

APPROVED
STATE OF CONNECTICUT
MUNICIPAL ACCOUNTABILITY REVIEW BOARD (MARB)

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
West Haven Subcommittee of the MARB

Meeting Date and Time: Tuesday, January 25, 2022 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Meeting Location: This was a virtual meeting. Meeting materials may be accessed at the following website:
[Municipal Accountability Review Board \(ct.gov\)](https://www.ct.gov/marb)

Call-In Instructions:

Telephone Number: (860) 840-2075

Meeting ID: 798 933 619

Members in Attendance: Secretary McCaw, Christine Shaw (State Treasurer designee; joined after adoption of minutes), Stephen Falcigno, Patrick Egan (joined after adoption of minutes), Thomas Hamilton, Robert White

City Officials in Attendance: Mayor Rossi, Frank Cieplinski, Jumaine Samuels, Wilma Petro (Purchasing consultant)

OPM Staff in Attendance: Kimberly Kennison, Michael Milone (OPM Liaison), Julian Freund

I. Call to Order & Opening Remarks

The meeting was called to order at 10:02 AM.

II. Approval of minutes:

a. December 14, 2021 Regular Meeting

Mr. White made a motion to approve the minutes, with a second by Mr. Hamilton. The motion passed by a vote of 3-0-1 with Secretary McCaw abstaining.

III. Update: CohnReznick audit

Ms. Kennison provided an update on the CohnReznick audit. The firm was on site for field work last week. The City has been asked to provide all outstanding requested documentation by the end of this week. Mr. Cieplinski reported that he and the mayor have assigned responsibilities for compiling the remaining information. He believes all of the outstanding information will be provided by Friday.

IV. Update: MOA Action Plans

The City provided an update on the requirement within the Memorandum of Agreement to implement training to better utilize the Munis financial system. Mr. Milone explained that what began as a Munis focused project evolved into a much larger project that entails developing policies and procedures, and a

manual, for the purchasing function. Wilma Petro, the City's purchasing consultant, described efforts to modernize purchase orders and other forms, and to enforce contracting procedures more consistently. Secretary McCaw asked which positions are the signatories and reviewers responsible for ensuring compliance in the process. Mr. Milone indicated that the manual references the Purchasing Agent. Mr. Hamilton asked about the criteria and approvals required for bid waivers. Mr. Milone replied that the manual identifies the conditions that must be met for bid waivers. The Purchasing Agent would conduct the first review, followed by review and approval by the Finance Director and the Mayor. Mr. Samuels explained that Tyler (Munis) is projecting about a month to implement the workflow processes in the Munis system. Training of the departments on the purchasing manual and based on Munis screenshots is proceeding currently. The purchasing manual will also be reviewed by the City's auditor or other firm for their input.

Secretary McCaw added that many of the policies that are revised or developed as part of the City's action plans and corrective action plan will be receive external review by either the City's independent auditor or other independent reviewer to ensure that best practices are satisfied and findings are resolved.

Mr. Cieplinski reported that interviews for the Procurement Director position was conducted and finalists have been identified for a second round of interviews.

a. Information Technology

Mr. Samuels provided an overview of his assessment of the City's IT systems and the action plan for updating systems, which he began in April. Secretary McCaw asked about funding for the required investments in the IT infrastructure and network. Mr. Cieplinski indicated that the funding would be included in the next Capital Improvement Plan. Secretary McCaw advised that funding for IT upgrades be accelerated to the extent possible. The City should report back on the matter at the Subcommittee meeting. Members discussed encryption, multi-factor authentication and other security practices. Secretary McCaw advised that the City's projected surplus be utilized to address identified vulnerabilities.

Mr. Hamilton asked about staffing needs in the IT department and whether the additional position recommended by Mr. Samuels will be funded. Mr. Cieplinski said that the position would be included in the FY 2023 budget.

b. Draft Human Resources (Personnel Dept.)

Mr. Milone reported that the draft plan is addressing all of the recommendations from the consulting report from 2019. For items previously reported as completed, the City's new Personnel Director has reviewed the status to verify completion. The Personnel Director will present a finalized plan at the next Subcommittee meeting. The HR Generalist position was posted and a top candidate identified.

Ms. Kennison asked about the position of Risk Manager which was one of the recommendations of the HR Consultant report. A report explaining the rationale for its placement in the Corporation Counsel office rather than within Finance was requested.

c. Purchasing/Accounts Payable

The update on the Purchasing and Accounts Payable action plan was provided at the beginning of this agenda item.

d. Corrective Action Plan

Mr. Cieplinski reported that the open items revolve around the procurement function, which are being addressed through the Purchasing and Accounts Payable initiatives. Other open items relate to investment of pension funds. The City intends to re-issue an RFP in July to address these findings. The individual pension commissions will need to ratify any selections of investment service providers that are made. Secretary McCaw suggested that representation from the commissions be included in the selection process to foster buy-in. Ms. Shaw offered her assistance in the process. Mr. Hamilton suggested that the MARB obtain information on the fees currently being charged to the pension plans for investment services. Secretary McCaw noted that the items reported as closed on the Corrective Action Plan will be tested by the independent auditor for confirmation.

V. Update: Status of Open and New Positions

Secretary McCaw said the City will be asked to follow-up with an action plan that addresses each open and proposed position for ongoing reporting.

Mr. Cieplinski reported that an offer has been made for the Junior Accountant position. A position description has also been drafted for the Budget Analyst position.

VI. Update: ARPA Funds Plan

Mayor Rossi reported that she has a meeting with the State delegation this week to discuss funding priorities. She is compiling a plan which will be submitted to City Council for their review. A volunteer committee will be appointed which will help in getting the projects ready. One or two City employees will staff the volunteer committee. She estimated that a plan would be available for the MARB in about two months. Secretary McCaw noted that the City has until December 31, 2024 to obligate the funds and until December 31, 2026 to expend the funds.

VII. Other Business

VIII. Adjourn

Ms. Shaw made a motion to adjourn, with a second by Mr. Hamilton. The meeting adjourned at 11:47 AM.