

APPROVED
STATE OF CONNECTICUT
MUNICIPAL ACCOUNTABILITY REVIEW BOARD (MARB)

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
West Haven Subcommittee of the MARB

Meeting Date and Time: Tuesday, April 26, 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: 189 611 457

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

City Officials in Attendance: Mayor Rossi, Scott Jackson, Neil Cavallaro, Matthew Cavallaro, Chris Hodgson (Labor Attorney), Lee Tiernan, Police Chief Perno, Pamela Alvino, Rick Spreyer

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

I. Call to Order & Opening Remarks

The meeting was called to order at 10:04 AM.

II. Approval of minutes:

a. March 22, 2022 Regular Meeting

A motion to approve the minutes was made by Ms. Shaw with a second by Mr. Hamilton. All voted in favor.

III. Update: FY 2021 Audit

The City's auditor, Clifton Larson Allen, has withdrawn from its engagement with the City and will not be performing the FY 2021 audit. The Municipal Auditing Act requires auditors be appointed at least 30 days prior to the fiscal year end. The City has prepared an RFP for audit services which will be posted. The State has audit firms under contract that have been competitively bid. The City may be able to use an existing state contract as an option.

IV. Review, Discussion and Possible Action: Labor Contract: West Haven Police Local #895, UPSEU-C.O.P.S.

This is a contract with the Police union that was set to expire June 30, 2023. The contract was re-opened for salary negotiation and the City and union reached a tentative agreement that provides a retention incentive of \$10,000 per position and extends the contract to June 30, 2025. The T.A. also

provides general wage increases of 2.5%, after the \$10,000 increase, in each of the three years. The timing of the submittal of the contract to MARB was pointed out at the April 14 MARB meeting and the City indicated that a waiver of the timeline would be obtained from the union in order to allow the MARB to take action on the agreement. An email from the union was received agreeing to offer the MARB time to consider the agreement but a waiver was not provided. The current plan is for the full MARB to consider the agreement at the May meeting.

Various backup materials have been provided, including an updated fiscal impact analysis and comparables. Also included in the materials is an email from the Police chief responding to a request for data regarding turnover and vacancies in the department over the last several years.

Chris Hodgson, Labor Attorney, explained that the proposal is intended to help with recruitment and retention difficulties. Mr. Waxenberg raised questions about the changes in the fiscal impact projections, head count and vacancy rates, and the City's process in negotiating and approving the contract.

Mr. Hamilton indicated that a more clear justification for the proposed contract, including historical data regarding vacancies and turnover would be helpful in assessing the need. Comparative data with municipalities in the immediate vicinity of West Haven would also be useful information. He also expressed concern about the City's long-term ability to fund the contract.

Members questioned how the City will fund the costs of the contract after ARPA funds are no longer available. The City was advised to demonstrate in the 5-year plan that the contract can be supported.

The Subcommittee took no action on the item.

V. Review, Discussion and Possible Action: Mayor's FY 2023 Recommended Budget

An overview of OPM's analysis of the budget was provided. A list of question had been provided to the City based on OPM's review. The emphasis of the questions was on the expenditure side of the budget, given that operations increase by almost 11%. Some of the increase is driven by new positions, including several that have been recommended by the MARB. However, there appear to be a number of areas in the budget that warrant being revisited by the City. The overview also noted the significantly reduced contribution to Fund Balance in FY 2023 when compared to previously approved 5-Year Plans.

Mr. White said that the budget should not be considered without a 5-Year Plan. He asked for confirmation that the budget does not include ARPA funding. Mayor Rossi confirmed that the budget does not include ARPA funds and that no ARPA funds have been expended yet. Ms. Kennison asked who will be responsible for managing and accounting for the ARPA funds. Mayor Rossi replied that funding for an accounting firm has been included in the funding plan. Mr. Jackson added that the City is building on its grants support unit.

Mr. Hamilton asked about the rationale for some of the new positions in the budget. Mayor Rossi discussed the additional Police Captain, needed in part due to the implementation of body- and dash-cameras. Chief Perno discussed police accreditation and standards needs and process.

Mayor Rossi addressed fund balance projections and reported that the unaudited estimates as of 6/30/2021 is \$6.1 million due largely to a balance in the Board of Education budget.

Chief Perno responded to a previous discussion saying that the proposed Police contract would apply the 2.5% general wage increase prior to the \$10,000 increase. He further discussed vacancies and

the availability of officers. Further discussion continued regarding whether the wage increase is applied before or after the \$10,000 increase.

Ms. Shaw asked about the pension valuations and when they would be finalized. She added that various options for consolidation of separate pension plans in the City, and for management and advisement services have yet to be fully explored.

Mr. Egan asked about the Municipal Restructuring Funds for FY 2021 and whether they have been distributed. The funds have been distributed and he asked if they are part of the projected fund balance. Mayor Rossi answered that the restructuring funds are not included in that estimate. He asked further questions about the roles of certain Police staff. Chief Perno said the new Captain oversees accreditation and standards.

Members discussed the difficulty of evaluating the budget in the absence of audited FY 2021 results and a 5-Year Plan. To that, Ms. Kennison noted that projections for FY 2022 have not been provided.

VI. Update: MOA Action Plans

a. Human Resources (Personnel Dept.)

Ms. Alvino provided an update on the status of the plan based on a written report that was included in the meeting materials. The City is going to engage a staffing firm to assist with recruiting for certain positions.

b. Staffing Plan

Ms. Alvino provided an update on the status of the plan based on a written report that was included in the meeting materials. She highlighted the status of hiring for certain key positions.

c. Information Technology

There was no update.

d. Purchasing/Accounts Payable

Rick Spreyer, Procurement Director, was introduced. He summarized the status of the action plan items. The procurement manual is going through his final review. The first round of Munis training is scheduled for April 29th. He discussed the status of implementation of a P-card system.

e. Corrective Action Plan

Mr. Jackson reviewed the updated corrective action plan provided in the meeting materials.

VII. Other Business

None.

VIII. Adjourn

Ms. Shaw made a motion to adjourn with a second by Mr. Falcigno. The meeting adjourned at 12:15 PM.