

APPROVED
STATE OF CONNECTICUT
MUNICIPAL ACCOUNTABILITY REVIEW BOARD
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Date and Time: Thursday, June 15, 2023, 10:00 AM –12:00 PM

Meeting Location: Legislative Office Building
Hearing Room 1D
300 Capital Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

Call-In Instructions: Telephone: 1 860-840-2075
Meeting ID: 202 863 216

Members in Attendance: Jeff Beckham (Secretary), Stephen Falcigno, Tom Hamilton, Matthew Brokman and Susan Weisselberg

Teams Attendees: Andrea Comer (State Treasurer’s Designee), Robert White, Mark Waxenberg, and Sal Luciano

Municipal Officials in Attendance: Mayor Luke Bronin, Leigh Ann Ralls, Julian Freund, Philip Penn, Maureen Colman, Mayor Nancy Rossi, David Taylor, Matthew Cavallaro and Rick Spreyer

Staff in Attendance: Kimberly Kennison, James Caley, Simon Jiang, John Mehr, Bill Plummer, Michael Reis, Gareth Bye, Chris Colibee

I. Call to Order & Opening Remarks by Secretary Jeff Beckham

Secretary Beckham called the meeting at 10:05 a.m. noting that there was a quorum. He then introduced John Mehr, the new Policy Development Coordinator and welcomed him to the team.

II. Public Comment Period – *The Public Comment portion of the agenda will be announced by the Chair. Members of the public will be provided with an opportunity to speak. Before making their comments, members of the public wishing to speak must be recognized by the Chair. Speakers may be asked to limit their comments due to time constraints of this meeting.*

Mr. Howard Horvath, a resident of West Haven, made comments regarding the FY 2024 budget.

III. Approval of Minutes: May 18, 2023, Regular Meeting

A motion to approve the May 18, 2023, meeting minutes was made by Ms. Weisselberg and seconded by Ms. Comer. Motion passed 6-0-3 with Mr. Hamilton, Mr. Falcigno, and Mr. Brockman abstaining.

IV. City of Hartford

a. Subcommittee Update

There was no May Subcommittee Meeting

b. Review, Discussion and Possible Action: Labor Contracts

Tentative Agreement between Hartford BOE and Hartford Educational Support Personnel – Local 82, AFSA, AFL-CIO

Mr. Penn summarized the terms of the contact. The term of this Tentative Agreement is from July 1, 2019, to June 30, 2026, and will be effective retroactively from 7/1/2019, for approximately 260 Employees.

Motion made by Mr. Brockman and seconded by Mr. Falcigno to approve. The contract was approved unanimously

c. Review, Discussion and Possible Action: Non-Labor Contracts

i. Parking Agreements – Aetna Life Insurance Company

The Agreement is between the City and Aetna Life Insurance Co. to lease parking spaces for Hartford Public High School staff. The contract term is from 8/1/2023 to 7/31/2024 for a \$11,160 monthly rent plus after-hour charges.

d. Review and Discussion: Monthly Financial Report: April 2023

Mayor Bronin discussed the Monthly Financial Report as of the end of April 2023. He is projecting a surplus of \$16.46 million, an increase of \$3.7 million from the prior report. Increases are due to increases in interest income, tax collections and licenses and permits. The City plans to dedicate a portion of surplus to fund balance and a portion to increase the “pay as you go” capital fund. The Board of Education reported that there is no major change in the May monthly financials over the prior month.

Mr. Penn invoked a point of privilege to let the members know that he is resigning as of July 21, 2023 and thanked the members for all their help and work with the City.

V. City of West Haven

a. Subcommittee Update

There was no May Subcommittee meeting.

b. Tier IV Updates:

i. Tier IV Action Plan

Secretary Beckham informed the members that the Tier IV Action Plan timeline was being handed out. These are the high-risk short term action items that the board was looking forward to having before the budget can be approved.

Mr. Taylor took the members through the process and his report regarding the timeline. He indicated that a great deal of progress has been made after engagement with the MARB, City Council and citizens of West Haven.

ii. Update on Whittlesey’s Assessment

Mr. Taylor addressed the short-term high risk action items as identified by Whittlesey and the City's independent audit firm included the status of completion for each item. Ms. Kennison agreed with Mr. Taylor's comment that a great deal of progress that has been made to address the short-term immediate high risk action items as reported in the Tier IV Action Plan by the City. Whittlesey will be asked to confirm that they agree with the City's results after the remaining items are completed.

iii. Update on RFP for Finance Manager

Ms. Kennison indicated that there is one last review with legal regarding the contract then it will be provided to the vendor. The goal is to have it executed by the end of June.

c. Review, Discussion and Possible Actions:

i. City Council Adopted FY 2024 Budget

Mr. Taylor presented the revised FY 2024 Budget. Major points include the revised budget which provides for increased funding for the internal service funds, continued funding of the ADC for pension, additional funding of OPEB and increasing to the general fund balance.

The Mitigation Plan create \$22.9 million of savings over the next 5 years. Revaluation will begin in FY 2024.

The City will be hiring a Grants Consultant to capture any grant funds that have not been applied for as part of the Mitigation Plan. The City will also increase fees after looking at neighboring towns fee schedules.

Mr. Hamilton mentioned that he was happy that the city has made a good first attempt at starting to develop some mitigation measures. He asked if the Sewer Fund is covering its expenses and if the mill rate had changed. Mr. Taylor responded that the mill rate will stay flat. Mr. Hamilton suggested the City to ensure all appropriate cost to be incorporated in the sewer fee including tax exempt properties.

Ms. Weisselberg also noted that she is pleased as well with the budget changes and questioned if the re-organizational cost was budgeted. Mr. Taylor indicated that there was contingency fund was budgeted for the cost.

Mr. Waxenberg made comments regarding police vacancies and overtime and asked if there are policies for overtime. Mr. Taylor responded that overtime is authorized by department heads. Mr. Hamilton believes the City's budgets is a conservative and standard practice over the vacancies and overtime.

Mr. White added his compliments to Mr. Taylor and his team on the budget presentation is the best he has seen as it includes goals & objectives. He is in favor of the budget. Mr. White also spoke about the fire departments/districts and their path forward.

A motion was made by Ms. Weisselberg and seconded by Ms. Comer to approve the budget. Motion was carried unanimously.

ii. West Haven 5-Year Plan

Secretary Beckham indicated that he would like an additional time to review the 5-Year Plan. Ms. Kennison said that it is prudent for the city to come back and provide the MARB members more information regarding the mill rate increase included for the Allington fire district over the next 5 years.

Mr. Brokman, Mr. Hamilton, and Mr. White also supported the tabling of the 5-year Plan.

d. Review, Discussion and Possible Actions: Non-Labor Contracts:

i. Hartford Freightliner – Removal and replacement of Rear Dump Truck Body

City is removing and installing a Rear Dump Truck Body using state contract for \$65,986. This body is 20 years old and is off the road.

Mr. Brockman made a motion to approve with Mr. Falcigno seconding. Motion carried unanimously.

ii. Gengras Ford Inc. – Purchase of 6 Police Vehicles

City purchase of 6 new vehicles for the total amount of \$378,320. Sent out for bid with one proposer. Funded through a 2023 capital bond account.

Ms. Weisselberg made a motion to approve with Mr. Falcigno seconding. Motion carried unanimously.

iii. The W.I. Clark Company – Purchase of Public Works Skid Steer

City is to purchase a Skid Steer for its Public Works department for \$94,598. A national contract (Sourcewell) is used.

Mr. Brockman made a motion to approve with Ms. Weisselberg seconding. Motion carried unanimously.

iv. Lift Now – Purchase and Installation of Overhead Lube System for Public Work Garage

The cost of this contract is \$99,381 and a national contract (Sourcewell) is also used. This is funded by a 2023 bond account.

Mr. Brockman made a motion to approve with Ms. Weisselberg seconding. Motion carried unanimously.

v. Big Truck Rental LLC – Purchase of 2023 Rear Loading Garbage Truck

City is purchasing a garbage truck for Public Works department for \$309,000. A national contract (Omnia) is used. This is a replacement for an old truck in the fleet. This is funded by a 2023 bond account.

Mr. Hamilton made a motion to approve with Ms. Comer seconding. Motion carried unanimously.

vi. Pre-approval Request – Purchase of a Mini Sidewalk Sweeper Machine

This will be funded through the “nip bottle deposit” fund through the State of Connecticut. When these machines become available, they are purchased immediately. The city will provide a final bill of sale.

Motion by Mr. White to approve with a second by Mr. Hamilton. Motion carried unanimously.

e. Review and Discussion: Monthly Financial Report: April 2023

Mr. Cavallaro from the BOE reported on the financials. They expect to be underbudget at the close of the year. There was a large increase in the ECS grant from the state.

Mr. Taylor indicated that they are on target with the budget with increases in taxes collected and interest income. There is \$1.2 million to repair Chestnut Street and the Sewer General Fund will fund this project.

f. Update on FY 22 Audit

Mr. Taylor indicated that they have given the auditors their trial balance and are awaiting questions.

g. Open Item List

There were no questions on the open item list.

VI. Town of Sprague

a. Subcommittee Update

There was no subcommittee meeting.

b. Review and Discussion: Monthly Financial Report: April 2023

The Town provided the status of its FY 2024 Budget and 5-Year Plan: FY 2024 Town Budget was approved at the Town meeting on May 31st. The 5-Year Plan is on the agenda for the June 14th Board of Selectmen meeting.

The monthly financial report for April 2023 was distributed with the meeting materials.

VII. Other Business

There was no other business to be discussed.

VIII. Adjourn

Motion to adjourn made by Mr. Luciano seconded by Mr. Brockman. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 12:10pm.