

**STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
MUNICIPAL ACCOUNTABILITY REVIEW BOARD**

**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**  
West Haven Subcommittee of the MARB

**Meeting Date and Time: Thursday, March 28, 2024, 10:00 AM –12:00 PM**

**Meeting Location:** Microsoft Teams Meeting  
[Meeting ID: 210 801 913 97](#)  
[Passcode: ZA9ANb](#)

**Call-In Instructions:** Meeting participants may use the following telephone number and access code:

[Telephone Number: \(860\) 840-2075](#)  
[Meeting ID: 382 492 205](#)

**Members in Attendance:** Kimberly Kennison (Secretary of OPM designee), Andrea Comer (Treasurer designee), Thomas Hamilton, Stephen Falcigno, Susan Weissenberg, and Robert White.

**Municipal Officials in Attendance:** Mayor Dorinda Borer, David Taylor, Ron Quagliani, and Brian Laucks.

**OPM Staff in Attendance:** Bill Plummer, Michael Reis, Simon Jiang, John Mehr, James Caley, Gareth Bye, and Lori McLoughlin.

I. Call to Order

Ms. Kennison called the meeting to order at 10:02am. She noted that the date of the Special Meeting Minutes on today's agenda is incorrect. The correct date is February 6, 2024, not February 29, 2024. The copy of the Special Meeting Minutes in the agenda packet is correct with the February 6, 2024, date.

II. Approval of Minutes

a. February 6, 2024, Special Meeting

Ms. Comer made a motion to approve the February 6, 2024, Special Meeting Minutes with a second by Mr. Hamilton. The motion was unanimously approved.

III. Review, Discussion and Possible Action:

a. Mayor's FY 2024 Recommended Budget

Mayor Borer deviated from the budget to provide an update on the process of hiring to fill vacant positions. She said 15 critical positions have been filled that include a Personnel Director, a Personnel Generalist, an Emergency Management Director, a Risk Manager, a Payroll Manager, a Procurement Manager, and a Senior Accounting. An offer has been made and has been accepted

for the Finance Director position pending a background check and a check of references. A challenging position to fill is a properly licensed Water Pollution Control Plant Superintendent that are few in the State.

Mayor Borer presented her City Budget at the City Council meeting on March 21, 2024. The City Council has scheduled a public hearing on the budget for April 4, 2024. She noted that the City Council will be meeting with department heads and will need nine (9) votes to make any changes to the Mayor's budget. The deadline for approving the City Budget is May 2, 2024.

The Mayor explained to the City Council the budget process. They talked about the approved 5-Year Plan that had a 2.4 mill rate increase in the 2024-2025 budget year. Her goal was to bring down that mill rate increase the best she could without cutting services. Included in the budget was filling vacancies that would eliminate high price consultants that were filling those positions. A few positions were eliminated from the budget as well as the creation of a few new positions. The City is going to focus on social work and outreach programs for its youth and veterans and look to significantly cut outside legal services by bringing cases to resolution. A favorable reduction in energy costs is expected by going out to bid for electricity and better budgeting for fuel expenses.

Mayor Borer asked the Department Heads to focus on expenses and to be more efficient in the operation of their departments. The City has met with a company to help tax out-of-state license plates for those that are West Haven residents. She discussed cost sharing with the Housing Authority for senior transportation services and creating a new revenue line item for blight with the forming of a blight task force that developed a program that will allow the City to address the blight and collect fees from violators. Additionally, the City will focus on a new program to deal with absentee landlords by requiring nonresident landlords to register and to provide an active person and contact number or face a \$500 fine. With the paid parking program working well, new locations have been identified for paid parking. The Mayor is budgeting \$50,000 for marketing West Haven, which is considered an investment towards competing to attract businesses to the City.

For the Board of Education, the Mayor is supporting the \$2 million increase request for the school's budget over the prior fiscal year. The Board of Education has not received an increase in its budget from the City over the past several years. The Mayor wants to demonstrate the City's commitment to the children.

The City has responsibility for the Allingtown Fire District budget. The Mayor worked with the fire district to lower capital expenses for trucks and equipment in order to lower the mill rate slightly in Allingtown. With pollution control being an area in need of significant improvements, the Sewer Operating Fund is raising its fee on households to \$15 to help with the infrastructure.

Mr. Taylor reviewed the Internal Service Fund Analysis and OPEB Funding Plans for the FY 2024-2025 Budget to the 5-Year Plan (FY24 – FY28) approved in December 2023. The City is looking to fund the pension at the Actuarially Determined Contribution (ADEC). Mr. White asked if the budget includes funding for the police pension that is going to arbitration. Mr. Taylor said it does not, however, he plans to begin working on the 5-Year Plan for FY25 – FY29. Mr. Hamilton was concerned about a line item in Employee Benefits for workers compensation not being sufficiently budgeted for the next fiscal year. Mr. Taylor said that he would review the run rates one more time. Mr. Hamilton asked if the ADEC figure was an updated number provided by the pension

actuary and that the \$4.7 million was updated in next year's budget. Mr. Taylor said that is correct. Ms. Weisselberg asked about getting updates on the cost of the upgrades at the Water Pollution Control Authority plant in the 5-Year Capital Plan update. Mayor Borer and Mr. Taylor provided an update on the pollution control plant situation. Mr. Hamilton expressed an interest in getting more information on liability insurance and if there is a Risk Manager on board. Mr. Taylor said there is a Risk Manager in place and discussed the City's liability insurance situation with the Subcommittee. Mr. Hamilton had a recommendation for the City to look into the existence of a consortium of municipalities, about 30, that in the past bid out their employee life insurance as a group. Mr. White asked about, and Mayor Borer discussed recruitment and retention of employees. Mr. Hamilton asked about the Senior Center and Elderly Services. Mayor Borer explained that they are adding a position that is going to be a combination of outreach that is providing information and resources for the elderly community outreach activities. The Mayor is also adding a position in Youth Services to coordinate for outreach, to engage and to provide services to the City's youth. Ms. Kennison suggested that Mr. Lindsey from Munistat take a look at new debt planned for the 5-Year Capital Plan and the overall debt service to ensure that the City can handle the increases. Ms. Kennison asked for a document that lists all the new positions being added and those positions no longer being utilized or being repurposed. She also requested documentation of the assumptions being used to build the budget. Mr. Hamilton would like to see details of the projected savings on electricity.

Ms. Kennison and the Mayor discussed the process of MARB reviewing the City Budget. The Mayor has submitted the budget to the City Council and it's the City Council that will be making the changes. The West Haven City Council has to approve the budget by May 2, 2024.

#### IV. Updates:

##### a. Mayor's Executive Summary

Mayor Borer talked about the news conference she had on March 27, 2024, addressing blight in the City and all the work that is being done to clean up the City. She said that the City has a sidewalk grant, a paving grant, a traffic lights grant, a bike paths grant, a flooding grant, a coastal resiliency grant, and trailway grants and is continuing to work on recycling projects.

##### b. FY 2022 Audit Findings

Ms. Kennison stated that Protiviti has been requested to take the lead addressing the auditor's, PKF O'Connor Davies, findings relating to the FY22 financial audit. Mr. Mehr provided an update on the matrix created by Protiviti to track the status of each finding that was provided to the Subcommittee and City officials. The Protiviti matrix is a work in progress to be updated by Protiviti as it works with the City to resolve each audit finding. Mr. Hamilton would like to see a timeline provided for when to expect these audit issues to be resolved.

##### c. FY 2023 Audit

Mr. Taylor provided an update on the progress of the FY 2023 audit. On March 28, 2024, the auditors were on location working on their audit related field work. Very few outstanding items remain on the auditors' request list. The finance staff is working on a new disclosure requirement on software leases and accruals for city employees. Mayor Borer provided that every 10 days the

City asks the auditor for an open items list. Any delays relating to the Board of Education are being sent to the attention of the Superintendent.

d. Open Item List

The Open Item List will be updated and provided to the Subcommittee at another meeting.

V. Other Business

The next Full MARB meeting will take place on April 11, 2024. The next West Haven Subcommittee meeting will be held on April 30, 2024.

VI. Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Comer with a second by Mr. Hamilton. The motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 11:35 AM.