

APPROVED
STATE OF CONNECTICUT
MUNICIPAL ACCOUNTABILITY REVIEW BOARD
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Date and Time: Thursday, August 31, 2023, 10:00 AM –12:00 PM

Meeting Location: Microsoft Team Meeting Only
Meeting ID: 217 600 356 606
Passcode: PDSt4F

Meeting materials can be found at
<https://portal.ct.gov/OPM/Marb/Full-Board-Meetings-and-Materials>

Call-In Instructions: Telephone: 1 860-840-2075
Meeting ID: 620 553 440#

Members in Attendance: Jeff Beckham (Secretary), Andrea Comer (State Treasurer’s Designee), Sal Luciano, David Biller, Tom Hamilton, and Susan Weisselberg.

Municipal Officials in Attendance: Julian Freund, Leigh Ann Rails, Maureen Colman, Colleen O’Connor, David Taylor, Rick Spreyer, Pamela Alvino, Neil Cavallaro, Matthew Cavallaro, and Chief Michael Terenzio

Staff in Attendance: Kimberly Kennison, James Caley, Chris Collibee, Simon Jiang, John Mehr, Bill Plummer, Michael Reis, Lori Granato and Lori McLoughlin

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

Secretary Beckham called the meeting to order at 10:04AM. He noted that this is a special meeting and that only the items on the agenda would be discussed. No other business would be discussed.

II. Approval of Minutes: July 13, 2023, Regular Meeting

A motion to approve the July 13, 2023, was made by Mr. Luciano and seconded by Ms. Comer. Motion passed unanimously.

III. City of Hartford

a. Review and Discussion: Non-Labor Contracts

i. CliftonLarsonAllen, LLP – Audit Services – One Year Contract with Three Additional One Year Terms at the City’s Discretion

The City issued an RFP for auditing services for the July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024 fiscal year. Two proposals were received with CliftonLarsonAllen (CLA) being selected with a fee of \$242,500 for year 1. This contract provides for options to extend annually up to four (4) years. This item is for the MARB review, no action was required. In the future if Hartford decides to exercise the option with CLA, it does not need to be brought back to the MARB.

IV. City of West Haven

a. Subcommittee Update – July 25, 2023

The West Haven Subcommittee held its July meeting on location in the City. The meeting involved touring of the fire stations in the three West Haven Fire Districts.

Ms. Kennison provided an update of the tour and stated that there would be further discussion when the MARB addresses agenda item c-i.

b. Moody's Investors Services Affected Credit Rating

Ms. Kennison notified the MARB that on August 4, 2023, the City of West Haven was notified that it was being put on Moody's Credit Watchlist due to insufficient current financial information. She stated that the goal of West Haven Finance Department is to provide Moody's with a set of financial information by September 8, 2023.

Mr. Hamilton asked what the projected date of completion of the June 30, 2022 audit. Mr. Taylor responded with the auditor's fieldwork finishing in mid-September and getting needed materials to the actuaries for the OPEB calculations, by the end of October.

Mr. Luciano asked about the status change with Moody's and going to market now, would this increase interest costs. Mr. Taylor said yes. However, the maturing BANS are going to roll for five months then the issuance of permanent financing in November with a completed June 30, 2022 audit.

Mr. Hamilton asked if the June 30, 2023 will be completed in the December/January time period. Mr. Taylor replied no assurance of completion by December. Staffing levels and the auditors' availability would affect that timeframe.

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

i. Tentative Agreement – City of West Haven and 1303-345, Council 4, AFSCME AFL-CIO.

The term of this Agreement is from July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2026, for the Water Pollution Control positions. Tentative agreement was signed July 21, 2023 – MARB has 45 days until September 4th to take action. The package includes the tentative agreement and a summary of the cost impact with steps and hourly rate increases.

Pamela Alvino, Director of Personnel & Labor Relations, provided the Board with an update of this labor contract. Mr. Taylor said that the increase for this contract is in the budget as a contingency item and is in the five-year plan.

A motion was made to approve the tentative agreement by Mr. Luciano and seconded by Ms. Comer. Motion passed unanimously.

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

- i. Pre-authorization – The use of ARPA Funds for Improvements at the West Haven First Fire, the Allintown, the West Shore Fire Stations and a feasibility study.

At its July 25 meeting the West Haven subcommittee approved these projects after touring three fire districts fire stations.

1. First Fire/Center Fire District – the acquisition of two properties on Savin Avenue behind the 366 Elm Street Fire Station

Mr. Spreyer provided an update on the two properties next to Elm Street Station that are available for purchase. These properties would allow for expansion for parking, for storage, and for turning the fire vehicles on location. There is an agreement in place but needs to get a contract in place.

Mr. Hamilton agrees that this station footprint needs to be enlarged to meet its needs.

2. Allintown Fire District - an additional storage building behind Minor Park Fire Station

Fire Chief Terenzio provided an update on the need for an annex building at the Minor Park Station. This would provide a better storage location of the rescue boat with better access for responding to water related emergencies. Also, the annex would provide the necessary space for washing machines that are required to remediate toxic materials on the firefighters' bunker gear after a call. ARPA funds would be used for this project.

3. West Shore Fire District – waterproofing the basement of the Ocean Avenue fire station, and improvements to the living quarters and bathrooms at two fire stations.

Mr. Spreyer provided an update on the need to waterproof the basement of the Ocean Avenue Station by sealing the area to prevent flooding after rainstorms. The living quarters need to be updated to provide privacy and improved living conditions for the fire staff at both fire stations. ARPA funds would be used for both projects.

4. A Fire Service Feasibility Study is to be performed for the City of West Haven.

Ms. Kennison discussed the need for a feasibility study master plan for the City's delivery of fire service. Mr. Hamilton believes the study would look at consolidating stations or replacing the current arrangement with a better located new station. Ms. Weisselberg supported the fire stations' projects and the feasibility study to look at the fire service in West Haven. ARPA funds would be used for the feasibility study.

Secretary Beckham stated the MARB's authority is to take action on any contracts greater than \$50,000. The MARB will act once receiving the contracts.

ii. Sparks Security LLC – Board of Education (BOE) Public School Security Services Contract

This is a three (3) year contract, commencing August 1, 2023, through July 31, 2026, between the BOE and Sparks Security to provide security at the West Haven Public Schools.

Mr. Cavallaro provided an overview. Sparks is a new contractor to the school district with high quality guards. Some are retired from the Department of Corrections.

Ms. Weisselberg asked if the security guards would be carrying weapons. Mr. Cavallaro said no, only the Student Resource Officers (SRO) have weapons. A discussion followed about security issues at West Haven schools.

A motion was made to approve the security services contract by Mr. Luciano and seconded by Mr. Biller. Motion passed unanimously.

iii. Sodexo Operations, LLC – Board of Education Public School Food Service Management Contract

This is a one (1) year contract, with four (4) one (1) year renewal options, between the BOE and Sodexo Operations to provide food service management at the City's public schools for one school year from July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024.

Mr. Cavallaro provided an overview. There were two bidders. This food service management selection process has oversight and approval by the State Department of Education. Sodexo has been a contractor with West Haven schools for ten years.

Mr. Hamilton asked if the food line workers were Sodexo employees. Mr. Cavallaro said the cooks and food line workers were West Haven school employees. Mr. Hamilton asked what employees are provided by Sodexo. Mr. Cavallaro said a manager, an assistant manager, and a part-time accountant. The management service has a good relationship with the front-line workers.

A motion was made to approve the Food Service Management contract by Mr. Biller and seconded by Mr. Hamilton. Motion passed unanimously.

iv. C. H. Nickerson & Co., Inc. – Improvements to the Oyster River Wastewater Pumping Station

The contract is between the City and C. H. Nickerson & Co. to make improvements to the Oyster River Wastewater Pumping Station. The contract amount is \$5,539,392. Another piece of the Clean Water Fund Program. This has been reviewed by West Haven City

Engineer and by the City's consultant, CDM Smith, and both recommend Nickerson. Also, DEEP was involved in the process and authorized the awarding of the contract to Nickerson.

A motion was made by Mr. Luciano and seconded by Ms. Weisselberg. Motion passed unanimously.

- v. Authorization of a City of West Haven Ordinance that appropriates \$6,950,000 for the costs of upgrading of the Oyster River Wastewater Pumping Station and the issuance of \$6,950,000 Bonds of the City to meet these appropriations.

The West Haven City Council and the Mayor approved an Ordinance that appropriates \$6.95 million for upgrades to Oyster River Pumping Station. Also, the Ordinance authorizes the issuance of \$6.95 million of bonds to meet the cost of these upgrades.

Ms. Weisselberg and Mr. Luciano asked if these bonds would be issued after the situation with Moody's was resolved and the auditors' work was completed. Mr. Taylor said these are Clean Water Fund bond issues handled by the State. Mr. Hamilton stated that Clean Water Fund bonds are issued by the State usually as a package of multiple municipalities clean water projects at a 2% interest rate as a 20% grant and an 80% loan.

A motion to approve was made by Mr. Hamilton and seconded by Ms. Weisselberg. Motion passed unanimously.

- vi. Gengras Ford, LLC – Purchase of Five Vehicles for Public Works off the State Contract

The City is looking to purchase Five (5) vehicles for Public Works. Light duty pickup trucks that will be equipped with plows to assist in the snow plowing operations. This purchase is off the State Contract and included in the Five-Year Capital Plan FY2023.

A motion was made by Mr. Luciano and seconded by Ms. Comer. Motion passed unanimously.

- vii. Robert Half International – Increase Spending Limits for Temporary Workers

The City is using temporary workers to fill three vacant positions: a Budget Analyst, an ARPA Accountant, and a Risk Manager. The City is requesting that MARB approve allocating \$200,000 additional funds to continue the services of the three temporary workers.

A discussion followed about these positions being filled by temporary or full-time workers. Mr. Luciano recommends that these positions be filled with full-time personnel instead of through temporary employment service. Mr. Taylor described the Finance Director position as an appointed position that is vacant. If filled, the person would need to resign from the position in November due to an election year. He is serving as the Acting Finance Director. The Risk Manager position is placed on administrative leave. The ARPA Accountant is a temporary position to be paid for with ARPA funds. Mr. Hamilton states that Mr. Taylor

makes a strong argument for temporary workers currently but does get expensive. Mr. Taylor said that these temporary positions are being funded by the vacant positions and contingency in the budget. Ms. Kennison said that the temporary workers are needed to help get the work done.

A motion was made to approve by Mr. Hamilton and seconded by Ms. Weisselberg. Motion passed with four affirmed (Beckham, Hamilton, Biller, and Weisselberg) and two abstaining (Comer and Luciano).

viii. Sanitary Equipment Co., Inc. – Purchase of a Used Rubbish Truck

The City is looking to acquire a used 2017 Freightliner Rubbish Truck for \$122,000 that will replace an existing rubbish truck. A quote from Sanitary Equipment Co. for this rubbish truck is \$122,000. This truck would improve efficiency of the removal of rubbish from the boardwalk and the beach parking lots. This purchase is funded by the combination of proceeds from the 2022 bond and proceeds from the State's NIPS fund.

A motion was made by Mr. Luciano and seconded by Ms. Comer. Motion passed unanimously.

ix. Winkle Bus Company of West Haven – School Transportation – Pending

The Board of Education only bidder to provide school transportation for the school year is Winkle Bus Co. Currently, the BOE and Winkle are finalizing the contract.

Mr. Cavallaro stated that the bus contract is being drafted by the attorneys. The contract is for five years but was not completed in time for this meeting.

Mr. Hamilton talked about the process of going out to bid for bus services. It should start a year before the contract goes into effect with bids being open in December. The bus companies need time to figure out how many buses will be needed and where to store the buses. He suggested that the bus contract be for one year, 2023-2024 school year, and look at having re-bid the bus service contract. Mr. Cavallaro stated that Winkler has been providing West Haven bus service for 30 to 40 years. In the past, the bus service contract received a bid waiver. The Board of Education put the bid out in early April and received one bid. The concern is that the cost for a one-year contract would exceed the 2023-2024 budget for bus service.

Secretary Beckham talked about finding the best value for the taxpayer. Is it through the bid process. Mr. Luciano said that the lack of a bid process over the years makes it difficult to determine if Winkler is good. Mr. Cavallaro said that Winkler may not be the best, but its cost is cheap, below the average for school bus service.

Secretary Beckham closed the discussion by saying that at the next MARB meeting there will be a debate about a one-year or a five-year contract.

V. Adjourn

Motion to adjourn made by Mr. Luciano seconded by Mr. Biller. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 11:15AM.