STATE OF CONNECTICUT
MUNICIPAL ACCOUNTABILITY REVIEW BOARD

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

West Haven Subcommittee of the MARB

Meeting Date and Time: **Thursday, May 9, 2024, 10:00 AM –12:00 PM**

Meeting Location: Microsoft Teams Meeting
Meeting ID: 282 649 017 174
Password: 22ii4X

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

Telephone Number: (860) 840-2075
Meeting ID: 873 603 395

Members in Attendance: Kimberly Kennison (Secretary of OPM designee), Kevin Alvarez (Treasurer-Designee), Thomas Hamilton, Stephen Falcigno, Susan Weisselberg, and Robert White.

Municipal Officials in Attendance: Mayor Dorinda Borer, David Taylor, Rick Spreyer, Michael Gormany, Ron Quagliani, Nicholas Pascale, and Allingtown Fire Chief Michael Terenzio.

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

I. Call to Order

Ms. Kennison called the TEAMS meeting to order at 10:09AM. This is a special meeting rescheduled from the April 30th regular meeting. Also, today's meeting is being filmed by CT-N.

Mayor Borer introduced Michael Gormany, West Haven's new Finance Director. For 26 years, Mr. Gormany worked for the City of New Haven holding various positions including internal auditor, budget director, and controller.

II. Approval of Minutes

a. March 28, 2024, Regular Meeting

Ms. Weisselberg made a motion to approve the March 28, 2024, Regular Meeting Minutes with a second by Mr. White. The motion was unanimously approved. Kevin Alvarez abstained.

III. Review, Discussion and Possible Action:

a. Mayor's Revised FY2025 Recommended Budget with City Council's Recommendation

The Subcommittee members were provided copies of the West Haven City Council Adopted 2024-2025 Operating Budget materials for the City, Allingtown Fire Department, and the Sewer Use

Operating Fund. The West Haven City Council at its May 2, 2024, Special Meeting, approved the City's budget for fiscal year July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025, and the 5-Year Plan for FY25 to FY29. The City Council approved a total budget of $182,958,120 which includes the City Operating Expenditures and capital non-recurring expenditures. The City Council set the mill rate for FY2025 at 36.57 mills, a reduction of 0.03 mill from the Mayor's proposed 36.6 mill rate, but an increase of 1.76 mills over last budget year.

Mayor Borer and David Taylor provided an overview of the changes to the City of West Haven FY June 30, 2025, City Council Approved Budget. Mayor Borer stated that the City Council went through a very thorough process with good questions and made very prudent, reasonable adjustments to the budget. A few adjustments were made to increase salaries for key positions like the City Planner and the Superintendent of the Water Pollution Control. Mr. Taylor reviewed the salary increase for the Clerk of the Council, the removal of rental space for elections, the ergonomic funding for chairs, adjusting down the account for recruiting in the Police budget, reducing the motor vehicle maintenance account, the fuel and fluids account, the tubes, tires and batteries account, and the reduction in street lighting account. The City Council increased the contingency line by $100,000. The net amount of all the adjustments made by the City Council to was $92,000. The Sewer budget revenue line for sewer fees was increased by $83,000. Finally, the Allingtown Fire Department budget had a few accounts rebalanced that resulted in a net zero change.

Mr. Alvarez made a motion to recommend the Mayor's Revised FY2025 Budget with the City Council's Recommendation to the Full MARB for approval seconded by Mr. Hamilton. The motion passed unanimously.

b. 5-Year Plan

The Subcommittee members were provided with a copy of the City of West Haven Five Year Financial Plan. Mr. White asked if the City Council had any reactions to the 5-Year Plan. Mayor Borer said that there were many good questions from the City Council that the staff walked the Council through and in the end, they appeared satisfied. This led to a discussion by Subcommittee about West Haven exiting MARB's oversight.

The Subcommittee discussed the upcoming revaluation of the City's Grand List and the rise in residential property values with the reduction in commercial property valuation. Questions about the Water pollution control was asked that Mr. Taylor stated that the City is expecting to build a pipe to the new incinerator that is contingent on the Department of Energy and Environment Protection (DEEP) approval. This will impact debt service for the sewer department. It also assumes that City gets the grants it has applied for. Mayor Borer stated they will be meeting with FEMA and believes they will be funding the hardening wall to be built around the facility located on the beach in a flood zone. The Subcommittee discussed the two fire districts, West Shore and Center District, unfunded pension and OPEB liabilities. Ms. Kennison stated the 5-Year Plan needs to show the mill rates that West Shore and Center Fire Districts will be charging the residents and the repayment by the City to the MARB by FY2028 of $3.9 million to be in line with the MOU. Mr. Taylor is reviewing the repayment schedule.

Mr. White suggested continued discussion on the two fire districts and voting on the use of ARPA funds for the fire districts at the May 16th MARB meeting. Ms. Kennison said she would discuss the MARB agenda with Secretary Beckham. Mr. White asked if the City performs (under this 5-

Year Plan), by meeting the goals and the criteria, the City could be released from MARB oversight by 2029. The Subcommittee discussed the City's pension and OPEB liabilities, and the internal service funds. Mayor Borer said that exiting MARB is another conversation. Besides criteria, it is time to look at benchmarking against the criteria.

Mr. White made a motion to recommended to the Full MARB for approval the West Haven's 5-Year Plan that is contingent on getting the MARB repayment in line and providing the other two Fire Districts mill rate. Seconded by Ms. Weisselberg. The motion passed unanimously.

IV. Updates:

a. Mayor's Executive Summary

Mayor Borer provided an update on activities in West Haven. The City has hired an Economic Development Director, and made an offer for a project manager position that will work with the Director. A Facilities Manager has been hired, promoted within from within the City. With the budget being approved, the City can restart advertising for those positions with increased salaries. The Ethics Committee has new members appointed to it as the City continues ethics training for employees along with the appointees to boards and commissions. The City is also putting back on the market the vacant Edgar Stiles School for development purposes. The City continues to close out grants, drawing down about $2 million. After a year of reconstruction, the long-awaited re-opening of Beach Street, a major economic development project, is scheduled in a couple of weeks.

b. FY 2023 Audit

Mayor Borer provided an update that the FY 2023 audit is done. The goal was to have this audit done by May 30, 2024. It's in draft form and the City has provided responses to the auditors. When available, a final draft copy will be provided to the Subcommittee. Ms. Kennison asked about receiving a draft of the findings. Mr. Taylor said yes, and Mr. Gormany is working on the corrective action plan.

VI. Adjourn

The next MARB meeting is on May 16, 2024, and will focus on the budgets and the 5-Year Plans for West Haven and Hartford. The next regularly scheduled West Haven Subcommittee meeting is May 30, 2024.

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