous year. One of the projects will involve the removal of asbestos and there will be some involvement of State funds for that project, but it will also require some cash from the City.

Chairman Curwen asked what the status of the \$500,000 for the grant matching funds in 06-07 Capital to Board of Education. It was stated that those funds were authorized for borrowing and could be reallocated. In the past, the City has looked for other projects that have been funded and transfer funds with the bond counsel's approval.

Mr. Bupkes said that the Board had just received authorization last week for the grant and scheduled the item for discussion. It was stated that there is a long lead time on a bond sale and that the City has sold bonds and the proceeds were due in the near future. The only option at this time would be to transfer the money between projects.

Mr. Bupkes said that one of the projects before the Committee was for a new roof replacement for the JFK campus, which is now twenty years old. The building is in distress and a new roof is needed as soon as state funding can be obtained. The project cost is estimated at 4 million dollars. The facility is the second largest facility after Central High School.

The second item is to affect alterations at Wilbur Cross School. Cross was approved for some code work projects a number of years ago. In order to make the work happen, the students needed to be temporarily relocated. At the time, this was not possible, so only the roof replacement portion was done and the remaining portion of the project was cancelled. Now that there is available space to relocate the students, it is possible to schedule the work at Cross. Last year, funds were approved for repairs at Columbus School and those students will be temporarily relocated in the fall of 2008. Mr. Bupkes said that it was the Board of Education's intent that the Cross students immediately follow behind by temporarily relocating them in the fall of 2009. The project is estimated at 10 million dollars. There will be substantial improvements to air quality, light, and air conditions.

Chairman Curwen asked if these projects had passed through the Building Committee. Mr. Bupkes said that technically, the committees for these projects do not exist at this time. The projects were approved at the most recent Council meeting and the committees are in the process of being assembled. June 30th will be the deadline for the Wilbur Cross project, but a special legislation will be requested because the next Council meeting will not be held until after June 30th.

Council Member McCarthy then asked for clarification about the City's portion of the Cross project. Mr. Bupkes then reviewed the figures with Council Member McCarthy. He also reviewed the terms of the grant funding and the details of the roofing project.

Mr. Lupkis asked whether the additional items that were maintenance repairs should be included as capital or if they should be paid out of the general fund as normal maintenance. Mr. Bupkes explained that if the roof is removed and the decking is found to be in poor condition, the State would most likely view it as a replacement, which means it is an ineligible cost, even though it is a capital component of the overall project.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER MCCARTHY MOVED TO APPROVE THE MODIFICATION OF THE CAPITAL PLAN TO INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING TWO PROJECTS: THE WILBUR CROSS SCHOOL AND JFK CAMPUS ROOF REPLACEMENTS BONDING.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER CURRAN SECONDED.**

Council Member Walsh asked if there was a further explanation of the phrase “Wilbur Cross ES Part 2 Code” entailed. Mr. Bupkes said he could forward an outline of the specs for that project. Council Member Walsh said he would like that before the next Council meeting.

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

### **Furniture Replacement**

The discussion then moved to the third page, including the line items for furniture replacement.

Mr. Hewitt explained that there was a two page letter dated from May 2007 to the Committee inside the packet. He explained that the Board was moving towards a systematic replacement of equipment, particularly for classrooms. He pointed out that a similar request was submitted last year and this is approximately what needs to be done each year. Mr. Hewitt then reviewed the figures with the Committee.

Chairman Curwen asked what was being done with the replaced furniture. Mr. Hewitt said that the furniture is sorted and the pieces that are no longer usable are disposed of properly. None of it has been given away, because Mr. Hewitt does not believe the City charter allows this. Furniture that is still useable would have to be put up for sale and the money given to the City. When the old buildings are closed, the furnishing are removed and put in other facilities. To date, there has not been any surplus furniture. Chairman Curwen stated that some Council members have expressed concerns that some of the furniture is still usable. Mr. Hewitt said that if something is still usable, the schools are still using it. Chairman Curwen said that he believe the schools need to develop a plan to determine how they will dispose of old, outdated but usable furniture.

Council Member Walsh asked about the number of classrooms that were receiving new furniture. Mr. Hewitt explained the process. A discussion about some of the line items amounts and their application of them to this project followed.

Council Member Walsh suggested that since the Board was planning on replacing the furniture for 46 classrooms, he felt it would be wise to completely replace the furniture in two of the schools, knowing that the next replacement would be in twenty years.

Chairman Curwen said that he agreed with Council Member Walsh on the process, but that he felt that the Committee should legislate and not micromanage the project.

Council Member Walsh stated that he believed that no one wants to make the decision of which school should be first.

Mr. Bupkes pointed out that over time items have been replaced a classroom at a time. He then reviewed the process and stated that rather than shuttling things back and forth across the District, from a maintenance standpoint, it saves manpower doing one classroom at a time.

Chairman Curwen stated that looking at the capital plan, there was over a million dollars authorized for furniture. He said he would make a recommendation that the \$150,000 be removed until it was clarified as to what the authorized million dollars was that had not been used at this time. Mr. Lupkis said that the City had just held a bond sale and that the funds would be ready on the June 28th. The Board's request was not on the most recent list, but the money could be reallocated. Mr. Lupkis stated that the Board of Education has 32 million dollars out of 45 million dollar bond sale. He went on to state that for \$150,000, he could almost guarantee that there were unspent Board of Education funds for a lengthy amount of time. By deauthorizing the project, the funds can be reallocated to a more appropriate line, if the Board of Education approves.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER MOVED TO DELETE THE \$150,000 FOR SCHOOL FURNITURE FROM THE PROPOSAL.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER MCCARTHY SECONDED.**

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

### **Replacement for Special Education Buses**

Mr. Dupree gave a very brief overview of the condition of the special education buses, one of which has over 200,000 miles on it. There are 27 buses. The request is for \$300,000 for four Special Education buses.

Mr. Lupkis commented that two years ago, the Board made a request to the City for Special Education buses. Mr. Lupkis said that at that time, the Board agreed that they would pay for them. Mr. Hewitt said that the Board had made a payment. Mr. Lupkis said that this was correct and at that point in time, there was a discussion about moving four of the rolling replacements. Mr. Hewitt said that if that would allow the Board to

enter into a rolling replacement so the buses are not continually in the repair shop, he was in agreement. On page two, there is a line item for Special Ed buses and there are also listings elsewhere. A discussion about the details then followed.

Council Member McCarthy said that after looking over the report, that he did not believe that there was enough information to make a decision. Mr. Lupkis said that the Board already had an authorization in the capital plan two years ago, but no one had requested the funds for the other portion of the money. Mr. Hewitt replied that 06-07 capital plan had been presented last year and that more than half of the plan was not funded. The Council and the members of the Board of Education then discussed the status of the funding for this project.

Chairman Curwen said that this was a request for \$305,000 and until the Committee had some clarification on the status of the previous authorizations.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER WALSH MOVED TO REMOVE THE \$305,000 FOR THE SPECIAL EDUCATION BUDGET FROM THE CAPITAL PLAN.**

Chairman Curwen said that Mr. Hewitt and Mr. Lupkis needed to verify the actual status of the previous authorizations. Then Mr. Hewitt, Dr. Ramos and the Mayor need to meet to set up a priority list for funding for replacements. Mr. Hewitt stated that the Board had approved the plan on November 2, 2006. Mr. Lupkis pointed out that if there is a high priority, and the item included in the capital plan, the Superintendent could request the Mayor have funds be allocated. If the money cannot be reallocated, then the funds are included in the next bond sale.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER CURRAN SECONDED.  
\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Council Member McCarthy stated that he did not believe that the Committee had access to all the information they needed to make these decisions. He also observed that the Council has been prone to authorize fewer rather than more funds. Council Member McCarthy suggested that the meeting be recessed until Mr. Lupkis and Mr. Hewitt can review the accounts for the actual balances.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER MCCARTHY MOVED TO RECESS THE MEETING UNTIL THE FUNDING HAS BEEN VERIFIED.  
\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER CURRAN SECONDED.**

Council Member Walsh pointed out that this could require a special Council Meeting in July. Chairman Curwen suggested that the meeting not be recessed because there might be items on the list still to be considered that were urgent. He also said he would not want to hold the process up on the two schools, because they are connected with the grant.

There was a discussion about whether the first two items could be approved and moved forward if the meeting was recessed.

Council Member Curran pointed out that there was another category called “Masonry Repointing” where the amount being requested was equal to the amount of the remaining funds. Mr. Lupkis commented that the line item in question had been open for approximately five to six years. It was stated that in previous years before Mr. Hewitt arrived, the Board of Education would often submit capital request with the heading of “District Wide \_\_\_\_\_”. The Council found this objectionable five years ago because they wanted the items focused. This is why the account may have remained opened but untouched.

Mr. Bupkes pointed out that there might be difficulties if the meeting was recessed until July 2 because of the deadline for the Wilbur Cross project requires that it be approved by the legislature and will require Special Legislation if it is not approved at this meeting. He also pointed out that Robert’s Rules of Order states that if a meeting is recessed, none of the business can move forward. The Committee discussed this.

Council Member McCarthy asked what items in the packet of information was needed before the August meeting. It was stated that the replacement technology and the security project.

The Committee then looked at the replacement technology requests. Mr. Lupkis pointed out that there was two and a half million dollars that had already been allocated for this category.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER MCCARTHY WITHDREW HIS MOTION TO RECESS IN ORDER TO HEAR THE NARRATIVES REGARDING THE VARIOUS ITEMS LISTED IN THE REQUEST REPORT.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER CURRAN WITHDREW HER SECOND.**

It was stated that two other staff members had planned on attending the meeting in order to review the information on the replacement technology. The inventory of what needed to be replaced was listed in the packet. There was a discussion about the need for computers and their distribution.

The Committee then considered the security requests. Mr. Waring said that the schools were able to purchase five cars as security vehicles and they are in the process of being retrofitted. An additional five cars are needed for the 07-08 budget because there are nine special police officers and the equipment in the cars has to be able to interface with the Police Department. The vehicles are not take home vehicles. Mr. Waring said that he hopes to hire two new police officers in the future.

Council Member Mulligan asked if the schools would be looking to purchase the same make and model Dodge as the Police Department has. Mr. Waring said that the Crown Victorias were sufficient for the school security needs. He then reviewed the details of the decision to purchase the Crown Victorias last year and said that he would continue with Crown Victorias. Council Member Walsh questioned why the School District needs Crown Victorias. Mr. Waring stated that the school security officers are dispatched just like the regular police department. If back up is needed, the Bridgeport Police provide it. Council Member McCarthy had some questions about the cost of the Crown Victorias. Mr. Waring reviewed the costs with him, including the costs of the retrofitting. The Committee discussed this proposal at length.

Council Member Walsh said that he would like to reduce the number of security vehicles to two because he did not believe that the District was purchasing the right kind or the right size of vehicles. He stated that he had no problem with purchasing two more vehicles, but not five, unless he could better understanding why this kind of money was being spent for vehicles like this. Mr. Waring stated that this was a rolling stock issue and he would be glad to accept only two vehicles because it was moving in the right direction. He commented that the officers need a full size vehicle because they are officers and do patrol the streets just like the Bridgeport Police do, including responding to calls for service. The equipment in the car is used by the officers.

Chairman Curwen pointed out that the Council had just replace a major portion of the Bridgeport Police vehicles and cost the City close to a million dollars.

The discussion then move to consider security equipment. Mr. Waring said that the students are aware of the camera and the surveillance equipment so they act differently. He then reviewed the various equipment being requested. Chairman Curwen stated that as a retired Department of Corrections Captain, the use of video cameras is invaluable. Council Member McCarthy asked about the details of the monitoring. Mr. Waring reviewed the program with him. Chairman Curwen said that in his experience, integrity was the largest component along with the ability to alter a tape, so the custody of the tape is important also.

Council Member Walsh asked if there was some type of return investment when this equipment is put in other schools, such as a reduction of vandalism. Mr. Waring said that there had been a burglary at Harding High School where six laptops were removed from the school. The suspect was caught on tape with the computers in his hands. The security officers and the Bridgeport Police were able to identify the student and arrest him with one of the computers in his possession. The other computers were recovered. He then recounted another incident at another school where the camera were pivotal in identifying the parties involved. There has been a reduction of incidents by almost 70% since the installation of the cameras. Council Member Walsh pointed out that the proposal was from Sonitrol. He then asked if Sonitrol thought that they were under contract or if it was

going out to bid. Mr. Waring replied that the District works well with Sonitrol, but that the proposal will go out to bid. The installations at Roosevelt School and the Classical Academy had been awarded to other contractors although Sonitrol did bid on them. Chairman Curwen reminded everyone that the minority contractor rules had been recently changed and that the City was trying to encourage minority vendors to bid on jobs. Mr. Waring said that this was part of the bid package that goes out, as per the requirement of the purchasing department. He said that he believed that this was standard operating procedure for the purchasing department.

The Committee then considered the Nutritional Center requests. Ms. O'Malley said that in 2002-2003, the Board of Education began to participate in a program that allows the District to serve all the children in the community year round. The Nutrition Center was closed during the summer and did not offer meals. The building was renovated 32 years ago and the production area was not air conditioned at that time, although other portions of the building are air conditioned. The request is for air conditioning in the production area, which is now open during the summer and food is being prepared there. During the summer, the production is reduced to only about one third of the meals.

Council Member Walsh asked about one of the line items. Ms. O'Malley explained that the items were not for the Nutrition Center, but for Harding High School, which has completed that renovation.

Chairman Curwen had some questions about the breakout for the request. Ms. O'Malley said that she had spoken with the designer and that by utilizing air curtains, the cost could be brought down to simply air condition the preparation area. There was some discussion about the deauthorization of one project for the Nutrition Center and authorizing a new project.

Chairman Curwen asked for the record, if it was possible that the Committee could get more specific on the project description titles. Mr. Lupkis stated that the titles were determined when the Capital Plan was passed. Mr. Lupkis said that he would work on it. Chairman Curwen asked about repointing for the building. Ms. O'Malley said that 32 years ago, when the City acquired the building, there were federal funds to acquire the building and make major renovations. However, that was a one time offer. There are no federal funds available to make major renovations now. Chairman Curwen suggested that Ms. O'Malley speak to the Mayor about the \$150,000 that was approved but never drawn against. Ms. O'Malley said that she would contact the Mayor about this.

The Committee then discussed the eight new replacement vehicles. Mr. Hewitt stated that there were maintenance employees driving vehicles that were long past their serviceable life. There are also employees who are driving their personal vehicles on city business. They do not have a maintenance provided vehicle for them to use for transportation to their various job locations at the schools. It is the goal of the Board of

Education to provide these employees with a City vehicle. This would also help with tools and equipment belonging to the Board of Education and protect the employees in the case of an accident. The vehicles being requested are vans. Chairman Curwen asked about the cost of the vehicles. Mr. Hewitt explained that these vans are stripped down and only include two seats, four wheels and a cargo area. Chairman Curwen asked if the vehicles would be marked. Council Member Walsh pointed out that there was an ordinance requiring all City vehicles be marked as such, other than vehicles used by the police. Mr. Hewitt stated for the record, that the vans would be marked appropriately.

The Committee then reviewed the requested maintenance projects. The discussion then turned to the \$500,000 in grant matching funds that was discussed earlier in the meeting. In keeping with past practice for the Council, titles were specific. Mr. Hewitt said that he would be happy to apply \$300,000 of existing authorization to these projects with the Council's approval.

Council Member Walsh asked about page 2 about the Econoline van replacements. Mr. Hewitt reviewed the details of the line item. Council Member Mulligan asked if there had been any malicious actions with the vehicles. Mr. Hewitt said that he had not heard of any malicious actions with City vehicles. Council Member Mulligan then asked about recklessness. Mr. Hewitt said that the Board no longer allows the supervisors to take the vehicles home and this has cut down on use.

Chairman Curwen said that there had already been a motion to approve the two items regarding Wilbur Cross and JFK campus roofs.

Chairman Curwen then reviewed his notes on the remaining requests. He then requested to know what the sense of the Committee was regarding the number of security vehicles. Council Member Curran said that she would be comfortable with three. Council Member Walsh said that he had some strong concerns about the type of vehicles being used, but would accept three vehicles.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER MCCARTHY MOVED TO AMEND THE REQUEST FOR VEHICLES TO \$80,000 UNDER THE REPLACEMENT SECURITY VEHICLES AND TO LIMIT THE NUMBER OF VEHICLES TO THREE.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER CURRAN SECONDED.**

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

Chairman Curwen then brought the request for \$400,000 for the security equipment to the table.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER MCCARTHY MOVED TO APPROVE \$400,000 FOR SECURITY EQUIPMENT.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER CURRAN SECONDED.**

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

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER CURRAN MOVED TO REMOVE THE REPLACEMENT TECHNOLOGY AND THE REPOINTING OF THE NUTRITION CENTER FROM THE CAPITAL PLAN REQUEST.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER MCCARTHY SECONDED.**

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

Chairman Curwen then called for a vote on the air conditioning for the Nutritional Center and the remaining two items.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER MCCARTHY MOVED TO APPROVE \$100,000 FOR THE AIR CONDITIONING FOR THE NUTRITIONAL CENTER, THE FUNDING OF \$150,000 FOR EIGHT NEW REPLACEMENT VEHICLES, AND \$450,000 FOR MAINTENANCE PROJECTS.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER CURRAN SECONDED.**

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

Chairman Curwen then called for a vote on the entire amended plan. This will not include the Wilbur Cross and JFK projects, which will be amended and added separately.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER MCCARTHY MOVED TO AMEND CITY OF BRIDGEPORT CAPITAL PLAN WITH A TOTAL OF \$1,180,000 IN ADDITION TO THE \$5,182,000 FOR THE WILBUR CROSS AND JFK CAMPUS ROOFS AS AMENDED, RESULTING IN A TOTAL OF \$6,362,000.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER CURREN SECONDED.**

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

### **ADJOURNMENT**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER MCCARTHY MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER CURRAN SECONDED.**

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

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes  
Telesco Secretarial Service



**BRIDGEPORT CITY COUNCIL  
BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE  
AUGUST 30<sup>TH</sup>, 2007**

**ATTENDANCE:** Committee Members: Bob Curwen, Chair; Rafael Mojica (6:30); Tom McCarthy; Amy Marie Vizzo-Paniccia; Bob Walsh

**STAFF:** Gail Solis, BRBC; Kathy Saint, BRBC; Julio Mollida, BOE; Robert Henry, BOE

**OTHERS:** Tom Mulligan; Linda Lambeck, Connecticut Post

**CALL TO ORDER**

This meeting was called to order at 6:25 p.m. by Mr. Curwen.

**228-06            Budget Modification for FY 2007-08 in Order to Appropriate  
Additional ECS Entitlement to the BOE.**

Mr. Curwen explained this item, saying that all the funds that are sent over from the State to ECS to the General Fund Budget needed to be moved over to the Board of Education budget. He said that the Mayor had committed all the money for ECS that was given by the State to the Board of Education and he believed that the Council made that same statement.

**\*\* MR. WALSH MOVED TO APPROVED ITEM 228-06.**

**\*\* MR. MCCARTHY SECONDED.**

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

Mr. Curwen asked that this item be moved to the consent calendar.

Mr. Mulligan asked if there was an additional \$2 million that had to be overseen by the State Board of Education.

Mr. Curwen answered in the affirmative.

Dr. Henry said that the total allocation was about \$10 million, \$6 million of which went directly to the school system. He said that \$2 million was provided to the Council and the City making up the \$8 million that based on this Committee's vote at this meeting and its recommendation would go to the school system. He said that the remaining \$2 million was under the jurisdiction of the Commissioner of Education and therefore required a plan by the school district to justify the use of those \$2 million.

*Mr. Mojica arrived at 6:30*

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Mr. Mulligan asked if it was correct that the remaining \$2 million would not go through the City Council at all.

Dr. Henry confirmed this.

Mr. Curwen apprised Mr. Mojica of the Committee's proceedings up until his entrance.

Mr. Mojica asked what the amount of appropriated funds was.

Dr. Henry said that the total amount was \$8,133,241.00

**218-06 Funding Authorization for Bridgeport Regional Business Council (BRBC) To Contract On Behalf Of City to Effectuate the Segregation of the BOE and the City's Budget and Operational Systems.**

Mr. Curwen said told the Committee that he sat on the panel that selected MJLM along with Ms. Saint and Dr. Henry and that MJLM did an outstanding job. He said that while item 218-06 had some major hurdles before it, including changing of state laws and other various obstacles, the item was long overdue. He said that there'd been a shadow cast over the City's General Fund Budget and the Board of Education's budget and there'd been some finger pointing and there needed to be some cooperation and teamwork put into place to allow this to move forward. Mr. Curwen said that he envisioned that the City would be moving forward with this and that he'd spoken with the Mayor who supported this item. He said that the Committee's task at this meeting was for the Committee to fund a portion of this particular segregation of the Board of Education Budget from the City's General Fund Budget. He said that the problem with this was that when the City Council and Budget Committee passed the past year's budget, it was passed on the premise that the figures that the Governor provided were completely accurate. He said that the budget for this year was \$2.1 million short from the Pilot Programs alone which left a gap in the General Fund Budget of \$2.1 million. He said that the project that they were trying to undertake with segregation was miniscule in the grand scheme but that it would have an impact on the budget. He said that it was his understanding that the Board of Education had approved in their meeting to fund their portion of this and if that was so, he felt obligated to do the same.

Ms. Solis reviewed a letter from Mr. Paul S. Timpanelli of the Bridgeport Regional Business Council addressed to the Bridgeport City Council Members which was distributed to all in attendance.

Ms. Saint said that she was the Co-Chair of the Quality of Education Council which was the group that put together the bipartisan committee to select the consultants and try to work through this four phase process of which this item was phase two. She said that she was particularly proud of the group that was put together which included representatives of the Board of Education, the City Council, the Mayor's Office, the Superintendent's Office and accounting professionals from the business community to make the selection

of the consultant. She said that they worked well together, and that she thought that the results were good and the consultants were able to get a good sense of the state of the system. She said that the City came out looking quite nicely at the end of the process because the City had good software, hardware and procedures and people who had the right skills for their jobs and managed their money well. She said that the Board of Education did not fare so well because their hardware, software and accounting systems were antiquated and out of control and was not in synch with the City's systems. Ms. Saint said that until things were separated and good standard accounting procedures were put in place and people had the tools to do their job, no one was ever going to be able to see improvement and if there was an improvement no one would be able to be held accountable for it because there was not a good system available to evaluate and manage that. She said that there was probably a lot of waste in the system but no good way to find it. Ms. Saint mentioned that she was in the manufacturing business and that 98% of all business problems were caused by the system and that bad people were rare. She said that she was of the belief that all the recent conversation on forensic accounting and digging in to find corruption was misguided because it focused on a potential 2% of the problem when the 98% was obvious. She said that the State had seen the need for the separation and it was par for the course for other communities to have this type of separation and there were other economies that had benefited from the City and Board of Education cooperating and collaborating in certain areas and that was addressed in the proposal. She added that this was part of the reason that the MJ LM consultants did not look for 100% separation because some of those benefits would be lost. She mentioned that Mr. Curwen asked at the beginning of this process if there were opportunities for the City and the Board of Education to buy together and get benefit from that, would MJLM recommend that and they have. She said that in order for the Board of Education to be considered for more money like the \$3 million that was given to Stamford by GE, they would need to update their systems to provide transparency in their finances. She said that it was important to give the people in charge the tools they needed to do their jobs so that they could appropriately be held accountable for the results and that at this time she didn't think this could be done because there was no clear process for how all these plans were managed.

Mr. Mojica asked if it was too soon to know how much it would cost to update the Board of Education's hardware and software systems.

Ms. Saint said that updating the systems and synching them with the City's systems was included in the total cost of this phase of the project. She added that she felt that this phase was merely a steppingstone and that the next phase was the critical one and that was to support the Board of Education in doing a full-blown operations audit so that once they had updated systems they could start looking for opportunities to save money and invest money back in the classroom. She said that with a couple hundred million dollars involved and a system which was as in need of improvement as this one was, it was a safe bet that there were some good opportunities for savings. She said that she'd heard from parents that were concerned that there was a lot of money going into the school system but that there were still lots filled with weeds, books missing, classes with no chairs and bathrooms leaking. She said that she didn't think the Board of Education

could say where all the money was going to at this time because they didn't have the tools to do so.

Mr. Mojica asked if the Board of Education was in agreement with moving forward with this.

Ms. Saint said that they were and that she thought this was probably a scary process for the BOE because she thought that they initially felt that the BRBC was pointing blame but that they were beginning to trust that this was not witch hunt and that the purpose of this process was to give them the tools that they needed so that they would be able to do their job so that they could be held accountable by the voters of this City and so the City Council could get off the hook for things that they were perhaps being unfairly blamed for.

Mr. McCarthy spoke to Ms. Saint's statement on relieving the City Council from being blamed, saying that the truth was that they had very little control over what the BOE did at this time and they got blamed constantly and that the Mayor actually caught the blame before the Council. He said that he understood the reasoning for the idea of separation but if there was a problem with something he would rather have more control over it and influence to fix it as opposed to less control. He said, as an example that there is an issue every year about missing books and so a separate fund for books was set up and people were asked if they were tracking books and it was found that there were books being bought but that there was no record of where they ended up.

Ms. Saint said that that was a perfect example of the system gone completely and totally out of control. She said that ultimately, there was no possible way for the City Council to win if they have more control because they would never have complete control. She said that she was familiar with the noxious politics of the situation but that ultimately the best solution for the City Council was to give the Board of Education everything that they needed and to support them.

Mr. McCarthy wanted to make sure that everyone understood that approving this item was a huge leap of faith and he wanted to make sure there was "water in the pool".

Mr. Mulligan said that the political state had probably been the same for decades and it was simply a question of there not being enough funds to go around which led him to believe that the "noxious politics" would remain, perhaps to a lesser degree regardless of the approval of this item by the strain of insufficient funds. He said that the Board of Education members were simply trying to press to get as much money as they could to educate and the Council was worried about the taxpayers who are already overtaxed.

Ms. Saint said that Mr. Mulligan was exactly right and that everyone involved wanted the exact same thing and that there wasn't enough money. She said that the only the State could be held accountable was by having this budget separation that they wanted and the transparency so that they no longer had an excuse. She said that once all excuses were removed, the right people would end up in the hot seat.

Mr. Mulligan asked Ms. Saint hypothetically, if the City's Information Technology Department went into the Finance department of the Board of Education, with their full cooperation and provided them with the appropriate standard accounting procedures if the goal would then be accomplished.

Ms. Saint said that the consultants could answer that question but that she could not.

Mr. Mulligan asked if this item revolved around separation or if it revolved around obtaining for the Board of Education standard proper accounting procedures.

Ms. Saint said that according to the consultants and GE, it would involve a) separation, b) conducting an operational audit and c) taking those savings and putting them back into the classroom.

Mr. Mulligan asked what was meant by 'separation'.

Ms. Solis said that this meant full autonomy for the Board of Education.

Mr. Curwen said that a lot of it had to do with in-kind services, questionable charges and duplication of efforts.

Mr. Mulligan said that the Board of Education's budget was fully autonomous.

Ms. Saint said that this was not the case according to the consultant.

Mr. Mulligan said that the consultant was wrong. He said that when the City Council appropriated for example, \$200 million to the Board of Education that they could not then say that they objected to them transferring \$1 million to buses.

Mr. Curwen said that this issue was hashed out in Committee and Mr. Mulligan's questions would probably be answered in the report from that Committee.

Mr. Mulligan asked if they'd not always been told that the Council had no control over the line items of the Education Budget.

Mr. Curwen said that Mr. Mulligan was correct, that they had no control over the line items. He went on to say that two years prior to this a Pandora's Box was opened when in-kind services of significant value were discussed. He said that because of this there was some give-and-take and the Board of Education felt that they would be able to do better but the City said that a separate hire would cost significantly more. He said that separation and autonomy would mean that the Board of Education would be responsible for each and every dollar that they spent. He added that it would take back some of the services that the city of Bridgeport currently provided the Board of Education and the Board of Education would have to provide funding for those services in the future.

Ms. Saint added that this would work both ways because the Board of Education was not counting some in-kind services on their budget that the City provided and the consultants felt that the Board of Ed should be counting those.

Mr. Mulligan asked if there was a discussion by the Bridgeport Regional Business Council of the concept of separation what New York City had done, which was in the exact opposite direction whereby their education Department had been enveloped within the city government for efficiency.

Ms. Saint said that there was not and asked if that would really be favorable.

Mr. Mulligan asked Ms. Saint if as a businesswoman she'd heard of any business in which the body which appropriated the money had no say over how it was spent and the body that spent the money has no say over the appropriation.

Mr. Curwen said that the current laws of the State of Connecticut prohibited the City from operating in that fashion.

Mr. Mulligan asked if it was wise to go further into that type of autonomy.

Mr. Curwen reiterated that this was just phase two of the entire project and that there were other obstacles ahead for this project which could potentially prevent the project from ever reaching its final phase. He said that if there was not a change in State law, a change in a Bill in the Legislature, a revision of the Charter and a host of other changes then the project may never be completed but that at this time, they needed to move forward.

Mr. Mulligan said that proper accounting procedure and autonomy seemed to him to be two separate things and if the Board of Education had on staff a great IT person who could make their system compatible with the City's, they could probably report on how many pounds of grass seed was used in a current year. He said that it was difficult to understand how over all of these years standard accounting procedures had not been adopted.

Ms. Solis said that step two in this four phase process was precisely to get that expert IT person in order to get the systems that were going to be compatible with the City's so that there would be synergy and both systems would be reading the same language and producing the same types of reports. She added that had the Mayor and Superintendent hired someone from the corporate world to "clean house" and do what needed to be done like a corporation would normally do, then a consultant wouldn't have been needed but that wasn't being done and so this was the only option.

Dr. Henry said there was room for improvement and there were things that needed to be done to make the school system more efficient. He said that it was not perceived from the Board of Education's side that they had autonomy with regard to their budget. Dr. Henry said that there were critical issues with how the system was set up such as the

Chart of Accounts reflecting what a city would need, not a school system. He said that this handicapped the BOE and caused them to have to do a lot more maneuvering to accomplish purchases. He said that the Board of Education's tie to the City reduced their ability to move funds as readily and timely as they needed to. He said that these were some examples that the consultant's report was able to capture and the Board of Education still wanted to find a way to ultimately reach phase three, which was where the BOE staff would become competent in those systems and compete in the real world. He said that there were specifics in the operation that would get accomplished by having this Project Manager help clean out some of those weeds, so to speak.

Ms. Saint asked Dr. Henry to confirm that the Board of Education had committed to the hiring of another person in their Finance Department after that.

Dr. Henry confirmed this.

Ms. Vizzo-Paniccia referred to the earlier discussion of hardware and software and said that four years ago when she started on the Council the Board of Education mentioned that they had a tracking system for books and inventory and a scanner system which she did not believe was being used currently and so there was an existing system but it was not being utilized. She said that she was nervous about the accountability of that type of product.

Ms. Saint said that this item was designed to address getting the systems, getting people to know how to use them, getting the proper procedure set up and then actually looking for ways to fix all these different problems.

Mr. Walsh said that they had before them a Resolution which was like a budget transfer but did not indicate where the money was being transferred from. He read the Resolution aloud which said, "Now therefore be resolved by the City Council, that the mayor and/or his designee is hereby authorized, and empowered to enter into agreements with the BOE, BRBC and authorized consultant and to execute such other contracts, transfers of funding and documents that may be necessary for the fulfillment of the proposal". Mr. Walsh said that he didn't believe that this was allowable adding that he believed that for a budget transfer the accounts that funds would be transferred to and from would have to be identified and they were not.

Mr. Curwen said that Mr. Walsh was correct and that they could do that as a Committee. He said that the resolution was put forth by the Bridgeport Regional Business Council not by any of the Committee Members.

Mr. Walsh asked if someone could, in a couple of sentences explain to him what the Project Manager's responsibilities would be.

Ms. Saint listed several responsibilities as follows:

- Implementing the actual structure to support Board of Education autonomy.
- Developing and maintaining comprehensive policy and procedure manuals.

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- Obtaining additional disk storage to update the data storage capabilities of the IBM mainframe.
- Designating the Board of Education functional experts to work with the City as a team in the development of system requirements in the process of replacing the Advantage payroll package with Genesys.
- Expanding the responsibilities of the Board of Education IT services to include system administration of the Advantage accounting system and Genesys systems for Board of Education data.
- Hiring and training the Board of Education system administrator to develop functional knowledge of the Advantage accounting system and Genesys systems (which the Board of Education would be responsible for paying for).
- Designing and implementing the Board of Education data security and backup procedures.
- Participating in the testing and selection of new financial management systems.
- Implementing the new financial management system.
- Conducting internal end-user training on the new financial information system.

Mr. Walsh asked if it was correct that someone was being paid \$150,000 to do this.

Ms. Saint said that was correct, adding that \$150,000 actually sounded cheap to her.

Mr. Walsh asked what the timeframe for this project was.

Ms. Solis answered that it was expected to be done by year's end.

Ms. Saint said that there were a few more responsibilities that this person would have which included the following:

- Identifying the capital operational costs and revenues in the Board of Education budget.
- Revising the Board of Education budget document to identify expenditures to strategic goals and objectives.
- Revising the Board of Education budget document to report comparative data.
- Establishing procedures for the Board of Education to have complete control over budget caps
- Discontinuing the Board of Education practice of net budgeting.
- Revising the account code structure being used by the Board of Education to enable spending controls to be placed at the program level.
- Developing Board of Education budgets and financial reports that enhance accountability and transparency.
- Developing budgetary policies and procedures.
- Working collaboratively to finalize in-kind methodologies.
- Annual evaluation.

Mr. Walsh asked if any of this would be wasted if this project did not move past this phase.

Ms. Saint said that it would not but that it would be a real shame if the operational audit wasn't done because that was where there was the best opportunity to find those dollars to reallocate into the classroom which was everyone's ultimate goal.

Mr. Walsh asked if this was also the opinion of the Board of Education.

Dr. Henry answered that it was.

Mr. Mojica asked if the correct amount for the Implementation of Budget Autonomy Report was \$275,000.

Mr. Curwen said that the amount was correct, adding that \$200,000 of that would come from Board of Education.

Mr. Mojica asked for confirmation that the other \$75,000 would be coming from the City.

Mr. Curwen confirmed this.

Mr. Mojica said he personally thought that it was time that the Committee moved forward with this project. He said that this would cost the City and everyone else more money as the process went on but that in the end they would be better off cutting the tether between the City and the Board of Education adding that if both sides were in agreement, this was something they should move forward towards.

Mr. Mulligan asked if there was a report from the consultant.

Ms. Solis pointed out the binder on the table which could be left with the Committee to look through and said that everyone in attendance was given an executive summary of that report.

Mr. Mulligan said that the Resolution that this Committee was being asked to pass at this meeting seemed rather open-ended and felt that there should be City Council involvement if it was going to be changed in any way in the future.

Ms. Vizzo-Paniccia said that there were two members of the City Council on the Committee with the BRBC and the Mayor to formulate this resolution and those members were Mr. Ayala and Mr. Curwen.

Ms. Saint added that a City Attorney and Mr. Feeney were also on that Committee and that the Committee was still active.

Mr. Mulligan said that there were 18 other Council Members that should also be updated regularly with the progress of this item.

- \*\* **MR. MCCARTHY MOVED TO AMEND THE RESOLUTION TO ADD “NOT TO EXCEED \$75,000” TO THE END OF THE LAST LINE.**
- \*\* **MR. MOJICA SECONDED.**
- \*\* **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mr. Walsh asked if the RFP had been issued.

Ms. Solis said that she believed it was in the process of being worked up and that the BRBC was prepared to send it out, administer it and do whatever it was that needed to be done with it and it was just waiting on this approval.

Mr. Walsh said that he wanted to make sure that there would be language in there about minority contracting.

Ms. Solis asked Mr. Walsh to email her so that she could be sure to include that.

Mr. McCarthy said that if the Committee voted on this item at this meeting that he wanted to revisit what Mr. Walsh said earlier about the specification of accounts the funds would be transferred from.

Mr. Curwen said that the Committee could designate a line item for this or leave the burden on the OPM Director or the Mayor. He said that he thought the Mayor should have the flexibility to allocate from one of his lines unless the Committee wanted to allocate it from a line that they knew had \$75,000 in it. He said he knew that there were not many line items that had flexibility of \$75,000 and that at the moment, all he could think of was \$½ million Contingency Account and \$¼ million of Support of Contributions, a lot of which was allocated in various areas.

Mr. Mojica said that they could come back to this and find out exactly where the money would be taken out of out of before they met and voted on this as a full council, that way the full council would be aware of it.

Mr. Curwen said that passing the item would empower the Mayor to do that.

- \*\* **MR. MCCARTHY MOVED TO APPROVE ITEM 218-06 WITH THE CONTINGENCY THAT THE COMMITTEE BE TOLD PRIOR TO THE NEXT CITY COUNCIL MEETING EXACTLY WHAT ACCOUNT(S) THE FUNDS WILL BE TRANSFERRED FROM.**
- \*\* **MS. VIZZO-PANICCIA SECONDED.**
- \*\* **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mr. Curwen asked that this be moved to the Consent Calendar.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

- \*\* **MS. VIZZO-PANICCIA MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**\*\* MR. MCCARTHY SECONDED.**  
**\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jessica Schroder  
Telesco Secretarial Services

**BRIDGEPORT CITY COUNCIL  
BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE  
OCTOBER 9<sup>TH</sup>, 2007**

**ATTENDANCE:** Committee Members: Robert Curwen, Chair; Rafael Mojica, Co-Chair; Amy Marie Vizzo-Paniccia, Bob Walsh; Carlos Silva, Tom McCarthy

**STAFF:** Ron Pacacha; Associate City Atty.; George Estrada, Public Facilities; Thomas C. McCarthy, Public Facilities; Tom Sherwood, OPM; Mike Lupkas, Finance; Adam Heller, Information Technology Services

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 6:33 p.m. by Mr. Curwen.

**Approval of committee special meeting minutes: June 27, 2007**

**Approval of committee special meeting minutes: August 30, 2007**

- \*\* MS. VIZZO-PANICCIA MOVED TO ACCEPT BOTH SETS OF MINUTES AS SUBMITTED.**
- \*\* MR. SILVA SECONDED.**
- \*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**250-06 Proposed Amendment to the Five Year Capital Plan 2008-2012 additional projects: (Wonderland of Ice, Baldwin Plaza, and Ballpark/Harbor Yard)**

*Mr. McCarthy and Mr. Walsh left the meeting at 6:35 p.m., recusing themselves from further Committee actions.*

Mr. Sherwood introduced a document, describing it as the form that the City Clerk used to do Capital Plan adjustments. He said that before the Committee was the adopted plan and referred to an outlined box on the second page where there were three items that were being requested as additions to the plan by Mr. Estrada. He said that if the Committee acted on this document at this meeting, those items would be added to the column that said "FY 2008 Capital Plan Modified".

Atty. Pacacha recommended entering executive session due to pending legal issues regarding Wonderland of Ice and Baldwin Plaza.

- \*\* MS. VIZZO-PANICCIA MOVED TO ENTER EXECUTIVE SESSION.**

- \*\* MR. SILVA SECONDED.
- \*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

*The Committee entered session at 6:40 p.m. and reconvened at 7:20 p.m.*

- \*\* MR. MOJICA MOVED TO APPROVE ITEM 250-06 AS PRESENTED BY THE OPM DIRECTOR WITH SUPPORTIVE DOCUMENTATION.
- \*\* MS. VIZZO-PANICCIA SECONDED.

Mr. Estrada reviewed the documentation of proposed repairs for the Ballpark/ Harbor Yard and recommended that it be amended.

Mr. Curwen asked why there was not a similar breakout for the Wonderland of Ice.

Mr. Estrada said that he could have such a breakout prepared for the full Council and continued reviewing documentation on Ballpark/ Harbor Yard repairs.

- \*\* MS. VIZZO-PANICCIA MOVED TO AMEND THE CAPITAL PLAN EXHIBIT DOCUMENT SUBMITTED BY THE OPM DIRECTOR TO ADD \$55,000 TO THE HARBOR YARD/ BALLPARK CAPITAL RESTORATION LINE ITEM.
- \*\* MR. SILVA SECONDED.
- \*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Mr. Curwen noted that the Exhibit should have at that time reflected a change of Baldwin Plaza for \$400,000, Wonderland of Ice for \$1.5 million, the Harbor Yard Ballpark Capital Restoration for \$300,000 and an additional Harbor Yard Ballpark capital restoration item line for \$55,000.

- \*\* MS. VIZZO-PANICCIA MOVED TO APPROVE ITEM 250-06 AS AMENDED.
- \*\* MR. SILVA SECONDED.
- \*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

**261-06 Approval of Additional Capital Project Authorization to the 2008-2012 Capital Plan, (Wonderland of Ice, Baldwin Plaza & Ballpark/Harbor Yard) \$2,200,000.00**

Mr. Lupkas stated that before the Committee was legal documentation to modify the Capital Plan. He reminded that the Committee was not authorizing yet and that authorization would come in the next step. He explained that before them was the normal language prepared by Bond Council each time a modification was to be made to the Capital Plan. He noted that this document, based on the conversation by the Committee concerning the previous item would have to be increased by \$55,000, changing it from the original \$2.2 million \$2.255 million in the middle of the front page.

Mr. Sherwood referred to the schedule on the second page of the document, saying that another line had to be added to it for the \$55,000 for the Harbor Yard/ Ballpark Capital Restoration. He then recommended that the following language, subject to Bond Council review be added to Document 261-06: "Be it further resolved that any recovery from legal claims to the above projects will not offset additional expenditures for such projects without Council approval."

There is a document 261-06 that we can refer to and whoever makes the motion can

**\*\* MS. VIZZO-PANICCIA MOVED TO AMEND DOCUMENT 261-06 TO A) REPLACE THE AMOUNT OF \$2,200,000 WITH \$2,255,000 FOR CAPITAL PROJECTS, B) TO INSERT THE FOLLOWING LANGUAGE, SUBJECT TO BOND COUNCIL APPROVAL: "BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT ANY RECOVERY FROM LEGAL CLAIMS TO THE ABOVE PROJECTS WILL NOT OFFSET ADDITIONAL EXPENDITURES FOR SUCH PROJECTS WITHOUT CITY COUNCIL APPROVAL" AFTER "...EXHIBIT A OF TAX TIER TWO OF THE 2008-2012 CAPITAL PLAN (LISTED AS THE PROJECTS) AND NOW THEREFORE", AND C) TO ADD ON PAGE 3, UNDER "BALLPARK / HARBOR YARD" THE HARBOR YARD/ BALL PARK CAPITAL RESTORATION FOR \$55,000 FOR A TOTAL OF \$2,255,000.**

**\*\* MR. MOJICA SECONDED.**

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

**\*\* MS. VIZZO-PANICCIA MOVED TO APPROVE ITEM 261-06 AS AMENDED.**

**\*\* MR. MOJICA SECONDED.**

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

**262-06 Approval of General Obligation Bonds - To Fund Certain Capital Improvement Projects (\$5,407,500.00)**

Mr. Sherwood noted that because of the previously discussed changes, the amount of \$5,407,500 would now have to be adjusted, adding \$55,000 for a total of \$5,462,500

Mr. Lupkas explained that before the Committee was the legal language from Bond Council for authorization to borrow for the modifications to the Capital Plan.

Mr. Mojica said that \$10,000 was supposed to have been given to the City Clerk's office for furniture and other such things and that money had not yet been allocated as promised.

Mr. Sherwood advised that no modification be made for that, adding that the City had to make an administrative call to take action on that within existing authorized projects. He agreed to meet with Mr. Estrada and the Mayor to discuss that.

Ms. Vizzo-Paniccia noted that the Town Clerk's Office also needed some attention.

Mr. Sherwood said that there was a plan in place for maintenance to that office

Mr. Curwen told Mr. Lupkas that the Council had recently been criticized by BCAC and other organizations regarding funding for Capital Improvements. He said that the City Council's job was only to approve items on the Capital Plan while it was the responsibility of the Mayor and his administration to fund them. He went on, saying that having looked through the documentation before the Committee, there were items that needed to be unauthorized or unfunded and he requested that Mr. Lupkas and Mr. Sherwood provide this Committee with documentation on those items within the following week so that could be done.

Mr. Sherwood said that he and Mr. Lupkas had been working on that and that it had been delayed because he'd been trying to get the actual bond issue dates for those items to show when they were authorized and how long they'd been on the plan. He then passed around a list of Capital Plan items, what was borrowed for them and what remained for the years 1997-2007, saying that anyone who wanted could have a copy. He further stated that he, Mr. Feeney, Mr. Lupkas and several other people would be drafting a response to BCAC's article, including documentation of Board of Education projects.

Mr. Lupkas said that on the front page of Document 262-06, there were four instances of "\$5,407,500" that all needed to be changed to "\$5,462,500" to account for the increase of \$55,000 that was discussed previously with the other modifications to the Capital Plan. He added that on page 6, Exhibit A, under the top section under Public Facilities there needed to be a line added for \$55,000 for Ballpark / Harbor Yard Capital Restoration, in turn changing the total at the bottom to \$5,462,500.

**\*\* MR. MOJICA MOVED TO AMEND ITEM 262-06 TO REPLACE THE FOUR INSTANCES OF "\$5,407,500" ON PAGE ONE TO "\$5,462,500", TO ADD A LINE FOR THE BALLPARK / HARBOR YARD CAPITAL RESTORATION FOR \$55,000 TO THE SCHEDULE IN EXHIBIT A ON PAGE SIX AND TO CHANGE THE TOTAL IN THAT SAME SCHEDULE TO \$5,462,500.**

**\*\* MS. VIZZO-PANICCIA SECONDED.  
\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**\*\* MS. VIZZO-PANICCIA MOVED TO APPROVE ITEM 262-06 AS AMENDED.**

**\*\* MR. MOJICA SECONDED.  
\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

### **ADJOURNMENT**

**\*\* MS. VIZZO-PANICCIA MOVED TO ADJOURN.  
\*\* MR. SILVA SECONDED.**

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

The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jessica Schroder  
Telesco Secretarial Services

**BUDGET and APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE**  
*of the CITY COUNCIL*  
**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT**  
**MONDAY - OCTOBER 22, 2007**  
**6:00 P.M.**

**ATTENDANCE:** Council members: Mojica, Curwen, Curran, Vizzo-Paniccia, Walsh (*arrived at 6:25 p.m.*) Silva (*arrived at 6:35 p.m.*)

**OTHER COUNCIL MEMBER(s):** Council member Mulligan

**OTHERS(s):** Mike Lupkas, Director/Finance Department

Council member Mojica called the meeting to order at 6:15 p.m.

**269-06** Approval of Additional Capital Project Authorization to the 2008-2012 Capital Plan, (Additional School Building Projects)

Mr. Lupkas said there were two resolutions. He explained that the state involvement for schools constructions were at a standstill as far as projects were concerned. The situation is that the state was supposed to give them \$14 million for the ongoing projects and they were supposed to receive another \$8 million. He noted that the city was able to pay for the projects through the last bond sale, for all the projects for the city's share.

Council member Mojica asked if they were current for September, October and November. Mr. Lupkas said yes, and they were now looking for future payments to move forward, but he didn't have any more authority to pay the costs. He further explained that when they took out the original grant, 25% was their share, but again, he doesn't have any more authority to move forward and they are looking to keep the projects moving, so they want to borrow short term to continue the school the projects.

Council member Curran asked if this would be a grant anticipation loan. Mr. Lupkas said yes, he noted it's what was used as collateral and it relates to the tax anticipation rate.

Mr. Lupkas referred to the listing outlining all the additional school building projects. He pointed out the total amounted to \$107,314,691; so the request is to give him the authority to do short term borrowing. He said they would pay a comparable rate of interest that will be executed through a bank. He went on to say that the good thing was that supposedly, the state is willing to pick up the expenses incurred by doing it this way. However, if the state doesn't pick up the expense, then it becomes a city expense at a cost between \$1 million and \$2 million. It will count as a direct hit on the city books this year, if they don't pick it up. Also, if the state doesn't give anything for schools, then the city may have to put their full faith in credit behind the projects. He said there was no expectation that will happen, although it could. The other option is not to approve the request, but this will

result in the schools program coming to halt and then they would have to work out a timeline with the contractors, but this will result in demobilization costs.

Council member Mojica said so the delays will cost the city a lot and if the state doesn't pick up the interest, this also presents a problem. Mr. Lupkas said that was correct.

Council member Curwen stated that he wasn't willing to stop the projects because they are desperately needed. He said if it means they will be subject to \$1 -2 million of interest to the budget, then they will make do with that; but he hoped the state would come forward with the interest payment. He further emphasized that \$107,000,000 was a large number. He asked if the amount would exceed the cap. Mr. Lupkas said no, because the grant anticipation note doesn't go towards the outstanding debt they have now.

Mr. Lupkas clarified that what it does is increase the capital plan, and because it's worded as a grant anticipation note, it's a temporary authorization to the capital grant.

Council Vizzo-Paniccia stated that she also wanted to see the projects go forward. She said she would rather see it happen now with the hope that they will make every effort to get reimbursement from the state to put the money back in the budget. Council member Curwen suggested that additional language be included at the end of the resolution to assure that.

Mr. Lupkas said that what the loan entails is a contract with the state indicating that they will pay the funds. Council member Curwen asked what mechanism was in place that indicates it will get paid back. Mr. Lupkas said they would have to submit a bill to the state showing the interest loss, i.e., any interest paid out, the state will pick up, so they shouldn't see any excess interest back from the state.

Council member Mulligan asked if they borrowed \$70 million in November and in December, the state comes through, will that pay off the tax anticipation note. Mr. Lupkas said that would depend on whether they can pay it off in advance. But if they have a set date, they can put the interest in an interest earning account to pay it off at a specified time.

Council member Mojica asked how long they could go without hurting the city's credit. Mr. Lupkas said they were at the limit next week - *he referred to page 2 that outlined the bills they had to pay this month.* He said that if they took another month on, there are no available funds and if a bill comes in next month, they won't be able to pay it. He said that was why it needed to be in place, so at the end of November, they can make payments.

Council member Walsh asked if they were able to put the brakes on the schools constructions. Mr. Lupkas said there would be a large demobilization in costs. He explained all the subcontractors were on time schedules. Also, doing that could extend the openings of schools, so overall, delays could be deemed to be more costly than having interest incur.

Council member Walsh asked if there was anything more concrete than the delays reason. Mr. Lupkas said they could possibly negotiate with the contractors. Council member Walsh commented that he hoped the city would protect themselves in this type of situation going forward.

Mr. Lupkas explained that construction plans were on a timeline and if one is thrown off, the others are thrown off as well. Council member Walsh mentioned the stop gap process as a way to handle the problem.

Council member Curran asked if all the projects were underway currently. Mr. Lupkas said yes, they were well underway. – *he referred to the listing that outlined all the active projects.*

Council member Curran asked if they were paid up September and October, were they able to take the \$14 million out of the total. Mr. Lupkas said no, the \$14 million was coming from the projects, but there is an 80% share from the state.

Council member Mulligan asked if it would be considered a breach if they broke the contract. Mr. Lupkas said absolutely.

Council member Walsh asked how much the city bond council would make. Mr. Lupkas said the amount would be between \$15k-\$20k.

Council member Mojica mentioned that it might be a good idea if a representative from the schools constructions program, come to a meeting and address the committee, so they can hear about timelines etc., Overall, he felt that any delay would cost money, but again, a representative from schools construction could give them some insight into what those costs might be.

Council member Curwen commented that they needed to keep a close eye on the next 30-60 days.

\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER CURWEN MOVED TO APPROVE

\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA

Council member Curran asked if they could do a 4-month bond. Mr. Lupkas said that would be called a grant anticipation note and that's what they were looking to do. *He referred to the details listed* and said that right now, they were looking at \$74 million dollars.

Mr. Lupkas reviewed the breakout for this month's bills due. He noted the amount that would be left after these bills were paid. He further noted the mechanism they were using now is to get money and invest it to see a bigger investment payoff.

\*\* MOTION PASSED WITH FOUR VOTES IN FAVOR AND ONE VOTE IN  
OPPOSITION (COUNCIL MEMBER WALSH)

\*Mr. Lupkas clarified this item pertained to the modification of the capital plan.

**270-06** Approval of General Obligation Bonds - To Fund Certain Capital Improvement Programs for School Construction Projects (\$107,314,691)

Mr. Lupkas stated this item gives the authorization for borrowing what was approved.

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**COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA MOVED TO APPROVE**

\*\*

**COUNCIL MEMBER CURWEN SECONDED**

\*\*

**MOTION PASSED WITH FOUR VOTES IN FAVOR AND ONE VOTE IN OPPOSITION (COUNCIL MEMBER WALSH)**

### DISCUSSION

Concerning Deauthorization of Capital Projects

Mr. Lupkas updated that OPM and the Finance Department were in the process of putting together a schedule to give an aging of each authorization of monies that are sitting untouched.

*Council members Vizzo-Paniccia and Walsh left the meeting to attend the Miscellaneous Matters Committee meeting at 6:46 pm.*

Mr. Lupkas continued and said that Mr. Sherwood was supposed to submit the information.

Council member Curwen said that as budget co-chair, if this was the way requests were going to be handled by the city, then he didn't want to hear any further business brought forth. He stressed that the capital projects listing was requested six months ago. He further stressed that by not submitting it, will cause the item to die. He was emphatic that there was no excuse for it not being submitted. Mr. Lupkas explained it was a time sensitive issue due to other responsibilities. And as far as who was tracking it, he said the committee did receive information of what has been authorized and what hasn't. He said they were trying to compile more of a comprehensive listing, but to be able to do that requires a lot more than just summarizing the information. Also, there were ongoing issues with the Board of Education capital expenditures.

Council member Curwen said he didn't except the reason. He said when they come before them with the capital projects list, it only encompasses what they are looking to add to the list. Mr. Lupkas repeated they were in the process of preparing a comprehensive list.

Council member Mojica asked that in the future, if they could have a discussion with the information available, especially since there will be changes in committee members. Mr. Lupkas said that shouldn't be a problem.

Council member Mojica said he would also mention this to Mr. Sherwood. He said that at the start of the new year, the request should definitely be filled and the information would be available. Mr. Lupkas said that was doable. He added that if they wanted a status of where the capital budget stood, he had the information available in his office.

Council member Curran asked about having a meeting at least once per month to review the city budget with an OPM representative where he can answer any questions they have. Council member Mojica said they might consider doing that into the new year as well as bringing in department heads to discuss their budget.

#### ADJOURNMENT

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER CURWEN MOVED TO ADJOURN  
\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER CURRAN SECONDED  
\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Graham  
Telesco Secretarial Services