

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS
REGULAR MEETING
APRIL 9, 2012**

ATTENDANCE: Angel dePara, Co-chair; Carlos Silva, Susan Brannelly, Lydia Martinez, AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia

OTHERS: Thomas Sherwood, OPM; Dawn Norton, Acting Financial Director; Council Member Martin McCarthy; Rev. John Olson, Council Member Michelle Lyons

CALL TO ORDER

Council Member dePara called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m. He said that Council Member Curwen would not be able to attend due to a medical issue.

64-11 Proposed Five Year Capital Plan (CP) for Fiscal Years 2013-2017.

Mr. Sherwood said that on Thursday, a budget had been submitted and appeared on the agenda, but nothing was planned as a presentation. There are two Capital discussions scheduled in the future.

Regarding the Capital budget, this is a unique opportunity in that the market is very favorable for borrowing. He said that the work on Harding was close to completion, which may allow the City to take advantage of the favorable borrowing terms. He said that he believe there would be an aggressive Capital plan.

Council Member dePara asked when the Committee could have a more substantive discussion. Mr. Sherwood said that he believed it would be within the next two weeks because there was cleansing of capital bonding that was obsolete or never got off the ground. The information should be coming in during the next week to a week and a half. Council Member dePara said that he would like the Committee members to be notified when the information arrives.

Council President McCarthy joined the meeting at 6:40 p.m.

Council Member dePara said that he would like to have known about this earlier. Mr. Sherwood said that he had not received the phone call with the information about this until 1:30 p.m. in the afternoon.

Council Member Martinez asked about using some of the funding for reducing the tax burden. Mr. Sherwood said that it was not allowed to use Capital funding for debt service. However, the restructuring of the bonds would help reduce the debt.

Council Member Silva asked what Capital funding was out there other than Steele Point. Mr. Sherwood reviewed the details. Council Member Silva asked what the figure was. TS said that he didn't know the figure but would contact OPED for the amount.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA MOVED TO TABLE AGENDA ITEM 64-11 PROPOSED FIVE YEAR CAPITAL PLAN (CP) FOR FISCAL YEARS 2013-2017.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

69-11 Proposed Budget Modification to the FY 2011-2012 General Fund Budget: Increase Line Item 01827000 55540 BOE Tuition (\$1,522,873) and Increase the Education Cost Sharing (ECS) Revenue Line Item 01863000 44520 (\$1,522,873).

Mr. Sherwood said that the last two pages focused on compliance with the MBR. The ARRA funding was not included, so those funds will come through the City from the State and pass through to the schools.

Council Member Silva asked for back up material. Mr. Sherwood said that this was just housekeeping so that the City does not get penalized and have the ECS funding cut next year.

Rev. Olson asked for some details, which Mr. Sherwood provided.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 69-11 PROPOSED BUDGET MODIFICATION TO THE FY 2011-2012 GENERAL FUND BUDGET: INCREASE LINE ITEM 01827000 55540 BOE TUITION (\$1,522,873) AND INCREASE THE EDUCATION COST SHARING (ECS) REVENUE LINE ITEM 01863000 44520 (\$1,522,873).**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

70-11 Proposed General Fund Budget for Fiscal Year 2012-2013.

Mr. Sherwood said that the budget had been turned in to the City Clerk last week and the copies had been distributed to the Council Members. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked why this was on the agenda. Mr. Sherwood said that when the budget is submitted, a schedule is created and an agenda item number is assigned. That number will be used again when the Council votes on the entire budget.

Council Member Silva said that if one of the Committee members know they will not be able to attend the meeting, they should contact the co-chairs. Council Member dePara said that he and Council Member Curwen would be getting copies of the materials from the departments or presenters to have copies made for those who are absent.

Council Member Martinez informed everyone that she will be away from the 13th through the 27th.

Council Member Lyons asked why this was being tabled. Council Member dePara said that it was placed on the agenda by the City Clerk's as a consistent and clear item.

Council Member Martinez asked if the Council Members could get a schedule with all the dates of the meetings. Council Member dePara said that he had copies which he will get to the Council members as soon as possible.

**** Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia moved to table Agenda Item 70-11 Proposed General Fund Budget for Fiscal Year 2012-2013**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER SILVA SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

GENERAL DISCUSSION OF MONTHLY REPORTS

Mr. Sherwood said that the OPM Director does not do the monthly financial report. The monthly report is done by the Finance Director. OPM works with the Financial Director. Mr. Sherwood said that the report has not changed in the last month. The items that have the most volatile items are noted, such as police overtime. For the police overages the storm related issues, homicide related issues, and crime issues are the items that may not be part of the forecast. The best data available is provided on the biggest items.

Rev. Olson asked whether FEMA included the damage at Seaside Park. Mr. Sherwood said that there were many items on the reimbursement list. He said that a ball park figure for the reimbursements would be between 400 and 500 million dollars. Mr. Sherwood said that the repairs to the sidewalk at the park were underway and a redesign of the sea wall was being done. The FEMA money will be charged back against the accounts for the repairs that have been done.

Council Member Lyons asked what is done with the funds for items that were not necessarily used, such as snow removal. Mr. Sherwood said that some of those funds are used for spring clean up. The fact that the vehicles used less gas this past winter will be used to offset the increase in gas prices. Gas prices are the number one worry since it goes across all the departments.

Mr. Sherwood said that figures had been distributed and each item has a write up for the various figures. If anyone has any questions on any particular item, he would be happy to review it. One example is that people are now putting coins in the parking meters because they have seen the boots. So, the amount of income from the boot program has decreased.

Council Member Martinez asked about the traffic tickets for moving violations. Mr. Sherwood explained that the State gets the money and the City only gets a small fraction of the fine. Council Member dePara said that the issue of red light cameras is something that should be discussed in Public Safety. He added that this was really a public safety issue, not a revenue generator.

Council Member Lyons asked about the changes in the anti-blight department dealing with landlords who are violators. Mr. Sherwood said that an estimate is put in to the budget. Now, there is a hearing officer appointed for these issues. Also the WPCA now is responsible for collecting their own delinquent bills. This will allow the attorneys to focus on blight issues.

Council Member dePara then asked whether the attorney who was doing the WPCA collections was being reimbursed by the WPCA for the work. Mr. Sherwood said that the WPCA did pay for the time and gave an overview of how it was handled.

Council Member dePara then asked how the budget areas of concern were monitored. Mr. Sherwood suggested that the narratives with the various departments. He said that if something like the building department has a large permit that would not be pulled before the end of the year that needed to be factored in. Council Member dePara said he was concerned about the expenditures. Mr. Sherwood said that he had already mentioned the police overtime and how it was influenced by crime, storms and homicide.

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS
BUDGET HEARINGS
APRIL 11, 2012**

ATTENDANCE: Angel dePara, Co-chair; Carlos Silva, AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia,
Lydia Martinez

STAFF: Atty. Mark Anastasi, City Attorney; Adam Heller, ITS
Director

OTHERS: Council Member Andre Baker

CALL TO ORDER

Council Member dePara called the meeting to order at 7:37 p.m.

ITS/City Attorney

ITS -

Mr. Heller, the Director of ITS greeted the committee and said that there were not many changes for the budget. He added that the City was about to lose a very valuable employee and would have an open position.

City Hall and the City Hall Annex have been transferred to Voice over IP and City Hall has three wireless hot spots. New cabling has also been installed. MUNIS updates continue

The department is preparing to move to the Annex. There will be outside services used for the data center design to ensure that it will be state of the art.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked about the wireless access in certain areas of the City Hall building and the Annex. She pointed out that making a phone call from the garage of the Annex was not possible. Mr. Heller said that the previous company had worked on the problem and provided service, but when the City switched to Verizon, they were told that the service could be extended to those areas. However, it has been three years and the service has not been extended into the dead areas. Discussion followed about the details of the issue.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked if the data lines are secured against hacking. Mr. Heller gave an overview of the security in place.

The response time for the Help Desk has improved tremendously and the backlog of service request tickets has been addressed.

Council Member Silva asked for clarification on the vacant positions. Mr. Heller said that the Support Specialist II was the position that would be vacated in the near future. There are three other vacancies on Support II. Discussion followed about the details of these positions.

Council Member Baker then asked about some of the information on an analysis distributed by Mr. Sherwood that contained in kind services for the Board of Education. Mr. Heller said that currently the IT department does not provide any services to the BOE other than connectivity. However, there is cooperation between the BOE IT department and the City's IT department when needed.

Council Member Baker then asked for more details about the vacant positions. Mr. Heller reviewed the positions and responsibilities associated with them.

Council Member dePara asked about future growth plans, which Mr. Heller outlined for the Committee members. Technology continues to change and more and more mobile devices are being used by the staff. Desktop support will continue, but the need in the data center is for the ability to handle multiple platforms, such as iPhones, Blackberries, iPads and Galaxy tablets continues to increase. The desktop support will continue because these are the staff members that physically go to an employee's desk and diagnosis what is wrong with the desktop computer and then repair it.

The discussion returned to the position of the soon to be vacated network architect and how it interfaces with the regular support staff. It is important to do just more than maintain the status quo. A discussion of the details of the various positions followed. Mr. Heller said that he would continue to do his part to work within the confines of the approved budget. He pointed out that an investment in technology would be a worthwhile investment.

Council Member Silva asked for clarification regarding investing in technology. Mr. Heller said that all technology requires management, training and maintenance. One issue is data storage. Staff has begun to store documents on the network and the network is filling up. This has to be considered and plans have to be made for the data storage.

Council Member Martinez asked what kinds of savings would be had if the department had a reduction. Mr. Heller said that he realized that an increase of 2.5 mills in the taxes was not sitting well with the residents, so he would work with the budget. However, he reiterated that he felt the City should invest in technology.

Council Member Baker asked about overtime and how it is used. Mr. Heller said that since his overtime budget is fairly low, he has staff that work extra hours and they take comp time rather than paying overtime. He reserves the overtime pay for the major problems such as when the computers were hit with a major virus and all the staff were on call for 24 hours along with techs from outside support services. Mr. Heller then gave an overview of the situations where outside services would be called in. His staff is able to work with the outside vendors when there are specialized tasks such as integrating new storage into the system has to be done.

Council Member Baker asked about new equipment budget items. Mr. Heller said that it was physical equipment that the staff has on their desks. He then outlined the process that is used when a computer is removed from service and stated that the hard drives are shredded when the units are recycled.

Mr. Heller then reviewed the various licenses that are in the budget, such as software vendors and hardware contracts, such as copiers repair.

Council Member Silva asked if Homeland Security was working with Mr. Heller's department. Discussion followed.

Council Member Baker asked if the BOE IT department was collaborating with the City's IT. Mr. Heller said the two groups work together somewhat and that there would be savings for the City in terms of purchasing power if the two groups collaborated. However, the BOE receives steep discounts because of their educational status and that they would lose if they combined forces with the BOE.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that there had been comments made in the past where there was no communication between BOE ITS and the City ITS, but it was clear from Mr. Heller's statements that there has been cooperation in the past between the two departments. She stated that she would like this information included in the record.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked about bar coding equipment. Mr. Heller gave an overview of how this is done. Council Member Vizzio-Paniccia said that if she traded a Blackberry unit in and got a new one, she would like to see a sign out sheet. Mr. Heller said that before a unit is given to the staff, all the identifying information is recorded. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that she would like to see a more formalized process instituted.

Council Member dePara said that Mr. Heller had done a significant job in reducing the expenditures in areas like the telephone services, computer services and other areas. These cost reductions represent savings and efficiencies. He then thanked Mr. Heller for his work in this area.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia then spoke about the National League of Cities and said that there may be potential for saving on storage equipment through them. Mr. Heller said that he would look into this.

City Attorney -

Atty. Anastasi said that there were some priorities and that the department was looking to duplicate some of the past successes, such as reducing the WPCA arrearages. Currently, it is reduced from over 20 million to less than 1 million. There is also a large issue in terms of the Wheelabrator tax bill.

Now the focus is anti-blight and condemnation fines. There is also an enforcement effort regarding the out of state plates on vehicles.

With the help of Quinnipiac College, the City is looking to start an internship for third year law students that would help with research. The interns would work with the various types of cases, such as litigation, business, land use and FOI.

Council Member dePara asked if the Budget Committee could be cc'ed when the Miscellaneous Matters Committee is updated on various court cases. Atty. Anastasi made a note of this.

Atty. Anastasi said that his department would like to work more with the Board of Education.

Council Member Silva asked about the vacant positions. Atty. Anastasi reviewed these positions with the Committee. The discussion then moved to the City Sheriffs and how they were assigned work. All of the sheriffs on the list are currently being given work in a rotation schedule except for the newest sheriff, whose paperwork is still in the vetting process.

Council Member Baker asked about the WPCA responsibilities. Atty. Anastasi stated that right now, the WPCA may be moving towards regionalization and that if this does become an actuality, then the City will no longer assist in collecting the outstanding funds. Atty. Liskov has been responsible in the past for following up on WPCA bills that were in arrears and significantly reduced the outstanding amounts.

Atty. Anastasi directed everyone's attention to page 82 with the information on what was handled by outside counsel and what was handled in house. There is an in kind service charge back that is handled through OPM for these services.

The discussion then moved to the fluctuation in the department's Personnel expenses, but an increase in other areas. Atty. Anastasi said that the administration wanted to reduce

staff and utilize outside lawyers. Previously the line item was two different lines, litigation, which covers expert testimony and Legal Services, which covered outside lawyers. The increase in the Legal Services amount is a direct result of the major cases that will soon be on the docket.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

**** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA MOVED TO ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS LEGAL ISSUES.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER SILVA SECONDED**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The Committee entered into Executive Session to discuss legal issues at 9:07 p.m. and returned to public session at 9:11 p.m.

City Attorney – CONT'D

Council Member Baker asked about the MERF expenditures as indicated on the January 2012 financial report. Atty. Anastasi said that he did not have the report and Mr. Sherwood might be able to follow through on this.

Council Member Silva asked why Mr. Sherwood was not present at the meeting and was told that Mr. Sherwood was at another meeting with the Mayor.

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER SILVA SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Service

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS
BUDGET HEARINGS
APRIL 12, 2012**

ATTENDANCE: Angel dePara, Co-chair; Carlos Silva, AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia, Lydia Martinez (6:30 p.m.); Council President Thomas McCarthy

STAFF: Thomas Sherwood, OPM Director

OTHERS: Ms. Laura O'Malley, Bpt. Public Schools; John Fabrizi, Central High School; Paul Vallas, Superintendent of Bridgeport Schools; Hernan Illingworth, BOE member.

CALL TO ORDER

Council Member dePara called the meeting to order at 6:17 p.m. He introduced the members of the Committee.

Mr. Sherwood said that he was aware that there were a few questions from last night and he was willing to answer any questions. It was decided these questions would be deferred to Saturday's meeting.

BUDGET HEARING – BOARD OF EDUCATION

Mr. Sherwood then directed everyone's attention to page 379 in the budget book. He said that this was the first time that a budget draft had been presented before the meeting in six years. The Mayor has frozen positions and it has become evident that the problems that have been left behind by the former Board administration cannot be fixed without major changes.

Mr. Sherwood then said that steps have been taken to shift the school crossing guards back to the police. Another step is that the recycling is being strengthened and the City will be handling the collection aspect. Snow removal is now going to be handled by the City also.

Upcoming changes will most likely include the closure of 948 Main Street and the movement of the Board into the Annex at 999 Main Street and City Hall at Lyon Terrace. The building at 948 Main Street will most likely be sold. Mr. Sherwood said that the target date for this is by the opening of the new school year. When the Board moves from 948 Main, there will be a reduction of \$90,000 in terms of parking payments. The changes are listed in Exhibit 2.

Mr. Sherwood said that there was a lot of work to be done on the State side. Superintendent Vallas has worked very hard in terms of restructuring the District. The Mayor has

Superintendent Vallas said that the administration has worked very hard to be transparent. The overall debt has been reduced to about 3 million dollars by working very hard at economizing and with the assistance from the City. The City has assumed approximately 3 million dollars in financial burden. The State made some promises about 3 million dollars to Superintendent Vallas' predecessor but Superintendent Vallas believes that the State will be only allotting 1.5 million. He reviewed how the District would handle this, which includes furlough days.

The current budget includes receiving 1.7 million from the City and at least 1.5 million from the State.

Council Member Martinez joined the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

Mr. Sherwood then gave an explanation about some of the information in the budget book regarding how the 7.1 million will be introduced into the budget. Superintendent Vallas said that no one understands the State formula for education allocation. He went on to give an overview of how any change in the State formula would benefit the City. There also needs to be a way to fact in kind contributions. Mr. Sherwood spoke about the issues regarding debt service in terms of in kind contributions. The role of Federal aid funding also needs to be factored in.

Superintendent Vallas said that he has submitted a five year financial plan to the Governor. He pointed out that through efficiencies along, there will be additional savings. He said that every single year, the District will seek to secure additional funds, also. Between the efficiencies and savings, the per pupil spending should rise to \$4,000 per student, which will allow the City to receive more State funding. He pointed out that eventually every State in the Union will have to deal with unfunded mandates and the associated liability.

The discussion then moved to salary step increases. Superintendent Vallas then gave a brief overviews of the steps that he was prepared to take in order to stay within the budget in the upcoming years. One third of the Central Office has been downsized. The positions in Central Office has been reconfigured with new job positions. Operations have been consolidated. Now the money can flow into the schools with the appropriate controls. Some of the out of district students are being brought back into the District. Transportation services are also being provided to the Charter schools.

Mr. Sherwood said that there was an upgrade to MUNIS. All the district schools will be charging time and attendance through MUNIS. However, now the supplies will also be charged through MUNIS.

Council Member Brannelly asked about the Good Schools Bridgeport Fund. Superintendent Vallas said that more and more states want to create Foundations where people can donate to the public schools and have the money go to the schools. Often private citizens are reluctant to donate money to the District because they fear the funding will go towards raises rather than classroom improvements. He also pointed out that he did not want to see the reform dollars be turned into salary increases or into operating dollars. Superintendent Vallas said that he had contacted a number of major foundations for donations but the money has to go into very specific programs.

Superintendent Vallas then gave an overview of how the alliance between the three colleges and the District would enhance the schools. He pointed out that by using the fund, the money cannot be diverted and if it is, the foundation can stop the flow of money.

Council Member Brannelly said that there were many variables in the projections, such as Bridgeport not having made the NBR allocations. However, there are still things on the State level that need to be adjusted. Superintendent Vallas said that he believed that the State would be waiting to see what the City would do, and that they currently seem to be very comfortable with the material presented so far. Good Schools Bridgeport was really a vehicle for private donations. Once funding is put into a formula, it is gone and never seen again. Council Member Brannelly said that she did not have faith that the State would meet its obligations. Mr. Sherwood said that the City is in compliance with the statute as current written. He said that there not anything that changes until both the City and the State passes new legislations. Council Member dePara pointed out there had been times when the State has cut the City short on items such as pilot payments for the hospitals and schools. Discussion about the details of this followed.

Council President McCarthy expressed strong concerns about the upcoming Board elections. Mr. Sherwood said that there was also a major change if the Charter Review proposal passes. He then reviewed how the NBR aid would be handled and how the City funding would be handled. Council President McCarthy said that there were strong concerns about the Council losing control of the money, and that it will be rolled into the base. Both Mr. Sherwood and Superintendent Vallas said that this would not happen. Superintendent Vallas went on to say that he thought that new money should never be put in the base because even if the student population dropped, the funding would remain. While this is unprecedented, it is thoroughly legal.

Council President McCarthy pointed out that the City has one of the highest mill rates in the State and that the residents are struggling to meet their tax bills. Mr. Sherwood said

that the State had taken the poorest cities and pitted them against the suburbs. The Commissioner has a new concept for education and the State Department was still trying understand it.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia left the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

Superintendent Vallas said that while closing the deficit this year was important, it also means that the District would have to keep the deficit closed next year. He then explained that he had been able to work with Houghton Mifflin to provide the District with new curriculum and the payment will be spread out over five years. The first initial financial influx will be from private donations.

Mr. Sherwood pointed out that when the City computerized there were problems that originally appeared to be related to the speed of the computers (286, 386, and 486), but it turned out that the real problem was the fact that the software was all different versions. Now everyone in the City is on the same platform. The same concept has to be applied to the curriculum so that a student who moves from the East Side to the West Side mid year would have the same curriculum in the same grade.

Mr. Sherwood also reminded everyone that last year, the District administration walked in the day of the meeting with a budget proposal and an 18 million dollar increase request. When there were objections raised, the response was “We’ll cut Band Camp.” or “We’ll cut freshman sports”, etc.

Council Member Silva left the meeting at 7:45 p.m.

Council Member Martinez said that there had been many years spent looking for good teachers and she wanted to retain those good teachers. She also expressed concerns about school funding equality. Superintendent Vallas said that these issues had been considered. Council Member Martinez said that many students don’t know what to do when they finish school. Superintendent Vallas said that the counseling was poor and that with the partnering with the colleges, including Norwalk Community College. He added that as the partnership between the colleges strengthens, the seniors could start working on college campuses or work in an internship. Discussion followed.

RYSAP will be working with the seniors and there will be a student center where there will be counselors to help the seniors make choices.

Council Member Martinez asked how important the Spanish language was in the curriculum. Superintendent Vallas said that the current staff was busy recruiting Latino teachers and staff. One of the functions of Good Schools Bridgeport will be to recruit teachers. He said that he believes in transitional bilingual programs, dual language

immersion and transitional immersion. He expects to have a much more practical approach for languages.

Council Member Martinez said that the Educational and Social Services Committee would appreciate a presentation and updates on the programs. Superintendent Vallas said he would be happy to bring a presentation to the Committee on invitation. He also said that he wanted to come back to the Public Safety Committee, also, to update them with the comprehensive Safe Corridors program.

Council Member dePara said that Council Member Silva wished to know what the lowest amount that the District would have to work with and what he would do. Superintendent Vallas said that he would have to institute more furloughs and it would also mean that more positions would be cut. This would include cutting assistant principals. However if this happens, it means that the freshman teachers would be bounced out due to contractual obligations. Class sizes may have to be increased and a few schools might have to be closed. He added that if the City doesn't come through with their dollars, no one knows what the State will do. Discussion followed.

Superintendent Vallas reiterated that he hoped that an increase of efficiencies would offset any increase for the '13-'14 school year. He said that the wave is towards more reform in the system. Mr. Sherwood pointed out that the key word is sustainability.

Mr. Sherwood said that due to an oversight on his part, he neglected to include Ms. O'Malley's budget. He added that Nutrition Center budget was neutral. Council President McCarthy said that this was a well put together, well organized budget and possibly the best department budget in the City. Mr. Sherwood said that he was requesting that this budget document be incorporated into the main budget.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY MOVED TO ADD THE FOLLOWING EXHIBITS TO THE RECORD:**

- BOE #1 – GOOD SCHOOLS BRIDGEPORT 2013 BUDGET & SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT**
- BOE #2 – BRIDGEPORT SCHOOL DISTRICT OPERATING BUDGET 2012-13**
- BOE #3 - BRIDGEPORT PUBLIC SCHOOLS CAPITAL BUDGET REQUEST FOR 2012-2013**
- BOE #3A – BRIDGEPORT PUBLIC SCHOOLS FACILITY/TECHNOLOGY PROJECTS DETAILS**
- BOE #4 – BRIDGEPORT PUBLIC SCHOOLS HIGH SCHOOL TRANSFORMATION MARCH 2012**
- BOE #5 – FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICES BUDGET**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Council Member Brannelly then asked for some clarification on the various line items, which Ms. O'Malley supplied.

Council Member Martinez asked about the category called "Catering". Ms. O'Malley said that this was the food cost. Mr. Sherwood said that this was the MUNIS code for food. Council Member Martinez asked about the Student Sales. She was told that this covered the healthy snacks vending machines.

Ms. O'Malley said that the biggest increase would be in the breakfast line. There may also be a new line introduced for supper. The breakfast program started with one school, expanded to three and by the time it went District wide, all the problems had been addressed.

Council Member dePara asked about Worker's Comp. Mr. Sherwood said that each department is responsible for indemnity for their staff. The figure is their expected cost for next year. Council Member dePara asked if there were safety programs in place. Mr. Sherwood said that there were monthly safety meetings and that those who are injured can file up to two years later. Ms. O'Malley reviewed the various safety ideas, such as long oven mitts, no open toed shoes and steeled toed shoes for the drivers. Mr. Sherwood reviewed how the system works and where the costs for medical care was represented.

Council Member dePara asked about the gas and electricity utilities. Ms. O'Malley said that it was the cost the BOE calculated for the use of the utilities. She reminded everyone that the refrigeration units run 24/7. Council Member Martinez asked for clarification.

Council Member Brannelly asked if the budget was finalized for the Nutrition Center. Mr. Sherwood said that this is reviewed by the auditor, so they are the finalized numbers. He also gave an overview of how the reimbursements are calculated and the revenue is recognized. Expenses must have the purchase orders and the receipt of goods in place by June 30th. No exception on expenses.

Mr. Sherwood said that he felt that the Nutrition Center should be totally independent entity similar to the WPCA.

Mr. Sherwood said that he had been asked to find out if the individual sealed packages of food that the students did not want had to be thrown away. Ms. O'Malley said that in one school they have a sharing table where students can put the items they do not wish to eat for others to have. Federal law prevents the students from getting a second serving of food, so this allows the students who still may be hungry to have that second serving.

However, there is legislation pending that may allow the schools to donate unopened food to shelters and food pantries.

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS
BUDGET HEARINGS
APRIL 13, 2012**

ATTENDANCE: Angel dePara, Co-chair; Carlos Silva, AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia,
Susan Brannelly

OTHERS: Council Member Andre Baker; Richard Weiner, Benefits Manager,
Larry Osborn, Labor Relations Manager; Janet Finch,
Human Resources Manager; David Dunn, Civil Service;
Deborah Brattleboro, Civil Service

CALL TO ORDER

Council Member dePara called the meeting to order at 6:08 p.m.

Labor Relations

This budget information is found on page 103 of the budget. Mr. Osborn came forward and said that the budget had not changed much.

He said that the department was down one person and the position has been unfilled. The department is doing more with less and there is only five staff in the department. Mr. Osborn distributed an informational packet.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY MOVED TO ENTERED LABOR
RELATIONS UPDATE 2012 AS LABOR RELATIONS EXHIBIT #1.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mr. Osborn said that the handout reflects the operations of the department. He then reviewed the details of the information. There are currently 13 labor unions in the City administration. There had been 14 unions, but the social workers are no longer employed by the City.

Council Member dePara asked about the graph showing the active cases as of the year end 2011. Mr. Osborn reviewed the details on the graph with the Committee members.

Mr. Osborn said that he would love to have the vacant position filled, but the department was working on doing more with less. When asked why NAGE had so many cases in their union, Mr. Osborn said that most of it was from the Board of Education. NAGE has

employees both on the City side and the BOE side, so it is one bargaining unit. Discussion followed.

Mr. Osborn noted that Council President McCarthy was doing a great job.

Council Member dePara asked if there was a protocol being developed that would prevent the occurrence of the repeat events. Mr. Osborn said that the department was working on this and hoped to have it in place within the next six months.

Council Member Brannelly asked for some clarification on the case graph, which Mr. Osborn provided. Discussion followed.

Council Member Baker asked for more details about Other Services. Mr. Osborn said that Mr. Sherwood would be the person to answer what items were covered by that particular budget category because it was determined by MUNIS. Council Member dePara said that Mr. Sherwood had a family emergency and was not able to be at the meeting.

Council Member Baker asked about the vacant position and asked if the department intended to fill it. Mr. Osborn said that he would love to fill it, but there was no money. Council Member Baker asked about the duties the staff member would perform and Mr. Osborn listed those tasks.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked if the employees are required to sign off on a guide sheet regarding the various supervisory labor responsibilities training. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia also asked if there could be an average case cost for the City employees. Mr. Osborn said that he would provide the Committee with that information.

In answer to Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia's question about the training aspect, Ms. Finch, the Human Resources Office, came forward to speak about the Federal law and the training that has to be provided for the staff. She said that her department was required to provide training for Federal issues such as sexual harassment, drug and alcohol and other mandated training. MUNIS has a list of the employees that have attended the mandated training. New employees are required to sign a receipt for the Code of Ethics and Practices for the last five or six years. Council Member Baker asked what the procedure was for updated or new policies. Ms. Finch gave a brief overview of this and said that most of the notifications are distributed via email. Creating new policies involves many different departments such as the City Attorney's, the Mayor's Office, Labor Relations and the CAO's.

Council Member Brannelly asked if there was a break out of the general categories that the cases fall into with the number of cases in each category. She asked if this could include a break out of what was on the City side and what was on the BOE side.

Council Member Brannelly asked the six month status of the goal. Mr. Osborn gave an overview of the situation.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY MOVED TO ENTER EMPLOYEES BARGAINING ORGANIZATIONS DOCUMENT AS LABOR RELATIONS EXHIBIT #2.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked if the extra staff position had been filled, the department would have all the cases settled by the next budget cycle. Mr. Osborn said that having all the cases settled by a given deadline would never be possible due to the fact that new cases were being filed and that the court schedule was not under the City's control.

He said that almost all the unions have now been brought up to as 25% cost sharing for health benefits. Mr. Osborn then stated that there were a number of cases that were close to being settled or had already been settled.

Council Member Silva then had several questions about the vacant position and the impact on the budget, along with the various responsibilities assigned to the other positions. He then asked what would happen if there was a 10% cut to the clerical staff or the supervisor's group. Mr. Osborn said that the department would not be able to function. He also pointed out that if a 10% cut was given to the supervisor's group, there would be a significant contractual impact.

Council Member Brannelly said that since the position had remained unfilled, would it be considered a surplus. Mr. Osborn said that he would have to discuss that with Mr. Sherwood.

Council Member dePara asked who was responsible for the MUNIS entry. Mr. Osborn said that that is done by the administrative assistance.

Council Member dePara asked about the Subscriptions line item. Mr. Osborn said these were subscriptions to Labor Relation journals and that the department needed this to keep current on topics and trends in the field. The journals provide background material for areas when it is in an area that may be specialized. Mr. Osborn said that he also calls other experts when needed while doing research.

Mr. Osborn said that the department was very effective and he would like to see everything in the budget maintained at a level that allows the department to function as it needs to. Cuts in the department could very well be detrimental to the City as a whole, since the department works for the City.

Benefits

Mr. Weiner and Ms. Finch came forward and greeted the Committee.

****COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY MOVED TO ENTER BENEFITS BUDGET AS BENEFITS EXHIBIT #1.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Council Member dePara referenced the increase to 25% cost sharing in the health costs and asked how this would impact the budget. Mr. Weiner said that this was a move from 12% to 25% on the medical cost and prescriptions.

Mr. Weiner said that his responsibilities were basically on the expense side of the benefits and that Mr. Sherwood basically handled the payroll deductions. A discussion followed about the type of exhibit that the Commission wanted. Mr. Weiner said that he could provide the Committee with the information they were seeking in two or three days.

The budget for the Benefits Department is on page 97 of the binder.

Mr. Weiner gave a quick run down on the various types of work the department handles such as claims, dental benefits, group life insurance and others. He then reviewed the various figures on the sheet with the Committee members. Mr. Weiner was asked for a listing of the most recent insurance claims.

RECESS

**** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA MOVED FOR A RECESS.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting recessed at 7:17 p.m. Council Member dePara called the meeting back into order at 7:27 p.m.

Benefits CONT'D

Mr. Weiner said that most of the items had a very modest increase with the singular, significant exception of medical. Last year, there were between 12-15 major claims that pushed the budget over the top, resulting in a 1.3 million dollar shortfall.

Council Member dePara asked about the Savings Initiatives section. Mr. Weiner then gave an overview of the Federal programs that help with the Employers Group Waiver Plan, Retiree Drug Subsidy, and other programs. There are some revenue streams from these programs, but all the revenue goes into the Internal Fund rather than to the Department.

Mr. Weiner gave a very brief overview of the upcoming contracts with Aetna, Medco and Wellness. Mr. Weiner then outlined the various programs that the department sponsors to encourage people to exercise and watch their weight, which helps with the health costs. Discussion followed about the various outreach programs.

Mr. Weiner said that when CIGNA first started working with the City, they were very business like and concerned about the costs, but now they see the City as a good customer.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked whether the employees realize that when there are health fairs, the employees know that the City is not using this information in their employee files. Mr. Weiner said that the department sends out flyers and tries to encourage the staff to use the CIGNA resources. Discussion followed.

Council Member Brannelly asked for clarification on the premium costs. Mr. Weiner explained that when the majority of the staff have healthy lifestyles, it reduces the claims, which can over time, reduce the premium.

Council Member Brannelly asked how the projections are calculated and whether the major claims such as ALS or kidney disease are factored in. Mr. Weiner said that CIGNA does the best it can in terms of forecasting and that there are 11,000 people in the coverage pool.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY MOVED TO ENTER THE DOCUMENT TOP 10 EXPENSES – MARCH 2012 AS BENEFITS EXHIBIT #2.**
**** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA SECONDED.**
**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Council Member Brannelly asked about the wellness program and whether that was covered in the Health Fair. Mr. Weiner said that the City pays for that, but CIGNA has come forward with a number of other things that they cover, such as employee testing for glucose, cholesterol and others where they cover the costs. Ms. Finch said that CIGNA was preparing some webinars for the public that were geared towards awareness.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY MOVED TO ENTER THE DOCUMENT BUDGET BREAKDOWN BY AGENCY AS BENEFITS EXHIBIT #3.**
**** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Council Member dePara asked if the WPCA was being charged for the health care coverage being provided. Mr. Weiner said that Mr. Sherwood would be able to answer that question.

Council Member dePara pointed out that the spreadsheets were only current up to March 31st and asked for an update on the spread sheets. Mr. Weiner said that he would provide updates to the Committee members. Discussion followed.

Council dePara asked if there was anything that the Council could do to help reduce the medical costs. Mr. Weiner said that accident prevention, particular with the BOE, could reduce the health care costs. He then distributed copies of the most recent insurance claims with the identifying information removed.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY MOVED TO ENTER A DOCUMENT AS BENEFITS EXHIBIT #4.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

A brief discussion followed.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY WITHDREW HER MOTION TO ENTER A DOCUMENT AS BENEFITS EXHIBIT #4.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

All copies of the documents were then returned to Mr. Weiner.

Council Member Silva asked about the vacant positions listed on page 98. Ms. Finch reviewed the various positions listed in her department. Not all the staff listed work in her office, but they are assigned where needed, such as Treasurer's, Civil Service, and Payroll. A detailed discussion about the various assignments followed.

Council Member Baker asked about the significant increase in the department budget. Ms. Finch explained that two positions had been shifted to her department and she has no control over the salaries.

Council Member Baker asked why the auditing services were needed. Mr. Weiner said that Mr. Sherwood would have to answer the question.

Council Member Baker wished to know about the actuary's fees. Mr. Weiner said that there was a multi-year contract with the actuary and that there were two mandated reports

that the government requires. Council Member Baker asked about the consulting services. Mr. Weiner said that there are some prescription projections that need to be done and consultant is needed when the RPFs need to be developed. Mr. Weiner explained that there may be a need to do a RPF in the near future. Council Member dePara asked if Mr. Weiner could provide a projected cost if the RFP is needed. Mr. Weiner made a note of this.

Council Member Baker asked about the employee testing and the timing of the testing. Ms. Finch said that there were encumbrances on the funding and it has not shown up in the budget yet.

The discussion moved back to the Personnel. Ms. Finch said that many of the positions that are assigned to her department were due to MUNIS requirements. She indicated where the two additional positions were found in the budget. Ms. Finch said that there had been several discussions about consolidation of Human Resources and Civil Service.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked if any of the health screening were done in house. Ms. Finch explained that the Health Department no longer has a lab. Fire Department does their physicals through the Health Department. The City has an agreement with St. Vincent's for the pre-employment and return to work physicals.

Mr. Dunn, the Civil Service Director, said that there was an OSHA program where the public health nurses can do the required OSHA firefighters tests.

Council Member Brannelly asked Mr. Dunn if the departments were consolidated, if there would be savings. Mr. Dunn said on the Civil Service side, his answer was a resounding yes. Ms. Finch heartily agreed and said that extra staff is always welcomed. She added that it would be less confusing for the employees.

RECESS

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY MOVED FOR A RECESS.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

The meeting recessed at 9:00 p.m. Council Member dePara called the meeting back to order at 9:12 p.m.

Civil Service –

Mr. Dunn, the Civil Service Director, came forward and distributed a document.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY MOVED TO ENTER A DOCUMENT AS CIVIL SERVICE #1.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mr. Dunn said that the current project was the Police hiring. Last year, the Police Exam was given and a class of 26 was sent to the Academy in June 2011. A second class of 20 is due to start.

Police hiring is dictated by the State of Connecticut via the Police Office Standard Training (POST) requirements. Mr. Dunn gave a brief overview of the process and State requirements. Council Member dePara asked if some of the consultants were paid out of department. He was told that the State dictates the use of the consultants but the City pays for it. The current exam list will be expiring next April.

Mr. Dunn added that he has started to plan for the Fire Department and that the estimated cost to administer it will be \$157,000.

The discussion then moved back to the attrition rate for the Police candidates, which is about 60% of the candidates. The largest attrition rate happens during the lie detector test. Mr. Dunn said that the current class of 25 at the Academy has not had a drop out and the Academy instructors said that this was the best class that they had seen at the Academy. This means that the money spent vetting the candidates was well spent.

Mr. Dunn went on to speak about the Fire Department exam process part of which will be underway next week.

Regarding examinations, there will be three upcoming Promotional Exams for the Police. On the Civilian Service side, a number of jobs have been moved from the competitive exams to non-competitive. Several other departments have inquired about having their jobs moved from competitive to non-competitive, which will relieve a significant amount of testing.

Mr. Dunn then reviewed the Fire Mandamus Mandatory Actions, which will require three Fire Department tests to be given, one in the fall of 2012 and two in the first half of 2013. These three tests will require funding.

Mr. Dunn then reviewed the organizational chart of the department with the Committee members.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked how the figure for renting Central High School was calculated. Ms. Brattleboro gave a brief overview how the charges were arrived at. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked if there was anyone involved in the testing

process that might have pending litigation against the City. Mr. Dunn said that the volunteers are screened and conflicts of interests are handled carefully. He spoke about how the test was created and the process clarified.

Council Member Baker asked for a spreadsheet with a list of the affiliated and non-affiliated employees. Mr. Dunn said that he would provide this.

The discussion then moved to page 92. Mr. Dunn indicated which employees were located in the office. Mr. Dunn said there would be a transfer of funds in the current budget in order to pay the current testing bills.

Mr. Dunn then reviewed the practice of “acting” positions. One Personnel Assistant is filling the position of Personnel Examiner. Another staff member has a combined job descriptions. A discussion followed about the shift of two payroll clerks from Civil Service to Human Resources on June 30, 2012.

Council Member Baker asked about one line item regarding rentals. Mr. Dunn said that last year he had to rent an entire floor of a hotel for the testing because he could not use Central High School.

Council Member dePara then asked about the January financial report where the line item for rentals was zero. Mr. Dunn said that he was about to rent Central High School for the testing and that line would no longer be zero after he did that.

Council Member Brannelly said that one of the largest complaints that she hears is that the office is not open consistently. Mr. Dunn explained that the staff rotates front window duty along with fulfilling their other duties. Without a full time clerical assistant, the office can only be open for limited time, otherwise it becomes Grand Central. Right now, the City is not hiring. When the City is hiring, the department is open more hours. Mr. Dunn said that he can't service the current employees, and coordinate the testing if he is standing at the front desk.

Council Member Brannelly asked if there is a requirement that the department accept an application if there are no job openings. Mr. Dunn said that it was not a legal requirement, but that it was City policy. The largest group of tasks involves current employees. The second largest task is working with the application. All of the department employees are notaries. This also draws the staff away from their work. Discussion followed about these issues.

Council Member dePara asked for the cost of an entry level clerical staff. He was told that \$34,900 would be accurate.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that she had mentioned consolidating departments that had the same functionality together. A discussion followed about the application process.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked if a combined organization chart showing the Human Relations and Civil Service. He said that he could, but it would be important to have administrative input. Council Member Silva asked for clarification on that. Mr. Dunn said that it would be protocol.

Council Member dePara asked about a line item on page 95. Mr. Dunn said that the funds were allocated to national advertising and he expected a small overage. He added that there were two employees who had been exceptional in getting ads out over the website. The cost of advertising in newspapers had risen. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia suggested advertising through the National Organization of Cities and CCM. This will be looked into by Mr. Dunn.

ADJOURNMENT

- ** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA MOVED TO ADJOURN.**
- ** COUNCIL MEMBER SILVA SECONDED.**
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 10:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET & APPROPRIATIONS
BUDGET HEARINGS
APRIL 17, 2012**

ATTENDANCE: Robert Curwen, Co-chair; Angel dePara, Co-chair; Carlos Silva, Council President Thomas McCarthy; Council Member Susan Brannelly (6:45 p.m.)

OTHERS: Rev. John Olson; John Ricci, Airport Manager; Charles Carroll, Public Facility Director; Paul Catino, Public Facilities Budget Manager; Gregg Dancho, Beardsley Zoo, John Cottell, Public Facilities Utilities, Jorge Garcia, Public Facilities Deputy Director; Bobby Kennedy, Public Facilities Deputy Director; Ted Graybarz; Council Member Andre Baker

CALL TO ORDER

Council Member Curwen called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m. Council Member Curwen then introduced the members of the Committee.

Mr. Sherwood said that he was not able to be at the meeting on Friday and that Council Member dePara said that there had been a question about the co-pays for the Police, which he then answered regarding the percentage.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER DEPARA MOVED TO ENTER THE DOCUMENT ENTITLED
FY 2013 REVENUE AS BENEFIT #4 - 4/13/12
** COUNCIL MEMBER SILVA SECONDED.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

PUBLIC FACILITIES

Beardsley Zoo - Mr. Sherwood said that Mr. Dancho was present representing the Beardsley Zoo. Mr. Sherwood reviewed the details on page 244 and explained that one vacant position had been unfunded. Council Member Silva asked about the unfunded position. Mr. Sherwood said that this was one of the contracts that had not been settled a few months ago.

Mr. Dancho said that this was the Zoo's 90th birthday. Ninety days of programs have been created in celebration. He then handed out a calendar and gave an overview. On the person's birthday, you can get in free. Two 80 year old Galapagos turtles will be present. On May 19th, there will be a formal birthday party and on Saturday will be Bridgeport Day, where the admission for Bridgeport residents will be \$5.00.

Last year, the Zoo was able to accomplish all its goals. The winter and spring were poor, but the summer and fall compensated. The Conservation Discovery Corps (CDC) has been going on and doing well.

Mr. Sherwood said that there will be a commitment to the Capital Plan and that Mr. Dancho would be giving an overview.

Mr. Dancho said that the Zoo's bear was now in West Virginia while the Andean bear exhibit is being updated and refreshed.

Mr. Dancho then distributed copies of a handout titled "South American Adventure at Connecticut's Beardsley Zoo. The last page of the handout had the four Phases listed on them along with the projected costs. This is a Capital project and will be discussed in detail at another time. Mr. Sherwood said that one approach will be to have the City put their share up and then see what the State does. Once that happens, it will be easier to find private funding.

Mr. Dancho explained that both Diageo, the beverage company, and Deloitte & Touche.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA MOVED TO ENTER THE NEWS RELEASE "CONNECTICUT'S BEARDSLEY ZOO CELEBRATES 90TH BIRTHDAY IN 2012 AS ZOO EXHIBIT #1 -4/17/12**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER SILVA SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA MOVED TO ENTER THE DOCUMENT TITLED THE SOUTH AMERICAN ADVENTURE AT CONNECTICUT'S BEARDSLEY ZOO AS ZOO EXHIBIT #2-4/17/12.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER SILVA SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Council Member dePara had a question about two line items on page 244 regarding overtime. Mr. Dancho said that one staff position was vacant and the animals have to be cared for on a regular basis, including the holidays. Mr. Sherwood pointed out that it was more economical to have the overtime than hire additional staff. This resulted in savings although the overtime was over by \$5,400. This amount will be offset by the savings from the unfunded position. Discussion followed about the details of this.

The discussion then moved to the State subsidy for the Zoo, which has not been provided in the last two years. Mr. Dancho said that the Zoo was put in as Tourism rather than Redevelopment. Mr. Sherwood pointed out that there is a park involved. He said that the Zoo was moved into

Tourism, it did not start out there and it was harming the zoo. Mr. Dancho said that this was also beginning to affect the State Parks.

Council Member Curwen asked why the position had not been filled. Mr. Dancho said that there had been some issues with the union regarding the position and that the economy was not in a good place.

Council Member dePara referred back to page 244 about the gas/utilities/services line item. Mr. Catino explained that because of it was a quarterly bill and with the light winter, the expenditures were lower at this point. Mr. Cottell pointed out that there was a minimum of a month delay for the billing. The gas bills come in on a monthly cycle, but they are always a month behind. Mr. Dancho said that the HVAC system was now computerized and it should realize more savings.

Council Member Brannelly joined the meeting at 6:45 p.m.

Council Member Silva asked if the Zoo had considered solar power. Mr. Dancho said that one company from Ohio had come in to see if they could do a solar array over the parking lot. However, the amount of solar power generated would not be enough for that company. Consideration is being given to possibly having a solar array on top of the carousal and also various grants are being considered.

Sikorsky Airport -

The overall budget for this facility is found on page 270. Mr. Ricci came forward and greeted the Committee. Mr. Sherwood said that one position has been eliminated but there was also a decrease in the base rate. Mr. Ricci then handed out a document titled Sikorsky Memorial Airport - Public Facility Revenue Forecast FY 12/13.

Mr. Ricci said that the FAA had moved their automated equipment out. Following this, the airport put the building out for sale. He then reviewed the details and the impact of the economic conditions along with a lawsuit. Mr. Ricci then reviewed the details of the revenue with the Committee. There are fewer aircraft flying and the price of Aviation fuel is now at \$7.00 per gallon.

Council Member Curwen asked about the various positions. Mr. Sherwood then explained how the NAGE salary step increases change.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA MOVED TO ENTER THE DOCUMENT TITLED SIKORSKY MEMORIAL AIRPORT - PUBLIC FACILITIES REVENUE FORECAST 12/13 AS AIRPORT EXHIBIT #1.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER SILVA SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Council Member dePara asked how current the figures were. Mr. Ricci said that they were the most current available. Council Member Baker asked how the figures were calculated and fit back into the revenue summary. Mr. Ricci and Mr. Sherwood reviewed the details with the Committee.

PUBLIC FACILITIES

Administration -Mr. Sherwood then encouraged everyone to review the reports. He said that Public Facilities were the gold star winners of worker's comp. They also had the largest drop in debt service. The regular activities have not changed much. A deputy director has been added to include the schools maintenance issues.

Council Member Brannelly pointed out that there had been discussion about having the Department Director reporting on the overall operation of the department rather than Mr. Sherwood's vision. Council Member Curwen said that traditionally, the Committee hears the Mayor's vision, which Mr. Sherwood presented. Mr. Carroll said that his vision for the department was the same as the Mayor's.

Council Member Curwen said that this department has showed decreases each year and Mr. Catino and Mr. Cottell had worked very hard to reduce the spending down. He spoke about how the department had worked to shuffle offices around and move offices to the Annex to reduce facility costs by closing other buildings.

Council President McCarthy asked about disaster recovery, particularly regarding Seaside Park. Mr. Carroll pointed out that while FEMA agrees with the plans for repairing Seaside Park sidewalks and some of the drainage plans. He added that one issue was adding more riprap along the sea wall, but the DEP has not approved this. Unfortunately, the Federal government moves slower than the City. Mr. Carroll said that one portion of the beach had been lowered by the lighthouse and it took very little damage. However, the baseball field took a beating, as did the sidewalks and seawalls.

Council Member dePara requested that Mr. Carroll introduce the members of the staff that were present. Mr. Carroll did so. He added that Mr. Garcia had joined the staff to help coordinate the school buildings.

Mr. Carroll then outlined the various relocations of the offices and how the consolidation of the buildings was being handled.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked about the personnel summary on page 180. She wished to know whether all the staff members listed were housed in his office. Mr. Carroll listed the employees who were working in other locations, such as Anti-Blight, Purchasing, and

Permitting. Council Member dePara wished to know why they were classified in different categories. Mr. Carroll explained.

Council President McCarthy asked why the parking meter collections were down; what was being done to modernized, and whether the parking meters should be sold off to a private company and then rented back. Mr. Sherwood said that this was basically an OPED question. Mr. Carroll said that there needed to be more enforcement. Discussion followed.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia then asked about food trucks that take up several parking spaces and the meters are expired. She asked if there was a permit fee that over ride the parking meters. Mr. Carroll said that he would not be able to issue a permit.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked about the three departments involved in the dealing with the parking meters. The revenue goes into the general fund. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that there was a numerous parking meter companies available through the National League of Cities that might be able to help with the meters.

Council Member dePara asked about the principles and debt service. Mr. Sherwood reviewed the details of the debt allocation. The decrease in that line is due to debt retirement. Discussion followed.

Garage – Council Member Silva asked about the take home cars. The information is on page 188. The biggest increase is in gas and fuel. The quantities are good and diesel use is down, but the price per gallon is up.

Council Member Curwen pointed out that there was a salary increase for a clerk. Mr. Sherwood said that this was due to the salary grid for NAGE. Council President McCarthy said that all the other unions agreed to compromises but NAGE did not accept freezes. Mr. Sherwood said that the City was in arbitration for almost three years with NAGE. He reminded everyone that the salaries were being adjusted for the three years lag. Council Member Curwen requested a chart showing all the unions increases, and the salary grid. Discussion followed.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked about the unaffiliated positions. Mr. Sherwood reviewed the details of those salary increases.

Council Member Silva asked where the take home cars were and if they were being used daily. He said that there had been a number of comments from residents about City vehicles being taken home. Mr. Sherwood said that there were only three vehicles and that there was some vehicles that were for on-calls.

Mr. Carroll pointed out that the biggest expenses were the aging fleet, and gave an example of one city vehicle where the bottom of the vehicle rotted out. Mr. Carroll then pointed out that one

garbage truck is very expensive. He pointed out that the department has learned to do more with less. He said that the National standards for Parks indicated that the City should have 34 more employees due to the park acreage. The Parks Department is operating with only 2/3rd of the staff it should have.

Because of the lighter winter, the staff was able to work on the parks, repair trucks and other heavy equipment. Mr. Catino said that most people think about cars, but the majority of the fleet is heavy equipment, such as the trucks. When the Capital plan comes up, there will be a request for rolling stock. A major repair on one piece of heavy equipment could support several cars. Replenishing two garbage trucks could cost half a million dollars.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked if the City had purchased sand, salt and other chemicals now since it was a mild winter. Mr. Carroll said that using the brine had reduced the amount of salt and sand needed and helped in the spring clean up. He pointed out that the BOE has smaller vehicles and don't have the heavy equipment to clear the school properties.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked for a list of projects underway. Mr. Graybarz passed up a copy of a report that lists 63 items. Mr. Carroll said that those were not all the project.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked about the project to purchase land for a major garage so everything would be under one roof. Mr. Sherwood said that it was underway in stages. Bringing the mechanics into the building would help, but it will also require the installation of equipment such as lifts, HVAC and ventilation systems so the equipment can be worked on inside.

Council Member dePara asked about the remaining balance for gas and diesel. Mr. Catino said that the price of diesel was increasing and that he believed he was very close to coming in on budget if there was not a .30 cent increase per gallon. Diesel consumption has not really increased, but the price has increased significantly.

Council Member dePara asked about a line item and was told that it was GPS monitoring. Mr. Catino said that it has improved efficiency and accountability.

Council Member dePara asked about Outside Services. Mr. Catino said that those were things like oil changes and other small tasks. He added that one of the mechanic positions has been vacant most of the year and that increases the amount of outside services needed. This position has been advertised and the department is now working on hiring someone. When the position is filled, the outside services costs will be reduced.

Facility Maintenance – The information for this was found on pg 201. Mr. Carroll said that the department was working on consolidating offices and close buildings were possible. The bulbs in the deco lights have been changed to LEDs.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that there had been discussions in the past about purchasing additional deco lights to repair damaged. She said that there were several that had been broken and had exposed wires and bolts sticking out. This could cause liability on the City's part. She said that doing preventative maintenance would be worthwhile. Mr. Carroll asked Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia to send him the list of the broken poles.

Council Member Curwen said he was very dissatisfied with the recent paving contractor. He pointed out that one street had been paved five or six years ago and there are cracks down the center of the road, along with dips and bumps. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that in the past, the paving did not have seams, but now the seams break up easily. She added that perhaps using airport grade asphalt would be preferable. Mr. Kennedy explained that the City does use airport grade and it is called SuperPave, the best on the market. He also gave an overview of the paving process and pointed out that some streets are so old they can't mill the street any more and it has to be reconstructed from the gravel bed upward. The asphalt is checked by engineers when it comes from the plant. Council Member Silva asked about the Firehouse on Beechmont and said that there was a dip forming in front of the station. A note was made of this.

Council Member Curwen asked for an update on the Health Department. Mr. Carroll said that he was looking for a location and that it would be important to keep the clinic on the East Side for the clients. Discussion followed.

Council Member Curwen asked what the vision was for the other buildings and Mr. Carroll gave a quick overview.

Council Member Curwen asked if the Parks Master Plan had been completed. Mr. Graybarz said that they were getting ready for the final printing and there would be a presentation to the Council

Council Member dePara asked about the line item for Building Materials and Supplies. Mr. Catino said that it was where lumber, hinges, and other items were assigned. Council Member dePara asked about "Other Services". This covers boiler supplies, and permits.

Council Member dePara asked about the rental equipment. Mr. Catino said that it was the lifter. Management Services covers the parking costs for the garage on John Street.

Mr. Catino then indicated the lines which covers services such as fencing, elevators and other specialized services repairs. Building services covers any service that the City can not provide. Discussion followed.

Roadway - Mr. Sherwood said that there were a number of vacant positions, but the department had used seasonals and other positions were frozen due to union negotiations that were still

under way. However, there are new guidelines regarding part time employees now having paid sick days. Mr. Carroll said that he would be filling the positions. It is either fill the position or pay overtime. Discussion followed about the figures.

Council Member Brannelly asked about an administrative position that reflected a drop. Mr. Sherwood said that the employee had been let go and the salary dropped back to the starting pay.

Council Member dePara had several questions regarding individual line items, which Mr. Catino review with him.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that the crosswalk striping at Madison and Westfield was flawed where a utility cut out a patch in the crosswalk and it wasn't filled properly.

Council Member Brannelly said that she had concerns about the fact that when the snow removal had to be done last year, the department had to scrap funding together to pay for it. She said that she felt the Council Members should be able to see every transfer from one account to another. This would allow them to be aware of the expenses and where the funds are coming from Mr. Catino said that he can transfer the funds between groups, which are actually commodities, such as sand, salt, brine, etc. Mr. Sherwood said that last year because of the severe winter, the department had to come to the Council for authorization to transfer funds from outside the group. Mr. Catino pointed out that last year, it was a snow emergency.

Council Member dePara said that it was definitely important for the departments to be able to function but it would help for the Committee to see some of these things and make a better decision when major events like the snow emergency situation. Mr. Sherwood said that Mr. Appleby generates a storm report that summarizes the costs of the City.

The discussion then moved to the long standing practice regarding the transfer of funds within groups and how that may have changed. Page 13 in the Budget book has the list of the various codes. Discussion followed.

Recycling and Sanitation - Mr. Carroll said that the department has more than doubled the recycling and that the tonnage is dropping. Mr. Graybarz said that the program with the Recycling Bank was working. He then gave an overview of how the program works. The volume of recycling has increased, but the tonnage has decreased because the containers are lighter now.

Council Member Curwen asked where the revenue was from this recycling. Mr. Catino then gave an overview of the process with SWEROC, which is complicated. He said that there was a recent meeting of the towns who form SWEROC. Mr. Cottell explained that the savings were cost avoidance. Mr. Catino said that this was listed on page 24. The Toters purchased have

helped in cost reduction in two ways. They have reduced worker's comp and the tops on the Toters prevents the water from getting mixed in with the garbage and reduces the tonnage.

Council Member dePara had several questions about the individual line items, which Mr. Sherwood and Mr. Catino reviewed with him. He was told that the increase in the department was due to the fact that the City would now be handling their recycling. This will involve adding a dumpster and a truck for pick up. Mr. Garcia said that the bins were already in place and the program was poised to start last year, but due to the BOE upheaval, the program was side lined. Mr. Garcia said that right now there is too much turmoil going on at the BOE. He said that with only two and a half months left in the school year, it would be better to start off next year.

Transfer station - Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked about the City employee there. Mr. Carroll that there was only one City employee there, the others were from the company.

Golf Course - Mr. Carroll said that the course was doing well and that there only two employees, the greens keeper and assistant greens keeper, all the others are seasonals.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked about the water and sewer fees for the golf course. Mr. Cottell said those fees were determined by Fairfield.

Council Member Brannelly asked about \$100,000 shortfall in the forecast. Mr. Carroll said that right now the course was substantially ahead this month than they were last year. He said that he did not believe that the predicted shortfall would happen.

Recreation - Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked about the drop in the field rentals. Mr. Carroll said that this was due to leagues fees, but the number of leagues have dropped. Most of the teams that play on the fields are Bridgeport residents and do not pay for the field usage. The out of town teams are the ones that are charged.

Parks - Council Member Silva asked about the .06¢ in the salary line. Mr. Sherwood said that this was Mr. Carroll's pay and it has to be in the budget.

Council Member Brannelly asked about the variance on the special events coordinator. Mr. Sherwood said that this was a special agreement for a position that includes tree warden and other roles.

Parks Maintenance - Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked about the seasonal check points attendants. Mr. Carroll explained that the number fluctuates between week-days and the week-ends. There are also cross checks to insure that the number of passes and the money was taken in were accurate.

All parks employees work on the week-ends.

Engineering - A discussion followed about the situation where a current employee was in the process of qualifying as an engineer. The permits are signed off by an outside certified engineering.

Harbor Master - The new Harbor Master is very active and working on collecting mooring fees. All the revenue goes to the Harbor Commission.

Council Member dePara asked about page 283 where there was an increase of \$100,000. Mr. Sherwood said that the lighthouse license plate revenue has stopped. The City is giving the Harbor Commission a one time gift to upgrade the pump out boat.

Regarding the City Engineer, Council Member dePara asked about that difference between last year's salary and this year's. Mr. Carroll reviewed the details.

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL MEMBER SILVA MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER DEPARA SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 10:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS
BUDGET HEARINGS
APRIL 18, 2012**

ATTENDANCE: Angel dePara, Co-Chair; Carlos Silva, Susan Brannelly,
AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia

STAFF: Thomas Sherwood, OPM

OTHERS: Fire Chief Brian Rooney; Mr. Scott Appleby, EOC; Council
Member Andre Baker

CALL TO ORDER

Council Member dePara called the meeting to order at 6:16 p.m.

Mr. Sherwood distributed a document to the Commission members.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY MOVED TO ENTER THE DOCUMENT
TITLED FY 2013 DEBT SERVICE AS BUDGET EXHIBIT #1-4/18/12**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER SILVA SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mr. Sherwood gave an overview of the figures on the debt service spreadsheet with the Committee members. He said that this document had been requested at the previous meeting and wanted to get the figures to the Committee members so they would have time to read it over. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia requested that several spreadsheet layout changes be made. Mr. Sherwood explained that it was a very long document, so it was broken into smaller segments.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

Mr. Sherwood said that the biggest change on the budget was the pension plan. The big items were on page 156 and 157. There were 13 positions that were eliminated because of the Federal grant funding that covers everything but the tuition at the Fire Academy. Mr. Sherwood outlined the grant priorities, which is rehiring laid off fire fighters and to restore the vacant positions. New hires are the last priority. Currently the City is in the process testing fire fighter candidates. There will be 18 positions filled when the process is completed.

Chief Rooney said that his department was satisfied with the budget. He said that the City was still working on the Safe Sleep program, which they sponsored since 2005. The federal grant dollars for this program has become more difficult to acquire, but since the City had continually

worked at this program, the City should be in a good standing for it. Mr. Sherwood said the Mayor had run a golf tournament to raise funds.

Council Member dePara asked where the line items for the Federal funding was allocated. Deputy Chief Petrucelli reviewed the budget lines.

The department works with RYSAP on installation, but some of the buildings have six families in it, so that one building could take up to 20 alarms. Proper installation is important.

There is a major effort to keep the program in the public awareness. Council Member McCarthy will participate by delivering pizza, which was a major draw. 35,000 smoke alarms have been placed in homes over the life of the program and more than 150 documented incidents where people survived because of the program.

RYSAP has been a great partner in this and they have worked hard to get into the schools. For the first time, the parochial schools have participated in the program.

The discussion moved to the grant deadline details. The RYSAP program has their own vehicle. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that she had concerns about the insurance coverage on the vehicles. Chief Rooney said that RYSAP has their own insurance coverage, but he would check into this.

Chief Rooney then explained that the combination smoke detector/carbon monoxide detectors. The CO2 is heavier than air, so the fumes tend to stay closer to the floor, whereas the smoke rises. Straight CO2 detectors plug into the wall, but smoke alarms should be mounted on the ceiling. The units that are installed are sealed units that are tamper proof where the batteries can't be removed. The units are riveted into the ceiling so they can't be stolen.

The discussion then briefly moved to the matching funds if the City is awarded the grant.

Council Member dePara asked for a review of the revenue summary on page 156. Deputy Chief Petrucelli gave a run down of the income revenue. Deputy Chief Petrucelli explained that there was a new charge for emergency response time. If a vehicle catches fire, a billing company will submit a bill for the truck and firefighters for their response. The letter is sent to the insurance company. Some insurance companies will pay it upon receipt of the City ordinance requiring this.

Regarding the Fire Watch reimbursement, Deputy Chief Petrucelli explained that State Law requires a Fire Marshal to be present when large crowd assembles for an event, such as a basketball game. Often there is a Fire Inspector on the main floor and one by the panel in case of an accidental alarm, such as a balloon in the rafters. The fire inspector determines whether or not there is cause to evacuate. This also includes the fireworks and other events.

Council Member Silva said that he was pleased to see that the Fire Department was charging the insurance companies for services.

Council Member dePara asked about the Daycare Permit process. Deputy Chief Petrucelli said that the Fire Marshal determines the schedule and the cost is approved by the Council.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked whether the revenue from these permits remains in the City or if it goes to the State. Deputy Chief Petrucelli said that the money stays in Bridgeport. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia had several questions about illegal daycare centers and stated that she knew where a number of illegal daycare centers were located. She said that she would send this information to the Chief.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked about the length of the Firefighter Grant. Chief Rooney said that it was two years. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia wished to know if the department was planning to retain these fire fighters and where the funding was coming from. Mr. Sherwood said that right now, there was a number of vacancies already, and since the pension moved over to the State, so the funding will be there.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked about the smoke alarm program in the schools. She said that both she and her children had been in a fire safety contest in the schools. She wanted to know if this type of program was still running. Chief Rooney said that there was a similar program underway. Discussion followed.

Council Member Brannelly asked for more details on the Firefighter's Safer Grant. Deputy Chief Petrucelli said that the grant will pay the salaries and the benefits of the new hires for two years. She had several more detailed questions about finances and the cost of benefits on page 155, which Mr. Sherwood reviewed with the Commission members.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked why there was a decrease in Meetings and Workshops and Education. Deputy Chief Petrucelli said that Mr. Sherwood monitors the transfers from one line to another and then will often adjust the categories accordingly the following year. The transfer amounts are going to where the department actually needs it.

Council Member dePara asked about the appropriation summaries on page 162. One item was the phone services. Deputy Chief Petrucelli said that this line item covers cell phones, land lines, Reverse 9-1-1, and other charges associated with phone services for eight fire houses.

The discussion the briefly shifted back to benefits, workers' comp and retirement.

Council Member dePara asked about the line item having to do with the cost of putting 18 candidates through the Fire Academy. Deputy Chief Petrucelli said that the department is down about 40 firefighters. He is projecting overtime will be over budget. Council Member dePara wished to know where all the overtime costs were coming from. Mr. Sherwood reviewed the

details and reminded everyone that there were mandatory manning requirements of 61 firefighters for every shift every day. When people are out sick, or on vacation, those are vacancies that must be filled. Deputy Chief Petrucelli said that since December of 2007, the department has lost 42 firefighters due to retirement, termination, and other reasons. Discussion followed.

Following the discussion on the transfer of the retirement to MERF, Council Member dePara said that the \$800,000 in savings was not enough and that he wanted 24 million. Mr. Sherwood said that this amount would not be found in the firefighters' retirement. Council Member Baker had several questions about the overtime, which Mr. Sherwood answered. Council Member Brannelly said that she would like to see where the overtime funding was coming from. Mr. Sherwood said that there was the salaries from the vacant positions. Council Member Brannelly said that having the source of the funding was important. Mr. Sherwood pointed out that while the salary was a right, overtime was not. The department must stay within their budget.

Council Member dePara asked about the staffing on page 164. Mr. Sherwood said that the break out was on page 166. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that this was one of the layout issues and it should be consistent. Council Member dePara said that there should be a way to put the header in. Mr. Sherwood explained that the reports were driven by the codes. Council Member dePara said that Mr. Sherwood should insert the headers manually.

Council Member Baker asked about removing positions from the budget. Mr. Sherwood noted that they had been reduced and indicated the column where the information was shown.

Mr. Sherwood said that he would get copies of the fire grant applications for the Committee members and the information about the benefits and MERF transfer.

Council Member Silva asked Mr. Appleby about security for IT. Mr. Appleby said that he would look into this and also look at this from a regional standpoint. He said that Bridgeport has a good grants department, they manage the regional funding for the sixteen towns in the region. He said he would be happy to sit down with Mr. Heller about this.

Mr. Appleby directed everyone's attention to page 161 where there was a listing of additional accomplishments. The City was able to obtain about 1.3 million in Homeland Security funding. He gave an overview on how the City would handle something like security cameras. Mr. Appleby then reviewed the Emergency Operations grant that covers half of his salary. This grant has been renewed every year. Discussion about the details of this grant and how the funding is processed.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia then said that there were several services available through CCM. She said that researching on the computer could result in getting more grants by using a more creative approach. She pointed out that the 9/11 bombers had been in Bridgeport, patronized local businesses and added the Times Square bomber had also been in Bridgeport, so

that this risk was right in the back yard. Mr. Appleby said that it would be important to consider sustainability when considering the programs or grant funding. This is why collaboration is important. Discussion followed.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that she had been speaking with someone involved in Boston EOC and the staff member was very impressed with Mr. Appleby's work. She stated for the record that too often, the good work that the EOC, the fire department and others went unnoticed.

Council Member Brannelly then asked about the Personnel summary. Mr. Sherwood that these increases were all contractual.

Council Member Baker asked where the grant reimbursement for the portion of Mr. Appleby's salary. Mr. Sherwood gave the line item number. Council Member dePara requested a report showing all the years reimbursements and when they arrived. Mr. Sherwood then reviewed the accounting practices used for this when there is a lengthy Federal delay. Mr. Appleby said that following the northeaster, FEMA took care of all the smaller towns first, and just now is beginning to handle the larger cities.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia commented about the fact that the fire fighters are the first responders and injuries on the job contribute to the overtime. Mr. Appleby said that during Tropical Storm Irene, the Fire Department alone racked up \$24,000 in overtime as part of the FEMA request. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that if there was anything that the Council could do to help, they should let the Council know. Mr. Appleby said that recently, Bridgeport had found out that they were about to be designated a "Storm Ready" community, which should help the City in applying for grants.

Council Member Baker asked who determines the retirement and sick days. Mr. Sherwood said that this was determined by the various contracts. This is tracked through the system until the employee retires.

Council Member dePara then asked about page 157, where there is an unassigned designation. He asked what the staff's assignments were. There are eight line assistant chiefs and one in training. Council Member dePara asked about one variation on a salary. Mr. Sherwood recounted the events surrounding this change.

Chief Rooney thanked the Council member s for their time. He requested that they consider keeping the budget intact because it involves public safety.

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL MEMBER SILVA MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET & APPROPRIATE
BUDGET HEARINGS
APRIL 19, 2012**

ATTENDANCE: Angel dePara, Co-chair; Susan Brannelly; Council President
Thomas McCarthy; AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia

OTHERS: Tom Errichetti, Bpt Public Library Trustee; Scott Hughes; Bpt. Public Librarian; Kelly McDermott, Community Development Senior Developer; Alexia McGoldrick, Central Grants Acting Director, Alanna Kabel, CAO Assistant Director, Jim O'Donnell, Bpt. Library Board Chair; Paul Arroyo, Bpt. Public Library Trustee; Don Greenberg, Bpt. Public Library Trustee

CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner dePara called the meeting to order at 6:15 p.m. He introduced everyone present and stated that Council Member Curwen was not able to be present due to illness.

CENTRAL GRANTS/LIBRARY.

Ms. McGoldrick said that both she and Ms. McDermott were present to discuss their requested budgets. Ms. McGoldrick distributed documents to the Committee.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY MOVED TO ENTER ACCOMPLISHMENT
2011-2012 AS CENTRAL GRANTS EXHIBIT A.
** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA SECONDED.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Ms. McGoldrick said that now that there are fewer grants available, the department is very careful to analyze the various grants in terms of the competitive number and return on investment. This also includes factoring in the matching funds aspect. She continued to review the various aspects of the department's work. The grant writers now spend more time crafting the applications, which are very complicated. While the program managers spend a fair amount of time providing information on the actual administration, the department is now working on monitoring the compliance and alignment of the grant funding objectives. MUNIS has helped with the reporting.

The shifts and changes in the department has resulted in an increase in grand awards. In the future, the department hopes to continue to increase the success rate in terms of grant awards. Ms. McGoldrick then listed the various grants that were pending or in the pre-submission process.

Council President McCarthy said that the presentation was excellent. He added that he was pleased that the department was working with OPM, but would appreciate it if the department reported back to the Council after the grant is awarded. Ms. McGoldrick agreed and said that previously, the department did not receive a report and the feedback from those reports were very important in determining how worthwhile the grant was in terms of specific time spent in applying for the grant. Ms. Kabel said that this would also be tracking the funding for the City. The way that the current system is set up, the City fronts the money and the City is later reimbursed.

Council President McCarthy asked about the vacant position. Ms. Kabel said that the position had been occupied, but due to a grant reduction, the staff member moved to Community Development, so the position is vacant.

Council Member Brannelly said that Ms. McGoldrick had mentioned a transition year while the department changed their focus to more analysis of the grants from the previous scatter shot application process. Discussion followed.

Council Member Brannelly asked what would happen if the City did not get the SAFER grant and what kind of planning had been done. Ms. McGoldrick gave an overview of the Federal application requirements.

Council Member Brannelly asked about the reimbursement tracking. Ms. McGoldrick said that OPM periodically checks to see what reimbursements have been received. There are many viable with each individual grant.

Council Member Silva said that both Mr. Sherwood and Chief Rooney were fairly positive that the SAFER grant would be awarded. Ms. McGoldrick listed the various reasons why the department was feeling optimistic about this.

Council Member Silva then asked if the department was shifting away from funding salaries with grant money. Ms. Kabel said that the department has been working on this and there have been a shift of some of those positions over to the City. When there are non-CDBG programs, the program often has an end date and the positions also terminate.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked if there were more employees under her department that worked elsewhere. Ms. McGoldrick said that currently there are four staff members and one vacant position.

Council Member dePara had several questions about the items listed on page 30-40. Ms. McGoldrick explained that the duties of the Financial Manager had changed and that the position had shifted over to OPM. Having the analysis will help when the reporting is due.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked for clarification on travel expenses and travel services on page 39. Ms. McGoldrick said that this break out was required by MUNIS, but it was basically all covered by travel budget. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia has several other questions about various line items. Ms. McGoldrick gave the information she had available and said that she would report back to the co-chairs on the information that was not immediately available.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT.

Ms. McDermott said that her office had combined with Community Development and last year the funding was cut by 15%.

- ** COUNCIL MEMBER COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY MOVED TO ENTER COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM YEAR - 37 NOTEWORTHY ACCOMPLISHMENT AS COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT EXHIBIT A.**
- ** COUNCIL MEMBER SILVA SECONDED.**
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Ms. McDermott spoke about the HUD funding programs for CDBG grants, such as HOPWA, ESGA and others. As the economy worsens, the needs increase. Ms. McDermott reviewed various programs listed on the Exhibit A handout with the Committee members. Many of the applications are incorporating the BGreen items into their programs. This has helped with leveraging with the Central Grants programs. When all the program reductions are combined, the department will see a 9% decrease in administration funding.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that she had received some feedback from a constituent who served on the Committee and that constituent was very pleased with the information and wished to serve again.

Council Member Silva asked about the process for allocating funds. He said that he understood that the funding was to be used for seed money and the groups were expected to provide their own sustainability. Ms. McDermott said that the department wants the groups to be pro-active and serve the needs of the community. HUD would like to have the funding have an impact on the community. Council Member Silva asked if the City should institute a term limit. Ms. McDermott said that the department could work with the applicants on providing more sustainability.

RECESS.

Council Member dePara declared a recess at 7:20 p.m. The meeting was called back into order at 7:27 p.m.

BRIDGEPORT PUBLIC LIBRARY

Mr. O'Donnell came forward and introduced the members of the Board and Mr. Hughes. There are currently 85 staff members on the payroll, the balance of which are part time. The Burroughs branch is now open on Sundays from 1-5. The other branches have one day a week and Sundays when they are closed due to staff shortages. With the funds available, the Board would like to have all the branches open with staff.

The Board was just informed that their web page has received an award. More and more of the reference questions are routed through the web portal. The Library subscribes to several periodicals such as Dunn & Bradstreet, which allows the residents access. There are also test preparation resources available through the library webpage also. Documents pertaining to the budget are available on the website. Many residents do not have access to a personal computer, so the 248 library computers that are available to the public assist with this.

Another initiative is to provide a safe haven for the students after school. Mr. O'Donnell then gave the details of how this might work.

The Teen Center is almost completed and renovations at Burroughs is underway. There is no one on staff with a CDL so the book mobile can be used consistently.

The East Side community has expressed a number of thoughts regarding having a library in the East Side.

RECESS.

A brief recess was declared at 7:45 p.m. The meeting reconvened at 8:02 p.m.

LIBRARY CONT'D

Mr. O'Donnell said that during the break, Mr. Hughes informed him that all the library branches were opened six days a week. This is part of the 20% increase in service hours. This also increased number of hours that the public has access to the computers. The branches are also now more available to the public, such as the one at the North End branch held on April 18, where the Governor was able to address the education package being considered by the State Legislators. The Mayor has also held a meeting at the Black Rock Branch to address the residents about the budget. The library is available for the public for educational, cultural and other events.

Mr. O'Donnell said that the Board had planned on bringing a PowerPoint presentation, but due to some last minute technical difficulties, they were not able to bring it. The information will be available on the website. Unfortunately, Mr. Errichetti had to leave for another meeting, but hoped to return to answer any financial questions that the Committee members had.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked about Mr. Errichetti's absence. Mr. O'Donnell said that Mr. Errichetti was the Treasurer for the Library Board was required to be at another City meeting. He will try to return as soon as possible.

Council Member dePara asked about the \$10,000. Mr. O'Donnell said that this was on the website and it was a copy of the strategic plan. There are six main categories, which are in the budget package. Council Member dePara asked for clarification on the location of the information on the website. Mr. O'Donnell said that it was under the "About Us" and on the upper right, there is a link to the Library's long range plan. That information is actually incorporated into the budget. Council Member dePara noted that the plan was also available in Spanish. Mr. O'Donnell said that while the library would like to have it available in one of the other 60 languages heard in the City, the translation services are expensive. When the staff increases, one of the focuses would be to hire staff that were fluent in some of the other languages so that everyone has access to the document.

He said that he believed that the library has a good collection of Spanish language resources and said that Director Arroyo could give a better evaluation since Mr. O'Donnell's Spanish was minimal. Director Arroyo agreed that the collection was good. However, Mr. O'Donnell said that the resources for the other people groups were lacking. The resources for English as Second Language learners is fairly large. This will assist the residents in becoming more fluent in English and enable them to access the other resources that the Library does have.

Council Member McCarthy rejoined the meeting at 8:08 p.m.

One primary concern that the Board has was to provide services to the communities that were served by the leased facilities. These are the East End, where the Old Mill Green facility is and the East Side, where the Newfield Branch is. The Board has been reminded on a number of occasions that there may be land available as part of the old marine project and also as another RFP feasibility study. This is being considered.

Another project on the Capital side of the planning is to utilize the resources and funding that are available for the educational aspect. There have been discussions in the past and hopefully there will be ones in the future about partnering with private and non-profits organizations in the City and the Board of Education to make use of space within those facilities for the East End, such as Dunbar School library to be used by the public for services for the local community. These would be providing access to hard resources elsewhere.

The Board has been approached and had some meetings with Housatonic Community College about a partnership with them. They are exploring grant funding for their museum and expanding their classroom capacity.

Mr. Hughes, the City Librarian, then came forward and said that much time has been spent just being a resource and the Library has been active in terms of community meetings. He added that

the Library has been able to build on some of the partnerships with other organizations. This includes work force placement with Mr. Carbone.

A primary program is with Bridgeport Beautifying, that has resulted in community gardens and some murals. Another event was Bridgeport Votes where candidates were hosted at the libraries. There has been a major effort to put the information on the website and get the e-information out.

Working on the Facilities Master Plan is critical. Work is ongoing with Purchasing to get that out. There has been interest from national firms regarding doing a City Wide Facility Master Plan and this will benefit the Library greatly. Mr. Hughes said that he would welcome insights on areas where they could improve.

Council Member dePara asked about college prep. Mr. O'Donnell said that this was on the webpage on the right hand column, there was a download for audio ebooks and access for entertainment purposes and non-fiction. The Test preparation is where the video courses for SAT, ACT, and PSAT. Below that there are a few language options available and the test and education reference center would be the link most helpful in terms of locating information about scholarships and testing information. Council Member dePara asked if this information had been forwarded to the high schools. Mr. O'Donnell said that the information had been given to the high schools and that Ms. Cunningham had been working on this to coordinate with the different curriculum in the schools. One project is to give the students access to the library with their student ID cards.

Council Member dePara said that he would like to request that the Library make additional efforts to reach out to the high schools about these resources that are available through the Library. He said that these two things would help and encourage the students. Mr. Hughes said that some work has been started with Housatonic in a V.I.P. program for SAT prep at the library. There have been some programs in the Teen spaces at the main library and Black Rock. However, he said that he agreed that more awareness needed to be given to the public. Council Member dePara asked if there were notices in the library. Mr. Hughes said that there were. Mr. O'Donnell said that the library staff was trying to find ways to communicate this, but unless the patrons come in and picks up the flyers, the information doesn't go anywhere.

Council Member Brannelly asked whether there was any way for a library to generate revenue. Mr. Hughes said that there were ways and models out there to generate revenue. He said that when Borders in Fairfield went out of business, Fairfield University came in and took over the space. There are products that could be marketed. Council Member Brannelly asked about the books themselves. Mr. Hughes said that there was an ongoing book sale. Council Member Brannelly asked about the ebooks. Mr. O'Donnell pointed out that there was a fine line between providing the tax payers with services that their revenue supports and charging them for something. Council Member Brannelly agreed. Discussion followed.

Council Member Brannelly asked about grants. Mr. Hughes said that most of the grants were geared towards the Bridgeport History Center. The Friends of the Library have also come a long way and are more viable. There have been some grants applied for through the Friends. The non-profit Resource Center grant was helpful and has been expanded. It is an area that the Library is considering, particularly now that the Friends have become more established. It would be good to have a grant writer that could work directly with the Friends of the Library.

When the Facilities Master Plan RFP goes out, it will allow for the Library's first Capital campaign. Most of the fund raising will be in the Capital improvements. There is a 5 million dollar fund for urban public libraries at the State level and the library would be eligible for. Once the Master Plan is underway, the City can apply.

Council Member Brannelly asked about the difference between the strategic Master Plan and the Facilities Master Plan that had been reference earlier. The Strategic Long Range Plan on the Library website is more of an operational plan and the Facilities Master Plan is a twenty year building program and vision for the entire City. The Facilities Master Plan could be used to apply for funds for the Old Mill Green branch and the Newfield branch capital improvements. Mr. Hughes said that there was a \$20,000 grant to do the plan. Council Member Brannelly asked if the Strategic Plan was completed. She was told that the plan was completed. Council Member Brannelly then asked about the Facilities Master Plan. Mr. Hughes said that the RFP had not been released yet.

Council Member dePara asked about the funding that was listed under the Capital funds for FY 11-12 grant. He asked about the \$250,000 set aside for the East Side and East End library. Mr. Hughes said that it should cost a fraction of that amount for the city wide facilities study plan and the East Side and East End will be covered in that study. Discussion followed about the details of the facility plan.

Council Member Brannelly asked about the personnel summary. She said that there were 53 full time positions listed. Discussion followed about the how the pages were listed and where they were listed in budget. Council Member Brannelly asked if the list could be broken out. Mr. Hughes said that he just submits the salary scale and once it goes to OPM, he was unsure as to how it is tabulated.

Council President McCarthy asked for a list of part time employees along with the salaries. Mr. Hughes said that he had a list of the salaries without the names that he could send. Further discussion followed and moved on to vacancies. Mr. Hughes said that he could send an up to date list of vacancies. Mr. O'Donnell said that there was also an ongoing updating of the existing job descriptions. The Library is working with Civil Service on this.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia then asked about the translations services. She asked if the partnership with the BOE would consider using some teachers or students for the translation purposes for credit. Mr. O'Donnell said that he would check into this. Mr. Hughes said that the

Library does have some foreign language classes and mentioned perhaps seeing if volunteers would be able to assist in this area.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked about the appropriation supplement and noted a large increase in the phone services. She also asked about the travel costs and noted that there was nothing listed for the recent attendance at an award ceremony. Mr. Hughes said that he had in fact attended the event and had paid the costs out of his own pocket.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked about Other Services line on page 377. Mr. Hughes said that he could provide the Council Members with an itemized break down. Council Member dePara had some further questions about that line item in reference to the monthly financial report. Mr. Hughes said that it may include debt service. Mr. O'Donnell reminded everyone that Mr. Errichetti would be the one best able to answer the detailed financial questions. Mr. O'Donnell said that there had been discussions with Mr. Sherwood about this.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that there was a large increase in regard to both membership services and telephone services on page 377. Mr. Hughes said that he was not sure why these items increased, but pointed out that the Library does pay its own bills now. Mr. O'Donnell said that the Library had gone to OpenAccess source through Bibliomation and the increase in that line item would be most likely be attributed to that. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that she would like to see the invoice covering the increase.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked about the recycling at the libraries and wished to know if the libraries were using the City services to do this. Mr. Hughes said that to the best of his knowledge, the City was handling their blue and green bins.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked where the funding from the Klein Foundation was indicated in the budget. Mr. O'Donnell said that the Library had been divested from the Klein. Atty. John Barton had requested that three of the members of the Klein Foundation be recommended by nomination by the Library Board. Other than that, the Library Board and the Klein Foundation have nothing to do one another, in accordance with the judgment entered by Raymond with the Attorney General and City Attorney's Office. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked about the facility located across the street. Mr. O'Donnell said that it was a City owned facility that was covered by Public Facilities like Kennedy Stadium, and other items. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia then wished to know if there was a charge for parking there and where the revenue from any parking charges went along with who was in charge of it. Mr. O'Donnell said that the Foundation had never charged for that and he believed that when Fairfield Theater was involved with it, those funds were used to pay for the staff that they had to secure the lot. It was not something that the Klein Foundation handles since the Foundation really isn't in a position, other than the Capital steps show, to produce shows. It rents the facility. The groups are under a management contract. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that she wished to have clarification on this matter. Mr. O'Donnell said that Mr. Greenberg was

not a member of the Foundation, however, Mr. O'Donnell himself is a member of the Foundation but the Library is not involved at all.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked if the Library Board members were listed on the website. Mr. O'Donnell said that the Library Board members were indeed listed on the website.

Council President McCarthy then asked about the revenue summary and another summary, but there was additional revenue such as fines and other items. He then asked what the other revenue sources were. Mr. O'Donnell said that in the monthly meeting, the Board members received the same information that is currently in front of the Committee members and another sheet that relates to the non-levied funds from bequests, etc. Council President McCarthy asked about seeing a report on any revenues that were non-taxed mill funds. Mr. O'Donnell said that he would provide the Committee members with a report. He stated that there were restricted endowments and other unrestricted funds. Discussion followed about details of the various bequests.

Council Member dePara had questions about the appropriation summary line item 56045 for Building Maintenance services on page 377. Mr. O'Donnell said that this line item covered basic operational issues such as fixing the elevator or the heating system. Another amount in the Other Services line is a result of an arrangement with Public Facilities from the Shovel Ready program that the City had. Mr. Errichetti could clarify this.

The discussion then moved to the work that was done on the boilers and chillers, but not enough left from the ERA funds for the roof. Funds that were in reserve for the library were discussed with Mr. Sherwood and Mr. Carroll in order to use these funds for the capital project to repair the roof. The roof work started two weeks ago. Discussion followed about this.

Council Member dePara asked Mr. O'Donnell, Mr. Hughes and the others if they wished to leave the Committee with. Mr. O'Donnell then reviewed the various information that the Council Members had requested to be forwarded to them.

Council Member dePara wished to know what the leases listed on page 377 were for. Mr. O'Donnell said that they were the leases for Old Field Green and Newfield. There are written leases for each of them that have been written to allow the Library to terminate the lease without penalties if needed.

Council Member dePara wished to know what the Equipment line covered. Mr. Hughes said that it was for the purchase of computers, routers, laptops, and other associated equipment. Currently, the library is working on creating a process for patrons to use Kindles or laptops on a loan basis.

Council Member dePara asked about the Subscriptions line item on page 377 and inquired why the item had decreased. Mr. Hughes said that if something is available electronically, the Library is subscribing to it electronically rather than in the hard copy.

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at _____

Respectfully submitted

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services.

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS
BUDGET HEARINGS
APRIL 20, 2012**

ATTENDANCE: Robert Curwen, Co-chair; Angel dePara, Co-chair; Council President Thomas McCarthy, Carlos Silva, AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia (6:16 p.m.) Susan Brannelly (7:00 p.m.)

OTHERS: Fleeta Hudson, City Clerk; Frances Wilson, Assistant City Clerk; Alma Maya, Town Clerk; Christina Resto, Assistant Town Clerk

CALL TO ORDER

Council Member Curwen called the meeting to order at 6:13 p.m.

CITY CLERK & TOWN CLERK

Ms. Hudson greeted the Committee members. She distributed a document titled "City Clerk's Office" to the Committee members

- ** COUNCIL MEMBER DEPARA MOVED TO ENTER DOCUMENT CITY CLERK'S OFFICE AS CITY CLERK EXHIBIT #1.**
- ** COUNCIL MEMBER SILVA SECONDED.**
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Ms. Wilson said that she had increased the advertising line item because the Connecticut Post will be increasing their advertising fees by 5%.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia joined the meeting at 6:16 p.m.

In the Other Services, there is an amount for a new company that links Municipal ordinances to the City websites. Discussion followed about whether the company would be providing support or posting the ordinances on a third party website. Ms. Wilson said that the back up material on the quote and the email detailing this were in the information packet.

Council Member Curwen asked if all the positions were filled in the office. Ms. Wilson said that the budget book indicated that a Typist II was vacant. The form is in the Mayor's office. Both Ms. Hudson and Ms. Wilson requested that the position not be unfunded. Ms. Hudson pointed out that if something happened to Ms. Wilson, there was no back up.

Discussion followed about the situation and the purpose of the office as permanent record keeper. Ms. Hudson commented that it was important to have all the records submitted to her office as official records.

Council Member Silva had some questions about the line item budgets, which Ms. Wilson explained.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked about the postage and commented that she had received mailing with regular stamps on them. She went on to say that it had been decided some time ago to have all the mail routed through the Print Shop and not use regular stamps. Some notifications come in fifteen minutes before the end of the day and the letters have to be mailed out using regular stamps since the staff in the Print Shop have already left for the day. Ms. Wilson said that the Print Shop now has all the stamps and the electronic postage meter.

The Committee thanked the City Clerks for their time.

TOWN CLERK

Ms. Maya greeted the Committee and distributed a document titled "Bridgeport Town Clerk" She said that she would like to support one of Ms. Hudson's points that the office is the record keeper and therefore, it is important to have competent staff.

CITY CLERK CONT'D

At this point, Council Member Curwen realized he had one more question for Ms. Hudson. He then asked Ms. Hudson about her opinion regarding remodeling the Council Chambers. Council Member Curwen asked Ms. Hudson to compile a list of suggestions for the chambers including electrical outlets, springs on the gate, and possibly better signage.

TOWN CLERK CONT'D

Ms. Maya was asked about the positions in her office. She said that there currently was a vacant position.

- ** COUNCIL MEMBER DEPARA MOVED TO ENTER BRIDGEPORT TOWN CLERK INFORMATION PACKET AS TOWN CLERK EXHIBIT #1.**
- **COUNCIL MEMBER SILVA SECONDED.**
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Ms. Maya said that her office is struggling to keep up with the work and that filling the vacant position would be extremely helpful.

Ms. Maya said that she had been investigating having the land records uploaded to the City website. This would be done via a third party company. Mr. Heller has been in contact with the company about this and it would be a cost sharing program regarding the incoming revenue.

Council Member Silva asked about the election supplies line item. Ms. Resto explained that the money was for ballot printing. Ms. Maya said that there was now an Assistant Town Clerk II, which provides the back up for the Assistant Town Clerk. It was also noted that the mini-computer position has been eliminated. However, the mini-computer operator position is still reflected in the budget book. Council President McCarthy suggested that Ms. Maya speak to Mr. Sherwood about this.

Council Member dePara had several questions about the recording fees, which Ms. Maya and Ms. Resto answered in detail. Ms. Maya said that when the State had come in to do an inspection, there were numerous violations cited. During the discussion with the State, the State wished to know what happened to the Town Clerk Dollar fund, which is a state mandated fee that should be set aside by the City for preserving the records. Ms. Maya said that she did not know where the funds for this were being held.

The discussion then moved to the Farm Fund. Ms. Maya said that she did not know why that was reflecting a zero. This will be discussed with Mr. Sherwood. Council Member Curwen asked if the Town Clerk could provide the Committee with the back up and generate a report on the actual revenue deposits.

Council Member Curwen asked for an update on the digitalizing the records. Ms. Resto said that it had been started, but it was an ongoing project. The tax liens will be filmed in June and bound in volumes.

Ms. Resto said that when the State was doing the inspection, they noticed that the Clerk's office was running out of room. Copies of the letter from the State citing the violations were sent to many different offices, such as Comptrollers and the Mayor. Council Member Curwen asked for copies of the letter.

Ms. Resto said that the State Inspector indicated that due to the year the vault was constructed might be the problem. Ms. Maya said that there had been several steps taken to rectify some of the violations, such as moving the copiers and computers out.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked about the subscriptions. Ms. Resto said that they don't use that line item. However, they had do belong to the State Town Clerks Association. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that there should be a travel line item. Ms. Resto said that their department had never had a travel line.

Council Member Brannelly joined the meeting.

Council Member dePara asked how long there has been a vacancy in the Clerk's office. Ms. Resto then reviewed the timeline around the retirement of one staff member and subsequent promotions and staff changes.

Council Member dePara has several questions about various line items, which Ms. Resto answered.

Council Member dePara said that Ms. Resto will provide the report to the Committee.

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT MCCARTHY SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET & APPROPRIATIONS
BUDGET HEARINGS
APRIL 23, 2012**

ATTENDANCE: Robert Curwen, Co-chair; Co-chair Angel dePara; Susan Brannelly,
Carlos Silva, AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia; Council President
Thomas McCarthy (7:04 p.m.)

STAFF: Thomas Sherwood, OPM

OTHERS: Andrew Nunn, COA; Alanna Kabel, Assistant CAO; Council Member Andre
Baker, Jodi Paul, Deputy CAO/Citistat

CALL TO ORDER.

Council Member Curwen called the meeting to order at 6:20 p.m.

Mr. Sherwood then passed out several documents to the Committee members, including a report requested by Council Member Lyons and another requested by Council Member Brannelly.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY MOVED TO ENTER THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENT AS MUNIS FINANCIAL FIRE FOR 2010 AS FIRE EXHIBIT #1, MUNIS FINANCIAL FIRE FOR 2011 AS FIRE EXHIBIT #2; AND MUNIS FINANCIAL FIRE FOR 2012 AS FIRE EXHIBIT #3.**

****COUNCIL MEMBER DEPARA SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY MOVED TO ENTER THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENT AS GENERAL FUND BUDGET TAX BUDGET DETERMINATION TABLE AS OPM 04/23/12 EXHIBIT #1.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY MOVED TO ENTER THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENT AS AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE REVENUE ITEMS IN THE BUDGET AND MAKING BUDGET AS OPM 04/23/12 EXHIBIT #2.**

****COUNCIL MEMBER DEPARA SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY MOVED TO ENTER THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENT AS REVENUES BY CATEGORY AS OPM 04/12/12 EXHIBIT #3.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY MOVED TO ENTER THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENT AS FILLED/VACANT/NEW/UNFUNDED POSITION AS OPM 04/23/12.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

CAO / OPM

Mr. Sherwood said that his major goal was to work with the CAO and Citistat to increase efficiency in the City.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia had numerous questions about some of the positions listed in the budget book, which Mr. Sherwood reviewed. He said that the goal was to have a self contained grants report within the payroll.

Council Member Baker asked for clarification on the OPM analysis. Mr. Sherwood said that originally there had been 13 positions in his office but they were down to six. His office is neutral and can not pay a check, create a P.O. or other functions. Those are Finance functions. He said that the next task will be to analyze the job functions so that when projects such as building esplanades, or installing sidewalks the office will be able to determine how much it costs to build.

Council Member Baker asked who was responsible for entering information into MUNIS. Mr. Sherwood said that he was one of four people that were MUNIS managers. Council Member Baker said that he wanted to know why the department managers could not answer what was covered by certain categories, such as Other Supplies. Mr. Sherwood said that the line items were determined by commodities. The clerks know the account numbers because they submit the request for purchases. He gave an overview of the various steps that would go into bringing it into a detailed report that lists the individual purchases. Council Member Brannelly confirmed this process.

Council Member Baker asked how many of his office staff were union members. Mr. Sherwood said that everyone was union except for himself and the part timers.

Council Member Brannelly had several questions about the grants and capitals line items, which Mr. Sherwood reviewed.

Council Member Silva asked about the vacation line items. Mr. Sherwood said that the staff can accumulate up to five weeks of vacations and that he has no way to predict when or how much any employee will take at any given time. Only five sick days can be carried from year to year. Unused sick days go into the General Fund. Council Member Silva asked how furloughs factored in. Mr. Sherwood explained how that happened and said that this year, no one had been asked to take a furlough. Council Member Curwen asked for a report on how much of the sick time was unclaimed

and went to the General Fund. Mr. Sherwood said that it would be found in the CAFER report under budget to actual basis in the supplements.

Council Member dePara asked for a breakout of the codes on the Filled/Vacant/New/Unfunded Positions and also requested that Mr. Sherwood submit an organizational listing.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked if the report could be more consistent by having the department names included in the report. Mr. Sherwood said that the codes are on page 126.

Council Member Baker asked how recent the list was. Mr. Sherwood said that Personnel compiled the report in January. He stated that there had been one person who changed positions and that there were daily changes. He added that there could easily be new hires that were being processed at Civil Service. Payroll runs one week behind the current date.

Council President McCarthy joined the meeting at 7:04 p.m.

Council Member dePara asked about the timing for the information in Exhibit #3. Mr. Sherwood said that the information has been compiled in mid February.

Council Member dePara then asked about the City Farm Fund and others listed on page 112. Mr. Sherwood said that it was zero and had been zero last year. He explained that this was a State statute and that in the past, it had been put into the General Fund. Now when grant funding comes in, it will be deposited into the specific line item. Discussion followed.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia expressed strong concerns regarding the confusion in the Town Clerk's Office and the shift in positions. Council President McCarthy reviewed the reasons why the City is not testing for certain positions. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that the City Council needs to be more informed about the number of Acting positions in the City. She said that there should be a policy about the back up for key staff members. Discussion followed.

CAO'S OFFICE

Mr. Sherwood directed everyone's attention to page 126. He then reviewed the changes in the department. There were two staff changes.

Mr. Nunn then greeted everyone and announced that Moody's had changed the City's bond rating from A1 negative to A1 stable, which will help tremendously with bonding rates.

Mr. Nunn said that two positions had been added in his office, an Assistant CAO and a Special Projects Manager.

Mr. Nunn said that since he had taken his job, his responsibilities had changed dramatically and listed a number of new duties such as Executive Director of the Port Authority. This has created a management vacuum and necessity for the additional meetings.

The Policy and Procedures have been updated and sent to the staff. He outlined the hiring process steps. The rules and regulations are there for the staff. The department has worked at updating policies and moving towards the current century.

There will be a new walk through tour for Council Members after the close of the budget for the Arena with the new operators to show the improvements, but as CAO, Mr. Nunn is involved in this.

Working on the Green Energy Park has also been added to the office's responsibility. In order to manage all the new responsibilities the office needs more capacity. There will be solar panels on the school buildings and a fuel cell at the Arena.

Citistat is a vital component for the City.

Mr. Sherwood gave an overview of the changes that were happening in the Civil Services and Personnel.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked about the changes at the Arena and the parking. She said that there needed to be an update on the signage. Mr. Nunn said that when the walk through happens, it will address signage. He spoke about the upgrades that have happened to improve the area, such as paving, tree planting and other items. Way finding will be announced in the next month or so. There are also talks with the State regarding the brown signs for attractions. The Arena is working on a new billboard that will be visible from the highway. Funds have been set aside for refurbishing the outside parking lots and design is underway. There is already coordination between the police and other departments when events occur. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia indicated that there needed to be more signage in specific areas and not just the Arena. Mr. Nunn said that this was just one initiative and that there is work on expanding it and keeping it consistent throughout. The business community is very anxious to assist the City with this project.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that she would like to have an update on the organizational chart. Mr. Nunn said that his job was to run the day to day operations of the City.

Council Member Silva asked about the advertising. He expressed concerns about the diamond shaped sign that is only partially visible from the highway. Mr. Nunn said that it would meet all the specifications for billboards.

Council Member Baker asked which positions were union positions. Mr. Nunn said that there was only one position in his office. Council Member Baker asked why a particular position was in his office. Mr. Sherwood reviewed this.

Council Member Baker asked what CitiStat does. Ms. Paul explained that the work is broken up into three pieces and each project manager works on their department and follow everything from initial data collection through to the end. There are also special projects along with regular CitiStat meetings. Service requests are initiated here and routed to the appropriate departments and following through. Each project manager has about 15 departments to oversee.

Council Member Baker asked what kinds of cost savings have been made with Fire and Police, including overtime. Mr. Nunn said that he was working with the two departments on an analysis in order to get back to the levels that happened two or three years ago. Discussion followed about the routing of tickets. Mr. Sherwood said that when the City decided to move to the Toter program, the information has been tracked.

Council Member Baker said that he wanted to know what the department was doing with Fire and Police regarding overtime. Mr. Nunn said that he had just reviewed that with the departments. Council Member Baker said that he did not see the savings. Mr. Nunn said that Council Member Baker asked about this every year but still had not been to tour the CitiStat.

Mr. Nunn said that one problem had been with the Tax Collector during the lunch time. Due to the fact that there were two different union employees in the department, which conflicted with lunch time coverage. Working with CitiStat, Civil Service and other groups, the employees moved into one union and now the lunches can be staggered as needed without violating union agreements.

Mr. Sherwood pointed out that right now there were 25 officers in the Academy, but their positions have to be back filled while the recruits finish their training. There are other reasons such as weather, special events, and catastrophes contribute to overtime.

Ms. Paul pointed out that often, there are simple changes, such as reducing a letter to one page rather than two pages, which would result in savings.

Council Member Baker asked about the Special Project Coordinator. Mr. Nunn listed a number of the duties associated with the position.

Council Member Silva said that he would like some kind of report that would indicate some of the cost savings. Mr. Nunn said that frequently, the tracking and goals are being set by the Mayor, OPED, Finance and CAO. Mr. Sherwood said that it might be worthwhile that would indicate something was a CitiStat initiative or project in each department. Mr. Nunn said that his department would be happy to present a quarterly report about the various changes. Discussion followed.

Council President McCarthy said that Ms. Paul has set up two meetings for the Council and that other than Council Member dePara, no one showed. The next CitiStat meeting will be on Tuesday at 2:00 p.m. in CitiStat on tax scoff laws. The department is trying to get constituents to use the system via the website. The meetings are usually bi-weekly and on the website calendar.

Council Member Curwen said that Council Members are often asked about the updates on projects. He said that many Council Members have been unhappy with the lack of progress at Steel Point. Mr. Nunn said that he would be happy to give updates on the projects and that the Economic Development Committee should be receiving reports. He said that the relocation of the shellfish business and Tiger 2 funds had been received. There will be an announcement of potential tenants. He then reviewed the status of Seaview Plaza with the Committee.

Council Member dePara asked about the February 2012 financial report. Mr. Sherwood said that the Other Service line item holds the funds for ICMA, NLC and other memberships. All the memberships for the City goes through the CAOs office. The CCM membership is based on population and is indicated in the line titled memberships.

Council Member Baker asked about a line item on page 130. Mr. Sherwood said that this was longevity pay. Council Member Baker said that there was a jump in that number. Mr. Sherwood said that there were numerous factors due to the employee's length of service and the union agreements. Council Member Baker asked for a break down on it.

Council Member Baker then asked what policies had been changed. Mr. Nunn said that there had been about five or six policy changes and said he would email those changes to Council Member Baker.

Council Member Baker asked about part time positions. Ms. Paul said that this was answering the phones for 311. Mr. Sherwood said that it would be a short time position and could be manned by a student or an intern and only seasonal. Discussion followed.

Council Member Baker said that he would like to see more information available on the website. Mr. Nunn said that IT and the Mayor's Office were working on overhauling the website. Ms. Paul said that they are trying to get more information on the website.

Council Member Silva said that he had received calls from developer to see the updates. Mr. Nunn said that OPED would be present on the 27th and could answer the questions. He said that the Tiger Grant was a real blessing in terms of putting the utilities in. Discussion followed. Council Member Silva said that he was ready to unplug the project now.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said for the record that she was late due to the fact that she was chairing the Miscellaneous Matters meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA MOVED TO ADJOURN
** COUNCIL PRESIDENT MCCARTHY SECONDED.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS
BUDGET HEARINGS
APRIL 25, 2012**

ATTENDANCE: Angel dePara, Co-chair; Robert Curwen, Co-chair; Carlos Silva, Council President Thomas McCarthy; AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia; Lydia Martinez

OTHERS: Police Chief Gaudett, Lt. Cueto; Council Member Denese Taylor-Moye; Council Member Leticia Colon, Council Member Michelle Lyons, Doree Price, EOC; Rebecca Ortiz, EOC; Debra Detro, EOC; Marcus Jackson, EOC

CALL TO ORDER

Council Member dePara called the meeting to order at 6:15 p.m. He then introduced all the Council Members present.

EOC

The budget for this department is found on page 171-178. Ms. Price then greeted the Committee and introduced the members of her team.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY MOVED TO SUBMIT THE FOLDER TITLED CITY OF BRIDGEPORT PUBLIC SAFETY COMMUNICATIONS 2012-2013 BUDGET APPROPRIATIONS MEETING AS PUBLIC SAFETY 04/25/2012 AS EXHIBIT #1
**COUNCIL MEMBER CURWEN SECONDED.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Ms. Price explained that the chart on page 3 illustrates why the department has a large amount of overtime, which is due to the starting pay for the dispatchers. The bar graph shows the spread between starting pay and top level. She also mentioned that the job requires multi-tasking and is a high stress job.

Ms. Price was asked what the staffing levels were. There should be 46 and there were six recent hires, in February, but one staff member has already resigned. Currently, the staff level is 39, including the five that remained from February.

Council Member Curwen pointed out that the EOC was only two years old where other towns indicated on the list had been around for longer. Ms. Price said that with the lower pay scale it was harder to attract candidates. She also pointed out that some of the original staff came from the Fire Department and Police, but a few have retired.

Council Member Brannelly had several questions about staffing details, which Ms. Price answered.

Ms. Price said that there is funding from the Office of Statewide Emergency Tele-Communication and indicated where that was in the documentation.

Council Member Curwen asked if there was any way to charge a fee for the referred ambulance calls, even if it was only a dollar a call. Discussion followed about the details.

Council Member Curwen asked if it would be possible to determine the number of actual emergency calls. Mr. Marcus Jackson, Public Safety System Director, explained that the 911 state of the art system and was provided by OCET and that the calls are broken down into anything that comes in on a 7 digit line (full telephone number) rather than 911 (emergency). Someone may call in to the 7 digit line regarding a follow up or to speak to a staff member. Due to the way the system is set up, it is not possible to separate the emergency calls from the non-emergency calls. The City is not allowed to alter it in any way, since it is State property.

Council Member dePara asked about the information on page 10, which lists the costs of training the employees. Ms. Price said that one issue is that an employee gets their certification and works for any length of time in Bridgeport. Then they can go to a different town where there are fewer calls and better pay because they are certified and have the experience. The training costs are a major investment. Council Member Silva asked if there was a way to enforce that the employees remain for a certain time after they are certified. Ms. Price said that this should be discussed with Civil Service.

Council Member Taylor-Moye asked if the candidates from Bridgeport area. Ms. Price said that the last five hires were from the Bridgeport area. However, once the person is trained, then if they can get better pay and a lighter call volume in another town, they usually leave.

Council Member Martinez asked if the training was required within a year. Ms. Price said that OCET requires this training. There is only an application fee that they pay to Civil Service. A question was asked about the cost per candidate. The staff reviewed the various training courses costs.

Council Member Curwen asked about the Dispatch Judo course and the number of dispatchers in the course. Ms. Price said that as the candidates progress through the courses, the administration evaluates and decided whether the candidate should advance to the next level. Council Member dePara asked how many staff members were in need of training. Ms. Price said that the new hires will be moved through in groups and that the first column on the page indicates the number of staff members expected to participate in training. Council Member Taylor-Moye asked about the trainees moved up levels and the staff reviewed this with her.

Council Member Curwen asked about the criteria for how the calls priority was determined. Ms. Ditro explained that in an incident where a car was vandalized, it would be handled through a teleservice report because there probably not a suspect or much information. This policy has been set by the police department. If the resident insists on having a police officer come out, the EOC explains that it is a Priority Three. Priority One calls are domestics in progress, or fights and other life threatening events. The Priority Threes teleservice allows the citizen to file a report with their insurance. However, the police do track these incidents and analyze them.

When the new center opened, the department adopted the police and fire department policies. If those policies change, it is done by the Police Chief or the Fire Chief.

Council Member Taylor Moye asked about the Priority One and Two dispatches. Ms. Ditro said that Priority ones are usually dispatched ASAP. Usually within five minutes. Priority Two is dispatched within 15 minutes.

The discussion then moved to page 172 of the budget book.

Council Member Brannelly asked about the TCOs and when Civil Service will be moving forward. Ms. Price said that the background checks can take up to three or four months due to the FBI background checks.

Council Member Brannelly asked if there was enough funding in the 2012 budget to support the new hires. She also has a question about a salary increase. Ms. Price said that there was a salary increase, effective January 1st along with a step increase.

Council Member dePara asked about another increase in the salary budget.

Council Members Colon and Lyons left the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Ms. Price said that these were step increases and handled by contractual agreement.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked about the number of staff members present in the office. Ms. Price said that all her staff members are in her department and there was no one paid out of another department. Council Member dePara asked about a break out of the staff. Ms. Price said that she was not sure how Mr. Sherwood had broken down the staff allocation, but thought it might be separating the veteran staff from the new hires.

Council Member dePara asked about a position on page 172. Ms. Price said that the particular position was a supervisor and there were two supervisors on each shift. There are no sworn officers on the staff. All the staff members are civilians.

Council Member dePara asked about page 178 where the Training Services were listed. He has some questions about the current balance. Ms. Price said that there were some classes scheduled for May. Also there will be some catch up classes with the vacant positions.

Council Member Brannelly asked about the grant funding. Ms. Price referred her to the information on the Revenue Reimbursements line on page 172.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked about the diesel allocation and office supplies, which had increases. Ms. Price said that there were three generators. After the budget figures were compiled, the generators fuel tanks were topped off. Mr. Jackson said that each week, the generators are fired up for a half hour to insure operating ability. During Hurricane Irene, the communication center lost power, but the two generators were running at Sylvan Avenue and at City Hall for three days.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked about the Other Services and the Public Safety Equipment increase on page 178. Ms. Price said that it was the Sonitrol Security Maintenance Agreement. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that she was checking to make sure there was no doubling up of costs. Ms. Price explained that some radio equipment had to be moved from a local school to a leased tower.

Council Member Brannelly asked about Public Safety Equipment increase. Ms. Price reiterated that was the equipment that has to be moved.

Council Member Brannelly asked an adjustment to one line. Ms. Price said that they had requested LED lighting for the 911 Center. This was completed after the budget numbers were submitted.

Council Member Brannelly asked about the redundancy plan. Ms. Price said that this was in order to prevent data loss. Mr. Jackson explained that originally, the system was a "light" system and as more concurrent connections take place on the system, it affects the performance of the Center. If there is an emergency event underway, the system can not afford to be down. In order to prevent this from happening, there will be an active and passive server environment. In the event of a failure of any machines on the active server, there would be a seamless transition to the passive server.

Council Member Brannelly asked about the cost of adding one server. Mr. Jackson said that in order to create the seamless transition, a few more servers need to be purchased. Council Member Curwen asked if this item would be a reoccurring budget item. Mr. Jackson said that this would be to provide equipment. He would like to add four servers, another chase, fiber optic equipment and other items. He then submitted a detailed list of the equipment price quotation. Council Member Curwen said that he would make a note to add this to the Capital Budget. Mr. Jackson said that it would cost \$60,000 for the equipment. The consultants would cost about \$8,000. Ms. Price reminded everyone that there would also reoccurring licensing.

Council Member dePara asked if there had been a vacancy within the TCOs in the last year. Ms. Price said that the vacancies seem to remain at about 7 or 8 vacancies.

Council Member dePara asked Ms. Price if there was anything that they would like to leave the Committee members with. Ms. Price said that other than the redundancy system, there was nothing else as a priority.

Council Member Martinez said that she had heard about cities that now request the insurances companies to reimburse the cities for the cost of the first responders. She thanked Ms. Price for her department's work.

POLICE

The information on this department's budget is found on page 140-151. Chief Gaudett and Lt. Cueto came forward and greeted the Committee members.

Chief Gaudett said that he had moved the overtime back to one million and was confident that he would be able to stay within the budget.

Chief Gaudett said that the people who don't put money in the parking meters get a parking ticket for \$25.00. That is about a million in revenue.

Council Member Curwen said that while Bridgeport helps other municipalities without a fee, Bridgeport is often taxed or billed when Bridgeport receives help from other municipalities. He asked if this could be changed. Discussion followed.

Chief Gaudett said that the City has a satellite training academy and also does recertification classes for not only Bridgeport officers, but local towns and Metro North Police. He then proposed offering recruit classes through the academy for a fee. Discussion followed. Council Member Curwen asked for a copy of the law enabling legislation for the fees for the Committee. Chief Gaudett said that he would be happy to get a copy for the Committee.

Chief Gaudett brought a graphic representation of the table of organization, which he distributed to the Committee members.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY MOVED TO ENTER BRIDGEPORT POLICE DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATIONAL CHART AS POLICE #1.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER CURWEN SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Chief Gaudett said that he had broken the City into three areas called Divisions where there was a Captain in charge for the geographic location.

Council Member Silva asked about overtime. Chief Gaudett said that the projection was close to two million. He said that he did not agree with the projection. The Chief pointed out that currently there were a number of trainees who had to be supervised. And the rate of pay for the field training had just changed. This increase comes out of overtime since it's not part of their regular salary. However, once the officers are on the street, it will impact the overtime.

Chief Gaudett said that the Police have unlimited sick time and they do not put officers on compensation. There will be a new contract being negotiated in the next few months.

Council Member Silva asked about the grant for the new officers. This will also have an impact on overtime. The grant does not pay for the equipment or other items, just salary and benefits. Council Member Brannelly had several detailed questions about the time lines associated with the new recruits, which Chief Gaudett reviewed with her.

Council Member Silva asked what the optimal number for the force. Chief Gaudett said that it was 447 and that currently, the force was at 429 with the new rookie officers.

Council President McCarthy asked if Chief Gaudett for a report on the actual over time on the last 5 years. Chief Gaudett said that he would provide this. He pointed out that there would at least 10 months where the new officers would reduce the overtime. When asked what he believe would be the actual overtime overages, Lt. Cueto said that he believe it would be about \$800,000 in overtime overages.

Council Member dePara said that the Committee was working to off set the tax increase. Chief Gaudett said that the Mayor had directed his department to do better and that the Police department would do better. However, he would not jeopardize the safety of the officers. He pointed out that this problem has been long standing and everyone has been working on. With the upcoming negotiations, he felt that there could be more progress made.

Council Member Curwen said that it was hard to balance the Mayor's budget. He asked if there was anything that the department could forego for a year. Chief Gaudett said that this was an operational budget and he couldn't change it.

Council Member Silva left the meeting at 8:20 p.m.

Chief Gaudett said that in the past, the number of typists was cut in half. The midnight shift records clerk in the records room had passed away. Since that can't be filled, someone has to work that shift in overtime to prepare the records for court. Currently there are five positions that are not being filled.

Two members of the general public left at 8:25 p.m.

Council Member Curwen asked about the grant funding for the officers. Chief Gaudett said that the funding for that is in a different budget to show the draw down on the salaries. The department will be assuming the salaries and the benefits for those officers in the fourth year of service. Discussion followed.

Council President McCarthy left the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

Chief Gaudett pointed out that on July 1st, 2011, there were 407 officers. Currently, there are 399 regular officers and there are three more officers applying for retirement. He said that there needed to be structural changes to manage the department. Due to layoffs in the NAGE and other unions, positions in the clerical areas such as records are now being manned by the officers.

Council Member Martinez then asked for an explanation regarding the placement of officers in civilian positions. Chief Gaudett said that there were two Typists for the Records Room, but the positions have been removed from the budget. It would reduce overtime. Council Member dePara asked if there could be a projection of what the costs would be in shifting the sworn officers back to regular police duties and filling the positions with the civilians. Chief Gaudett said that he would provide this.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that the Mayor had included the school crossing guards on page 142. She wished to know how many positions that included and how the figures was calculated. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia noted that there was no number associated with this and the item had not been included in the budget last year.

Council Member Taylor Moye asked about page 144 regarding the ability to divert juveniles from the court system. Chief Gaudett said that there was a State Grant for Disproportionate Minority Grant. The department is working with RYSAP and the Fairfield Child Guidance Center to reduce the number of school based arrest across the board.

Referrals are made to the Juvenile Review Board. Studies have shown that once a child is in the court system, they tend to stay there. The program is underway and the number of arrest in the schools has been reduced. Council Member Taylor Moye said that she had seen some children get into the juvenile system, they enjoy benefits such as being taking to baseball games and basketball games, go to movies and other incentives while in the programs. Council Member dePara said that this was not something that the Police Department had control over.

Council Member dePara said that he had some questions about page 147 with the Appropriations Summary, such as Advertising Services. Chief Gaudett said that this was for the Animal Shelter and it is required by law. Council Member dePara reminded everyone that the CT Post would be increasing their costs by 5%.

Council Member dePara said that there was a line about leases. He asked for an update. Chief Gaudett gave an update and suggested that the Committee follow up with OPED.

Council Member dePara asked about telephone services increase. Chief Gaudett said that the worksheet had a \$50,000 former amount and the current request is for \$40,000. There may be a typo in the budget. Council Member dePara asked what the commodities were. Lt. Cueto said that these were the land lines and Blackberries. IT usually handles this until a threshold was reached. This will be followed up by the Committee.

Council Member dePara asked about the travel expenses. Lt. Cueto said that this covers extradition and training costs. The officers pay up front and the department reimburses.

Council Member Curwen asked about the Motor Parts. Lt. Cueto said that the department is trying to purge the fleet of the Crown Victorias.

Council Member Curwen asked about the potential number of outside academy attendees. Chief Gaudett said that he could do a survey to see what they expected to hire in the next few years. While the department could run two classes a year, but the question was about capacity.

Council Member Curwen asked about the court order. Chief Gaudett said that the order was until the position was vacated and the position had been vacated. Lt. Cueto said that when an officer writes an infraction, the money goes to the State for the Academy, but the City can no longer send candidates to the Academy for free.

Council Member Curwen asked what it costs to test a candidate. Chief Gaudett said that Mr. Dunn would know that. However, he pointed out that he often supplies the officers for the oral exams and that is a tremendous benefit for the City. Council Member Curwen had a suggestion about the testing process. Discussion followed.

Chief Gaudett said that he did not understand why the department could not keep a rolling testing situation, just like the program with the replacement vehicles.

Council Member dePara asked about page 148. Chief Gaudett said that this was for bullet proof vests, handcuffs, guns, ammo, and other equipment.

Council Member dePara asked about the Computer Services. Chief Gaudett said that this was for the parking violations and that there was a new RFP out for the parking violations company. The figure in the budget is a contractual amount. Council Member dePara asked about the Communication Equipment. That is the servicing for the mobile data computers in the vehicles.

Council Member dePara asked about Other Services. This is for the transcript for OIA. The farriers for the horseshoes are also included here.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked about the list of officers and said that Mr. Dunn had mentioned this during his interview regarding the testing situation. Chief Gaudett said that the last testing cycle has been head and shoulders over the previous testing experiences and the candidates reflect this.

Council Member Martinez asked what the ethnicity of the new police class. Chief Gaudett said that he did not know. Lt. Cueto said that the department had spent significant dollars with a recruitment group to insure that the class reflected Bridgeport.

CAPITAL

Chief Gaudett said that it is estimated that the department would have to replace the 41 remaining Crown Vics at \$35,000 a piece.

The Council had authorized a new police building but it had not been funded. Council Member dePara said that there had been a discussion about evaluation the new building.

Chief Gaudett said that he would like to have a records management system. The current system is very old. This would be a significant investment.

Chief Gaudett said that the City had been awarded two separate JAG grants for a shooting range. It would be excellent to have it in the City rather than having to go to Monroe. One is \$225,000 for a full shot house and \$75,000 for a line of fire range. The second grant is for a canopy to change the lighting on the range. This would be an indoor range. Lt. Cueto said that sending the 400 officers to Monroe costs 800 hours.

The discussion then moved to having tough books in the vehicles rather than the data terminals. The tough books would allow the officers to write the reports, file it and get it to the records rooms electronically. The current data terminals do not allow these types of functions.

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services.

City of Bridgeport
Budget and Appropriations
Regular Meeting
April 25, 2012
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**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS
PUBLIC HEARING
APRIL 26, 2012**

ATTENDANCE: Robert Curwen, Co-chair; Angel dePara, Co-chair, Lydia Martinez, Susan Brannelly, Carlos Silva

OTHERS: Council Member Olson, Council President Thomas McCarthy

CALL TO ORDER

Council Member Curwen called the meeting at 6:05 p.m. He then introduced the Council Members present and requested that the speakers limit them

**PUBLIC HEARING –
General Fund and Board of Education**

Superintendent Paul Vallas said that he would defer to Dr. Trefry of the Board of Education.

Dr. Trefry came forward and said that his role was to insure that Bridgeport Students were prepared for life. Housatonic Community College has reported that over 80% of the incoming students require remedial classes. Only about 50% of the students finish high school due to earlier failures and dropping out. The objective is to get the students are proficient at their grade level. Using school based budgeting and making sure that there is accountability are high priorities. Education starts at birth and the district needs to reach out to the pre-school providers. It is also important to make sure the educators are being supported and have access to the best and most consistent resources. Professional development will be a priority also. There will be time to work with the students during the day to avoid pulling the students out of classes. Struggling teachers and students will receive support.

The transition for the 8th grade student to high school is an area of concern. There will also be opportunities for off site training at various locations such as local hospitals or on college campuses in the future. Consistency with school discipline will also be a focus of attention, along with a financial plan for the District. Lastly, it will be important to establish a Bridgeport Education Foundation to bring in private dollars to the District.

Superintendent Vallas came forward to speak about intradistrict programs and having vocational training for Bridgeport students who could not enroll at Bullard Haven and other schools. Early college enrollment program is being worked out with the local colleges. The curriculum is being reviewed. The intradistrict high school will be completed within the next year or so. This will result in an array of quality school choices for the students.

Regarding the finances the District is requesting a one time increase in order to secure the additional funding. The State has indicated that there would be funding available from them. There will be more efficiencies that will result in cost savings.

It is critically important that the City makes a full contribution, not only the funds, but also the services. Cities often support school districts through in kind services, but that also has a cost. It will be important to cost out the services, transfer the dollar amount for the in kind services to the fund with the one time fund and then the District would be paying the City back for the in kind services. This would clearly illustrate how the City is supporting the District. He said that this might address the issue and possibly be a model for the other districts.

Superintendent Vallas said that the District was moving forward on working with the District plan because the focus of the entire District was to improve the schools for the students regardless of how much funding was provided. Services need to be brought to the students in a cost effective way. He said that by this time next year, the classrooms would be transformed. There are a number of textbook providers who are interested in working with Bridgeport.

He thanked the Committee members for their time.

Council Member Curwen announced that Ms. Mary Pat Healy had submitted a document.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER DEPARA MOVED TO ENTER A PACKET OF INFORMATION FROM MS. MARY PAT HEALY AS EXHIBIT #1.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY MOVED TO ENTER SUPERINTENDENT PLAN AS EXHIBIT #2**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER SILVA SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Ms. Dee Brassell, 364 French Town Road came forward and said that she was a parent, taxpayer. She said that she supported the Mayor's budget and requested that the Council fully support the proposed school budget.

Ms. Pat Fardy, 200 Nutmeg Road, came forward and said that she had a list of items from Mr. John Marshall Lee regarding requests for the Council Members. Ms. Fardy said that the Mayor had requested 7 million dollars. She said that there were a number of ghost positions that had not been filled in four years. By cutting those positions, the City could save 5 million dollars right now. She requested the Committee look at those departments and cut the positions.

Ms. Fardy asked for a 12 month financial report. She stated there had not been one in some time. She added that the Budget and Appropriations Committee needs to have more open meetings like this so that the public can have a cross dialog with the Council Members.

Ms. Frances Newby, Chairwoman of the Bridgeport Child Advocacy Coalition, came forward and thanked the Committee. She said that she was please that the Mayor had allocated funding or the schools. As a taxpayer, she said that she was not happy to pay more taxes, but a good education was vital. When the schools begin to appear on a list of the best schools, it will help properties. All City departments should be trimmed. Bridgeport residents already pay the highest taxes in the state.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY MOVED TO ENTER THE DOCUMENT SUBMITTED BY MRS. FARDY INTO THE RECORD AS EXHIBIT #3.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER DEPARA SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY MOVED TO ENTER THE DOCUMENT SUBMITTED BY MS. NEWBY INTO THE RECORD AS EXHIBIT #4.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mr. John Marshall Lee came forward and said that he resides at 30 Beacon Street. He then read a document into the record. He stated that the Committee had not seen all the expenses.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY MOVED TO ENTER THE DOCUMENT SUBMITTED BY MR. LEE INTO THE RECORD AS EXHIBIT #5.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mr. Andy Fardy, 200 Nutmeg Road, came forward. He said that there was only 38 days to do the budget while other cities take 90 days for their budgets. He also insisted that Mr. Sherwood provide everyone with a 12 month report. He went to speak about how Mr. Sherwood should have all the information with him at the meetings. Mr. Fardy then spoke about the paid vacation that both Mr. Nunn and Mr. Wood have accumulated.

Dr Jackie Comeau of 392 Eckart Street came forward and said that she had a few thoughts about the transformation that the Board of Education was undergoing. She has seen people move from caution to optimistic hope.

Good schools will make the property values increase. It will send a message to the residents of Connecticut that Bridgeport is serious about school and education. Early intervention and scientific intervention will help the students develop 21st century skills for their adult lives. There will many mandates from both the Federal and State governments. She said that she was

asking for the budget increase in order to insure that Bridgeport students have a chance to succeed.

Mr. Kates said that he had attended Central High School when it was located in City Hall. From a retired person's view, the taxes are important. He would like to see the Bridgeport students have the opportunities, but the property owners are being flattened by the taxes.

Ms. Mark came forward and said that she was a single woman. She was for education.

Mr. Mark Trojanowski came forward and said that he regretted that the budget was creating factions. He said he knows Council Members who were having struggles with paying their taxes. 45% of the Bridgeport tax base is paying 100% of the cost. Mr. Vallas said that no matter what happens with the budget, he will be moving forward to make the changes to make the schools better. There was a tax increase through other means, such as a WPCA or gas taxes, even though the mill rate did not rise for the last two years. He asked the Committee not to raise the taxes. While \$50 a month does not seem to be much, when people are sending in 50% of their total income to City for taxes, it does make a difference. People are now working two and three jobs. When taxes are increased, Bridgeport loses its competitive edge because people are forced to leave the city because they can't pay the taxes.

Mr. John Gomes came forward and said that he was a parent, tax payer and business owners. He said that for the last few weeks he had been standing around City Hall with a sign reading "No More Taxes". He said that it was disturbing to have a budget that requested more money from him. The State taxes have increased. He displayed copies of a news article from the Connecticut Post showing the top earners. Using education as a crutch on the budget is irresponsible. Mr. Gomes said that there were 81 vacant positions that account for 4 million dollars. He then asked for no salary increases. Before the election, take home cars were supposed to be sold, but after the election they weren't. He said that he was asking the Mayor to be fair and represent the

A resident came forward and said that she had bought house in 1998 in Bridgeport and after her son was born, she had to sell her house because of the taxes. People talk about students a lot, but don't mention the special education students. She reported that two aides had told her they quit because they couldn't deal with the old BOE. For the first time in her son's life, she was hopeful. Since the school year started, her son has been in four different schools. At the last school, her son was bullied on the bus by a student with a knife. 13 million dollars is paid for out of district students. Her son never saw a dollar of that money. There are too many different programs in Bridgeport that are not working together. She said that the support groups are not working together and don't provide support. Her child was out of school for 60 days and no one helped.

Mr. Don Greenberg, came forward and said that if he believed that the 7 million dollar tax increase would help Bridgeport, he would. He said that as an educator, he did not believe that the schools could be turned around in a year. He said that he wanted to see the research. While he was able to afford the taxes, many others can not. He said that he was worried that the Mayor

was trying to build a legacy rather than giving the City what it needs. He sat on a panel about drop outs, but before the panel finished working, it was voted out of existence. It will be important to make sure the reforms will really do the job.

Ms. Jennifer Buchanan of Seabright Avenue came forward and said that she had moved to Bridgeport 10 years ago. She is concerned about the unfunded debt that has not been reported to her and other members of the public. She said that she had spoken with the neighbors and they feel that the Council is rubber stamp for the Mayor. There are a large number of homes in Bridgeport are now underwater and a 2.9 mill rate could very well have more people not pay their mortgage which would cut down on the amount of taxes. She wondered when Superintendent said that he would go forward with the changes regardless of the budget decision.

Mr. Jeff Kohut came forward, and said that he wanted to make a point about how the Governor and the Mayor were black mailing the residents into making the tax increase. He cited Sheff vs. O'Neill and said that the State owes every Connecticut student an education.

Mr. Kohut said that he had concerns about the city employees who lived outside of Bridgeport and said it could come down to a few suburbanites losing their jobs vs. Bridgeport residents losing their homes. He then referred back to the 1968 Life magazine article that stated the Bridgeport education district would serve as a national model. Back then, the city had a tax base. The district eroded over time as the tax base eroded. He said that the City should be working with G.E. and other companies to come back to build the tax base back up.

Mr. Kohut said that the proposed changes by the Board of Education included a safe schools program. He pointed out that Council Member Martinez had proposed a safe school program years ago when she was in the State Legislature and finally there are Federal funds for it. By saving money and cutting vacant positions, the City could recoup some funds. He wondered why the Mayor and other State representatives weren't fighting harder for the City at the State level. He referred back to 1968 when there was an elected school board that ran an excellent system.

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services

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Budget and Appropriations
Public Hearing
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**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS
BUDGET HEARINGS
APRIL 27, 2012**

ATTENDANCE: Angel dePara, Co-chair; Robert Curwen, Co-chair; Susan Brannelly, Carlos Silva, Amy Marie Vizzo-Paniccia, Council President Thomas McCarthy, Lydia Martinez (7:20 p.m.)

OTHERS: William Minor, Land Use; Michael Nidoh, OPED; Bill Coleman, Dennis Buckley Zoning Department; Don Eversley, OPED Director; Peter Paajanen, Building Department; Council Member Andre Baker, John Strafstrom, Pullman and Comley Bond Counsel

CALL TO ORDER

Council Member dePara called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m. He then introduced the members of the Council present.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY MOVED TO HEAR FROM THE BOND COUNSEL FIRST.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER SILVA SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mr. Strafstrom spoke about the history of the bonds over the last few years, the use of reserves and the use of the upcoming bond refunding.

Mr. Strafstrom reviewed the figures relating to the pension, which revolves around Pension Plan A, which is closed. This involves a number of police and firefighters, almost all of which are retired. Police officers that retired under that plan receive any increases that the current officers get. This required the City to issue \$350 million in pension obligation bonds to cover the pensions. That funds 80% of the City's liabilities. The plan is now funded at about 40%. The "Pay As You Go" plan was working until the State required a full funding requirement. Four years ago, the City requested temporary legislation that would require significantly less than was required. The current fiscal year was the final year of the lower payment. Discussions have been held with the State and a new actuarial table was agreed upon. The City must place \$10.5 million dollars this year into the fund. There is a legal obligation under the law to do this. Without the four year exemption, the City would be required to fund the pension at 18 million.

Council Member Martinez joined the meeting at 6:20 p.m.

Council Member Brannelly asked about the various numbers associated with the payments over different time periods. Mr. Strafstrom reviewed figures with the Committee members. When

asked about a bar graph in the budget books, Mr. Strafstrom said that it was created by Mr. Sherwood and not the actuary tables. The chart also showed the most pessimistic scenario. The discussion then moved to the language on page one of the budget report.

Council President McCarthy said that there was some confusion about the actuarial report and uncertainty that the 10.5 million amount would need to be set aside was for this year. Mr. Strafstrom said that the Finance Department generates the report and then informs Mr. Strafstrom. He reiterated that this was a legal obligation and that the State OPED had worked with the City in good faith to rework the payment tables.

Council Member Curwen had several questions about details of Plan A. Mr. Strafstrom pointed out that a number of police officers that had been covered by this Plan went out on disability. The City has such significant financial outlays that the investment returns will never catch up. Discussion followed.

Mr. Strafstrom said that the City has an RFP out for a new investment advisor. He said that the current plan has actually done better and was in the top quartile during the last few years. Many other groups were not so fortunate, but Merrill Lynch will no longer be handling this type of business.

Council Member Brannelly asked for more details. In 1999, the plan was completely unfunded. The City funded around 350 million dollar for the pension. No general fund funds are used for pension; it comes out of the Pension Trust. There is debt service paid from the general fund. The pension bonds were issued as taxable bonds. This means they are not refundable. If they had been, the debt service on the bonds could have been reduced. There are two sources of revenue into the plan, employee contributions and the City's 10.5 million payment. The line items 53200 and 53201 contain the amount.

The Mayor has requested that a reserve be built into the budget. The fund balance on the book (assets minus liabilities) is critical in terms of being able to borrow. Currently, the fund balance is at about 5 or 6 % of the budget, or 15 million. Moody's just completed a review of the finances. They have graded the City as an A1 rating with stable outlook, which is a positive change from the previous B negative status.

The reserve is needed as a rainy day fund and helps with the fund balance. 15 million is a minimum reserve. Council Member Curwen said that last year, the Council dedicated 1.5 million back to the fund balance, so it should be higher than 15 million.

Council President McCarthy said that there was a line item called Contingency. Previously, half a million was set aside for the Contingency and a half million for the Reserve. Last year, it was increased to 1.5 million. One goal is to bring the fund balance back to 8%. Mr. Strafstrom said that usually, whatever was in the Contingency at the end of the fiscal year would be rolled into the Fund Balance. Discussion followed on the reasons why the city needs a Contingency Fund.

If the City does not continue to build the fund balance, it will affect the borrowing rate and bond ratings. The change in the Moody's rating from negative to stable is probably worth 10 basis points, which could change the interest percentage from something like 3.5% to 3%.

Another question that had been asked was about the upcoming bond refunding. Many people are doing advanced refunding because the numbers are very favorable, which could mean something like 6.8 million over the life of the bond. However, the savings can not be all up front. State law requires that certain levels of maturity before refunding. Mr. Strafstrom said that it could be possible to realize anywhere between 1.5 to 2 million in savings on the refunding. He suggested that perhaps it would be prudent to put most of the savings towards the pension contributions. Council Member Brannelly asked about the next evaluation on the rating. Mr. Strafstrom said that the Moody's report was basically positive and that Moody's expect Bridgeport's grand list to expand.

Council Member dePara said that he was very glad that Mr. Strafstrom had come to the meeting. He said that the underwriters had brought the refunding to the attention of the City.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY MOVED TO INCLUDE MOODY'S INVESTMENT SERVICE REPORT AS INVESTMENT #1
**COUNCIL MEMBER SILVA SECONDED.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

OPED - ALL DIVISIONS

It was announced that the OPED budget information was located on pages 285 - 312. Mr. Eversley said that he would be happy to answer any questions on the budget. All the department members present introduced themselves.

Council Member dePara said that there had been numerous questions about Steel Point and that the Council Members were looking to OPED for vision and direction. Mr. Buckley and Mr. Paaanen work in departments that enforce codes. City Planning and the remaining departments work on initiatives and development.

Mr. Eversley then narrated a PowerPoint presentation, which gave an overview of OPED's function. Investing in downtown, improving neighborhoods, business expansion, transforming brownfields, and growing the creative economy were highlighted in the program Mr. Eversley listed numerous projects such as 333 State Street, the Bijou Square, the Arcade and others that have been underway since Mayor Finch took office. Mr. Eversley also displayed drawings for 570 State Street and the Downtown Village District North RFP along with various interested parties.

Mr. Eversley pointed out that the vacant buildings are not only a non- generating source of tax revenue, but actually cost the City money. When the buildings are rehabilitated, it reactivates the

area. There is currently a tremendous demand for housing. Both the City Trust building and the Bill Kushma building have been fully leased. While the industrial aspect is important, it depends on the factory.

He commented that when a factory is in town, it usually is one story, however, when one can get a single floor of retail and two or three floors of residential above it, the revenue generated is much greater. Elias Howe, Webster School, 235 William Street, Barnum Schools were all sold to developers for adaptive reuse and housing has been constructed. He also reviewed some of the upcoming projects such as the Jewish Home for the Elderly.

Council Member dePara asked about the Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) The City received just under 6 million, and applied for and received another grant funding award from NSP III. There is an RFP for a new management company for the shipyard.

Mr. Eversley said that regarding Steel Pointe, that by breaking the parcel into four parcels, the developer must complete one section before moving on to the next parcel. This project was the largest grant that the City ever received. The 11.2 million came from the TIGER grant for the infrastructure. An RFP will be released for the infrastructure within the next few days. Pleasure Beach is also in the planning/design stage.

Council Member Martinez left the meeting at 8:00 p.m.

Mr. Eversley said that there were two small projects underway at Steel Pointe involving relocating the Oystering Company and a Yacht Club.

Council Member Silva asked why the ferry had not been moved over to the other side of the river to the old CarTech property. He also said that he had been in favor of Steel Pointe but over the last few years, had lost faith in the project. He said that he had spoken with Ms. Jeanine Webb about the project, but remained unconvinced. Council Member Silva said there were several other council members who were ready to pull the plug. He added that there was another developer waiting in the wings.

Mr. Eversley said that regarding the ferry there were those who support moving it to the East side of the river and others who are against it. The ferry company has indicated a desire to have landings on both sides and have purchased 8 acres of the old CarTech site. The Port Authority, the DEP, the Coast Guard and many others have a say in whether they can move. Perhaps having better circulation at the site would be helpful rather than moving it over to Seaview Avenue.

Mr. Eversley said that he was a late arrival to the Steel Pointe part and was also frustrated. He reminded everyone that the project was originally expected to be funded by a particular type of tax increment bonds, which were no longer available after September of 2008. He said that he

was totally sympathetic about the fact that Bridgeport had been promised many things but little had been delivered.

Council Member Silva said that one State legislator had stated that the TIFF bond had expired. Mr. Eversley said that an extension had been granted by the State. He then spoke about the Interlocal Agreement that would be coming before the Council in the next few months. He gave the details of this upcoming agreement. He suggested that the Council Members raised their concerns at this meeting. Council Member dePara said that he would like the developers to know how unhappy the Council Members were with the project.

Council President McCarthy asked about the fact that they were asked to provide funding for an off hours zoning inspector. Mr. Buckley said that there had been someone hired in February and had sent him out on a few times. Mr. Buckley asked about the fact that having the inspector on the week-ends, but it would involve comp time.

Council Member Curwen asked about zoning compliance permits and if there were permits annotated in the budget. Mr. Buckley said that there were some compliance applications coming in. Council Member Curwen asked if the projects would be generating revenue. Mr. Eversley said that most of the revenue is generated from building permits. There is one vacancy in the department that has been there for almost two years. During the last two years, there was only one inspector. He added that the zoning inspector's contract reads City Hall hours and limited to 35 hours.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked about the secretarial support. Mr. Buckley said that it was listed as a minicomputer operator. Mr. Buckley said that if he had a choice between filling the minicomputer operator or a zoning inspector, he would take the minicomputer operator to have another person at the counter. Mr. Buckley will send a list of the fees to the Committee members.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked about the three downtown North properties and the parking balance between residential and commercial. Mr. Nidoh pointed out that it depends on what goes into the commercial spaces. He said that 333 State has no parking on site, but made a deal with a property owner across the street. When developers come into the office, Mr. Minor speaks to him about parking. Mr. Eversley pointed out that the developer has to juggle the market, the City and sometimes the financial backers who don't want to lose money on the project. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that there were issues with parking on the street, particularly when plowing is involved. Mr. Nidoh said that there was alternate side of the street parking regulations in downtown. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that it was not being enforced. Discussion followed.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that the street sign at Commerce Drive read Commerce Street and needed to be replaced. Mr. Nidoh made a note of this.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked if there was anyone in the department was being paid from another department. Mr. Nidoh said that his secretary was paid from CitiStat. Discussion followed about the details followed.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked about the annual rent and why it had decreased. Mr. Nidoh said that there had been some facilities were not longer generating rent. Council Member dePara asked that this be looked into and said that the change would mean the budget was not accurate.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked about the parking revenue. Mr. Eversley said that this had to do with the arena parking. He then reviewed the details. This includes the surface lots. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked if the City was considering any capital improvements to the parking. Mr. Nidoh said that the State was totally running the parking garage and the City no longer received any revenue.

The discussion then moved to the Pequonnock parking lots. Both Mr. Coleman and Mr. Eversley said that they believed it was completed.

RECESS

A recess was announced at 8:40 p.m. The meeting was called back into order at 9:00 p.m.

Mr. Paajanen said that the revenues from Longfellow school and renovations on another school Roosevelt would be generating revenue approximately 1 million. They are included in the budget. When the Jewish Center for the Elderly gets underway, there will be additional revenue. The revenues from Fairchild Wheeler School have already been captured. The hospitals are regularly coming in with renovations and projects. In a normal year it would be about 2.1 or 2.4 million.

The discussion then moved to the budget figures. Mr. Paajanen pointed out that it was difficult for him to project what might walk in the door since he is the last cog in the wheel. He also pointed out that there had been a projected amount for the Fairchild Wheeler School, but the actual construction had only been 49 million and the actual permits had been over a million but less than what had been projected. Additional discussion followed about the details of the permit process.

Council Member Curwen asked how the new office equipment was working. Mr. Paajanen said that it was working out fine.

Council Member Brannelly asked about the unfunded building inspector. Mr. Paajanen said that the two inspectors were due to staff retirements and the secretarial position was a lay off. Council Member Brannelly said that the assistant Building Inspector was unfunded. Mr.

Paajanen said that the administration had moved the position from the vacant role to the unfunded column.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked who was working as a secretarial support. Mr. Paajanen said that his staff was helping to cover for the part time secretarial position when the staff member cannot be there.

Planning - Mr. Nidoh said that his budget had been merged into Mr. Eversley's budget.

Council Member Brannelly asked for clarification for the debt service and interest payments listed on page 291. Mr. Eversley said that this was an issue for Mr. Sherwood. He said that he thought it was Capital project related or bonded in the past.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked about 5299, regarding uniform allowance. Mr. Eversley said that he would look into it and send the information to the Committee members.

Council Member dePara asked about the marketing services in appropriation summary. This is a shared account between the Mayor's Office and OPED. It covers printing costs, advertising and other costs associated with special events.

Council Member Curwen asked about Supportive Contributions. This covers the Financial Council and the Center for Business Growth. Mr. Eversley gave a run down about how this was used. Council Member Curwen asked about the National Development Council. Mr. Eversley said that they do training, direct lending and financial analysis. Council Member Curwen said that this should have been in a salary line and was not transparent. Mr. Eversley said that in terms of the contribution, it was the same as People's Bank. Council President McCarthy pointed that the Council had just approved the contract with NDC. Mr. Eversley pointed out that this was a flat fee to receive services on call. Council Member Brannelly pointed out that when a consultant was involved, the charges were usually done by the hour or project, but this was closer to a membership.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked if there was any revenue generated by the Downtown Thursdays or the Arts Program. Mr. Nidoh replied that it generally was a break even.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked about the marketing services that are shared with the Mayor's Office. Mr. Eversley said that the printing line was for routine, normal operation of the department. Much of the advertising was for the advertising for Zoning, Land Use, ZBA and Historic District in the Connecticut Post.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked about the equipment line item. Mr. Eversley said that the department had requested newer equipment but it had been cut from the budget. Mr. Nidoh said that their equipment was aging. Some equipment is covered by IT, other equipment is not.

The discussion then moved to adaptive reuse of old factories, but the remediation is quite expensive. Mr. Coleman spoke about how some buildings were reused. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that the City was a member of the National League of Cities. Discussion followed. Mr. Coleman said that the Committee members could send emails to him at 2 a.m., if they wished to.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked about travel expenses and travel services and pointed out that the amounts dropped. Mr. Eversley said that his department does a criminally low amount of travel and he would like his staff to attend more workshops and conferences in order to hear more new ideas and talk with people.

Council President McCarthy asked about the million dollar marketing plan for Bridgeport. Mr. Eversley said that there had been discussions about high concepts ideas. However, this is not something that his department is involved.

Council President McCarthy then stated sometimes that the NRZs are more representative of the City than the Council Members. However, the Council Members are the actual elected officials. Council President McCarthy said that the Council Members also represent the budget, too.

Council Member Brannelly asked about one of the line items. Mr. Eversley said that he believe it to be their secretary.

Council Member Brannelly then asked about the advertising budget. Mr. Eversley said that his department had been requested to look for reductions. He said that the special hearings and extra meetings really take bite out of the budget.

Council Member Brannelly asked about the engineering services, which had a major increase. Mr. Nidoh said that there were funds that were expended on an "as needed basis", for surveys, title searches, the wetlands consultant or other professionals. Mr. Nidoh said that for 2011-12, the actual expenses were up, so the department asked for an increase that matched the current expenses. There is also another line for management services. Mr. Nidoh said that it was basically for management of buildings that are vacant.

Council Member Brannelly asked what was covered by Other Services. Mr. Eversley said that he would provide a print out of the items under this category. Mr. Coleman said that there were some times when they needed a quick consultation for a project.

Council Member dePara asked about a particular line item that was the Mayor's credit card. Mr. Eversley said that he thought the credit card was used for economic development.

Council Member dePara asked about the rentals/lease. Mr. Nidoh said that the department has leases for copiers. He added that when the department has an event in a school building, they have to pay the Board of Education.

ADJOURNMENT

- ** COUNCIL PRESIDENT MCCARTHY MOVED TO ADJOURN.**
- ** COUNCIL MEMBER CURWEN SECONDED.**
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 10:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET & APPROPRIATIONS
BUDGET HEARINGS
APRIL 30, 2012**

ATTENDANCE: Robert Curwen, Co-Chair; Angel dePara, Co-Chair;
AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia; Carlos Silva, Lydia Martinez;
Council President Thomas McCarthy (6:40 p.m.)

STAFF: Thomas Sherwood, OPM

OTHERS: Ann Kelly Lenz, Tax Collector; Atty. Russell Liskov, Nestor Nkwo,
Finance; Council Member Leticia Colon, Council Member Michelle
Lyons, Elaine Carvalho, Acting Tax Assessor; Council Member Denese
Taylor-Moye

CALL TO ORDER.

Council Member dePara called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

FINANCE DEPARTMENT - ALL DIVISIONS.

Tax Assessor - Mr. Sherwood reviewed the finances on page 68. Ms. Elaine Carvalho, the Acting Tax Assessor, said that the appeal process had just concluded today.

Ms. Carvalho said that nothing had basically changed in the budget. She said that she had five tax assessment clerks. There are a total of nine filled positions. Mr. Sherwood said that due to the coverage needs within the department for the counter, the three vacant positions are going to be filled.

Mr. Sherwood said the revenue was from various streams. Council Member dePara asked why an assessor was still vacant but they were filling a clerk. Mr. Sherwood started to answer but Council Member dePara said that he wanted to hear from Ms. Carvalho. Mr. Sherwood replied that the decision regarding which position was to be filled was an administrative one. Ms. Carvalho agreed and said that she had advertised for an appraiser but had not found a qualified candidate.

Council Member Silva asked about one of the contractual issues involving NAGE, which Mr. Sherwood reviewed with him.

Council Member Martinez asked how long the appraiser position had been vacant. Ms. Carvalho said that one had been vacant for two years and the others were vacant for four years.

Council Member Colon asked for the amount for the Veteran's and Elderly Tax Exemptions. Ms. Carvalho said that there were six residents involved in the "freeze" program that was started in the 70's, but is no longer available. She then reviewed the assessed amounts for the Elderly and Veterans.

Council Member Silva had more questions about the NAGE agreement. Mr. Sherwood reviewed the details of the increase. Council Member Silva requested a break out of the figures, which Mr. Sherwood said that he would provide for the Committee.

Council Member Silva asked about the criteria for the elderly to receive the tax reduction. Ms. Carvalho reviewed the State requirements.

Council Member Lyons asked for clarification about the State property tax for the PILOT payments. Mr. Sherwood said that this would be items such as the prison and Mead Hall. The hospitals and universities were treated differently by the State years ago and they have just traditionally remained in a separate category.

Council Member Baker asked how the figure on the Grand List was calculated. Ms. Carvalho said that this was the sum total of all the taxable pieces of property in the City. Council Member Baker then asked what the Exempt category contained. Ms. Carvalho said that they would be properties owned by the City, or items such as schools, hospitals and churches.

Council Member Baker asked about the Overtime pay. Mr. Sherwood said that this was the time and a half overtime line. When the Assessor's office has a deadline, such as finalizing the Grand List and the appeal process, this is the line item that is used. This is more of a seasonal type of overtime. The discussion then moved to how the re-evaluation process is handled and recorded in the budget.

Council Member dePara asked what was being charged to the Appraisals line. Mr. Sherwood said he would get a detailed report on the expenses. He reminded everyone that there was a difference between Appraisals and Re-evaluations.

Council Member Silva asked for a report for Contingency, Reserve and Supportive Contributions.

Council Member Lyons asked about subscriptions. Ms. Carvalho said that the department subscribes to a particular journal for assessors. There are also costs associated with Ms. Carvalho's MLS subscription so the department can utilize the information.

Council Member Baker asked about a particular line item that had not been totally expended. Mr. Sherwood said that the remaining budget had been moved into the General Fund.

Council Member Brannelly had several detailed questions regarding the Grand List.

Council Member Curwen asked for a break down from last year showing what each department contributed to the general fund. Mr. Sherwood said that this was included in the CAFIR report under the non-gap basis. He stated that the auditors have a number of calculations to deal with before they announce the final amount.

Council Member dePara asked about the upcoming statistical re-evaluation. Ms. Carvalho said that the process would need to be done via an RFP. Mr. Sherwood gave a ballpark figures on the cost.

Council Member Baker asked who determines when the re-evaluations are done. Mr. Sherwood said that it was determined by the State.

Council Member dePara asked about the computer services line item. Ms. Carvalho said that this was a contact for the specialized computer program. Council Member dePara asked Ms. Carvalho to provide him with costs so that this could be adequately funded.

Tax Collector- Mr. Sherwood said that the department staff level was down. Ms. Kelly-Lenz had completed a reorganization of her department. He said that there had definitely been a change and an improvement.

Council Member dePara asked about the PILOT payments. Mr. Sherwood said that all the big state driven PILOTS were in the Assessor's and the local PILOTS that the City authorizes are recorded in the Tax Collector's.

Ms. Kelly-Lenz said that the Lafayette PILOT would be coming to an end soon. There is another PILOT that has not yet started.

Council Member dePara asked about the vacant positions. The senior Tax Collection Clerk has been vacant for two years, but there is someone acting in that position. She added that it has taken over three years to reorganized was because of the cross training and the rewriting of the job descriptions. Discussion then followed about this.

Council Member Baker asked about the DMV charges that were listed page 65. Ms. Kelly-Lenz said that this was a charge from the DMV when there are vehicles that are delinquent. This account also covers the people who are driving vehicles that are not registered in Bridgeport.

Council Member Baker asked about the Legal Services line. Ms. Kelly-Lenz said that the department had reviewed the delinquent properties with the City Attorney's Office. There are also court ordered fees involved.

Council Member Colon thanked Ms. Kelly-Lenz for the excellent work. She then asked how long the positions have been vacant. Ms. Kelly-Lenz explained that these positions have been vacant for about two years due to the reorganization. The clerks need to know tax law in order to reduce the City's liabilities. There have been some applications for the Senior Tax Collector and the interviews are about to start.

Council Member Martinez asked about the Senior Tax Collector vacancy. Ms. Kelly-Lenz said that with the Acting Finance Director leaving, the interview committee has to be reconfigured.

Council Member dePara asked if the new process has worked well. Ms. Kelly-Lenz said that Civil Service and the unions had been very helpful with the reorganization.

Council Member Martinez thanked Ms. Kelly-Lenz for the time that she took to train people. Council Member Martinez said that she would like a drop off box. Ms. Kelly-Lenz said that the drop off box is open during the tax season, but not at other times. When the payments come in, the ten staffers are in on a Saturday, and processing the payments.

Council Member Taylor-Moye thanked Ms. Kelly-Lenz for the great work that her department was doing.

Council Member dePara asked about the insurance line. Ms. Kelly-Lenz said that State requires her to be bonded for 20 million dollars.

Council Member dePara asked about Training line items. Ms. Kelly-Lenz said that she was required to attend some training and she has started sending staff to classes for training.

Council Member dePara had several detailed questions about various line items, which Ms. Kelly-Lenz reviewed with him.

Comptrollers - Mr. Sherwood said that he had checked into the property rentals and it was the Cabaret and the MOVE yacht club. The administration allocated overhead and the WPCA collection service reimbursements are for the WPCA. Discussion followed about the details.

Council Member dePara asked for an overview of the Personnel summary. This department has been reorganized. Now that payroll is integrated into the system. Now the department needs

more clerks to enter the data. Four high level jobs have been unfunded and positions have been opened up for clerks. This gives \$189,000 in personnel for the department.

The members of the general public left at 8:10 p.m.

Council Member dePara asked about reduction in a position. Mr. Sherwood said that there had been a staff member who left and a new hire filled the position. Council Member dePara asked for length of the time for the vacancy. He also asked for the length of time that the clerks were vacant. Mr. Sherwood said that they had just created the two entry level clerks.

Council Member Baker asked about the MERF contributions, which Mr. Sherwood reviewed with him. Council Member Baker asked several other questions about the various line items.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked for a job description for the Clerk 1 and Clerk 2. Mr. Sherwood said that the Clerk 1 primarily enters the figures. Clerk 2 staff can reconcile the figures.

Council Member dePara said that he noticed some inconsistencies, such as the fact that there were three accountants last year. Mr. Sherwood described how this was handled when one position was moved from the Treasurer's Department to Comptroller's. Discussion followed about the changes and how they should be noted in the budget book.

Council Member Curwen said that he had spoken about the fact that the collection rate was steadily rising. Ms. Kelly-Lenz said that as she has purged the Grand List of uncollected debts, which should make the collection percentage rise. Motor vehicles registration is the weakest point due to the fact that it is so transient.

Council Member Curwen asked what was on the horizon in terms of Grand List growth. Mr. Sherwood said that one area that needed to be addressed is the fact that the City continually is being short changed on the PILOTs from the State. This is based on the State's ability to pay. So the assessment might be 70%, but the actual payment might only between 50% and 55%. Council Member dePara agreed. The number of the exemptions that the City has granted is killing the City.

RECESS.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY MOVED TO RECESS.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting recessed 8:32 p.m. and reconvened at 8:52 p.m.

Tax Collector CONT'D.

Mr. Sherwood then reviewed the Personal Property Claims Awards and Personal Property Claims Attorney. The first type of Claim is filed with the City Clerk's. The second line covers claims that have been filed through the court system.

FINANCE.

Mr. Sherwood informed the Committee that currently there are two positions vacant, the Director and the Deputy Director. No decision has been made on filing these positions, as one of them was just vacated on April 27th.

Council Member dePara asked how long the Finance Director's position has been vacant. Mr. Sherwood said that the Acting Director left on the previous Friday. The Deputy Director position has been vacant for about a year and became vacant when the Deputy Director became the Acting Director.

Council Member Martinez asked what was being done to fill the position. Mr. Sherwood said that the Mayor was responsible for appointing the candidate for the position.

Council Member Baker asked about the unrestricted Fund Balance. Mr. Sherwood reviewed the figures and reminded everyone that Moody's had changed the percentage that should be in Fund Balance about a year and a half ago to maintaining an 8 - 10% balance for reserve. Because Bridgeport has maintained a steady growth plan, Moody's has recognized this by upgrading the status, even though the City is still below their recommended reserve. The discussion then moved to the NAGE contracts and the transfer of the Firefighters to MERF.

Mr. Sherwood then directed everyone's attention to page 267 where the contingency line item was. He reminded everyone that there was a 1.5 million deposit to the Fund Balance. Discussion followed about how the bond rating is affected by this.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY MOVED TO ENTER THE DOCUMENT INTO THE RECORD AS LABOR RELATIONS #4.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER CURWEN SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Printing - Mr. Sherwood said that the vacant position has been noted and would be filled soon. The foreman retired two months ago. Another staff member is filling in as an acting director. The trade union will be filling this position.

Council Member Lyons asked about the fact that many of the jobs were changing into "clerks". Mr. Sherwood said that there has been a major effort to bring consistency into both the jobs and job descriptions. There is also a major effort to move the jobs closer to the private sector positions.

Council Member dePara asked about the Personnel Summary and a decrease in the pay scale. Mr. Sherwood said that the previous staff member had retired and a new employee was hired. Council Member dePara asked how long the position was vacant. Mr. Sherwood said that it was sometime in the fall and the position was filled shortly after.

Council Member Brannelly asked about Probate Court. Mr. Sherwood explained that by State statute, the Probate Court had a reimbursement. Finance pays the Probate bills. The money is used to pay for materials and postage.

Purchasing - The figures are listed on page 58. There has is one vacancy.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that this department has been targeted for many years and now a test has been called for. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that it was wrong to have a test for this department and not all the others. She then insisted on knowing who called for the test. Mr. Sherwood said that he did not know. He explained that there was a vacancy for an Assistant and if a test is given and the Acting Director does not get the highest mark, the Acting Director could fall back to the Assistant position open. However, if the Committee cuts the Assistant position the Acting Director will not have a position to fall back on. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia demanded to know when the test would be given. Mr. Sherwood said that Civil Service would know, but added that right now, the Fire Department mandamus was the top priority.

Council Member Baker asked about the department using the MUNIS system.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked about the employee who does the purchasing for the BOE and that employee's physical location. Mr. Sherwood said that he believed the employee was back with the BOE offices but linked by computer.

Treasurer – This information was on page 72. Mr. Sherwood reviewed the staffing and said that one of the accountants had been shifted from the Comptroller's. The discussion then moved to the confirmation on the salary for this staff member. Discussion followed.

Council Member Baker asked about a line items regarding Public Safety. Mr. Sherwood explained what was covered in that line item.

Council Member Brannelly asked about a line item on page 59 with the Purchasing working with BOE. This is due to the approvals needed by the Purchasing Agent.

Council Member dePara asked about the Personnel Summary for the Treasurer. Mr. Sherwood reviewed the transfers that occurred between the Comptroller's and Treasurer's. Council Member dePara asked that next time something of this complexity is done, that a footnote be included.

Council Member dePara asked about the banking services. Mr. Sherwood said that he would check into this.

RECESS.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY MOVED TO ENTER INTO RECESS.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting recessed at 9:45 p.m. and reconvened at 9:50 p.m.

Mr. Sherwood then gave the Committee a brief update on the meeting with the State regarding the educational in-kind donations and the NBR. He also outlined a proposal for school budget growth.

CAPITAL PLAN.

Council Member Lyons then asked about the separation programs. Council President McCarthy said that the sewer separation was part of the flood control. It is a solid, basis step towards modernizing the sewers and stopping the clean water from entering the sewer system. Council Member dePara said that he would like to have the WPCA come in to update the Committee on the various projects

Council Member Lyons asked about the replacement of the police car fleet. Mr. Sherwood said that this was for 41 new Ford vehicles to move the last of the Crown Vics out of the fleet.

The discussion then moved to the repairs needed at Kennedy Stadium. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that there were numerous potholes in the asphalt. She added that the trees along Lincoln Avenue had branches that were too low. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that she has been taking a knife and cutting the branches to reduce the liability of the City.

The discussion then moved to the Bluefish and the Wonderland of Ice facilities. Mr. Sherwood noted that the outstanding items had never been completed.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked about the Park Department moving. Discussion followed about the possibility of the State taking the land that the building is on.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked about the City Attorney's office renovation. Mr. Sherwood said that it was for an air handling system for the entire building. It is accessed through the City Attorney's Office.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked about penthouses mentioned in the list. Mr. Sherwood said that the term penthouse is a standard building term and was used to refer to the top floor of the annex and other City buildings. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia objected to the use of the term and said that she wanted the terms to be consistent through out the City.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked why it would cost \$10,000 to paint a building. She pointed out that there was no back up material for the project. Mr. Sherwood pointed out that this project was not scheduled for at least another year and that an RFP would have to be done.

Council Member Martinez asked about the Parks Master Plan. Mr. Sherwood said that this was a plan that the City would be bonding for. Once that happens, then the bids would go out for the work.

Council Member Lyons asked for clarification about the projects listed in the Master Plan. She said that she was concerned that there might be duplications in the projects between the CDBG projects listed and the ones included in the Capital Plan. Discussion followed.

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT MCCARTHY MOVED TO AMEND BY REMOVE 11.8 MILLION FROM PUBLIC FACILITIES TO REDUCE IT TO \$16,415,204
** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA SECONDED.**

Council Member Brannelly said that the Parks Improvement Plan was important and that she hoped that the City would have an on-going Capital Plan. However by vetoing the Plan, it would send a very negative message to the public and those who worked so hard on proposal. It is a comprehensive plan to bring the parks to where they need to be.

Council Member Curwen said that regarding the 11.8 million, he said that he didn't support cutting the plan out, but move it back to Year 3,4 & 5.

Mr. Sherwood said that in order to get the bonding, the Five Year Plan must be included in the request to bond. Discussion followed about modifying the Capital Plan.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that she had no issues with the work that went into the Parks Master Plan. She said that there was no supporting documentation for the projects. She said that she would vote against the entire plan because of this.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that she had requested the WPCA come before the Budget & Appropriation, but this had never been done. Council Member dePara said that he had called Mr. Robinson about this but had never had gotten a return call. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked who his supervisors were. Mr. Sherwood said that the former Acting Financial Director was on the Board. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia stated that when the WPCA comes before the Committee for bonding, they wouldn't get it.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA MOVED TO REMOVE THE LINCOLN BOULEVARD PARK PROJECT FROM THE CAPITAL PLAN
** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY SECONDED.**

Council President McCarthy then spoke about the situation on Lincoln Boulevard and pointed out that the blacktop was very wide and during the summer, the heat radiates off the black top. The esplanade would break this up, help the flooding, and make the area greener. The parades and the busing would be handled through the parking lot. Council Member Silva asked if it would help with the traffic. Council President McCarthy said that he believed it would.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia left at 11:05 p.m.

**** THE MOTION TO REMOVE THE LINCOLN BOULEVARD PARK PROJECT FROM THE CAPITAL PLAN FAILED TO PASS WITH NO ONE IN FAVOR AND FIVE AGAINST (SILVA, CURWEN, MARTINEZ, MCCARTHY AND BRANNELLY)**

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia rejoined the meeting at 11:15 p.m.

****COUNCIL MEMBER CURWEN MOVED TO AMEND THE VARIOUS PARK PROJECTS TO \$16,415,204 WITH 3 MILLION IN FY 2014; 3 MILLION IN FY 2015, AND 5,835,236 IN FY2016.**

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT MCCARTHY SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER CURWEN MOVED TO AMEND ON KNOWLTON AND BEARDSLEY TO HAVE \$3,140,146 IN FY 2013; \$2,606,460 IN FY 2014 AND \$2,519,000 IN FY 2015.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

****COUNCIL MEMBER CURWEN MOVED TO AMEND PLEASURE BEACH TO \$3,628,830 IN FY 2013; \$40,000,000 IN FY 2014 AND \$1759,909 IN FY 2015.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Council Member Curwen said that the Reservoir Streetscape was not in the Capital Plan and he wanted bring it to the Committee as he was requested to do by

**** COUNCIL MEMBER CURWEN MOVED TO ADD \$500,000 FOR THE RESERVOIR STREET SCAPE ROADWAYS PAVING CULVERTS**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED WITH FIVE IN FAVOR (BRANNELLY, CURWEN, MARTINEZ, MCCARTHY AND SILVA), ONE AGAINST (VIZZO-PANICCIA)**

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that she voted against the streetscape because it was brought to the floor at the meeting.

Council Member Curwen left the meeting at 11:30 p.m.

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT MCCARTHY MOVED TO APPROVE THE CAPITAL PLAN AS AMENDED.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED WITH FOUR IN FAVOR (BRANNELLY, MARTINEZ, MCCARTHY AND SILVA), ONE AGAINST (VIZZO-PANICCIA)**

ADJOURNMENT.

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT MCCARTHY MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER SILVA SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 11:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET & APPROPRIATIONS
BUDGET HEARINGS
MAY 1, 2012**

ATTENDANCE: Robert Curwen, Co-chair; Angel dePara, Co-Chair;
AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia; Susan Brannelly; Carlos
Silva, Lydia Martinez

STAFF: Thomas Sherwood, OPM Director

OTHERS: Council Member Denese Taylor-Moye; Council Member Leticia
Colon; Council Member Richard Paoletto

CALL TO ORDER

Council Member Curwen called the meeting to order at 6:15 p.m.

CAPITAL PLAN DISCUSSION/VOTE

Mr. Sherwood said that there were four items changed at the previous meeting. Various Park Improvement Projects had the funding redistributed. The second change was the Paving/Culvert where \$500,000 was added. Pleasure Beach was allocated over three years along with the Knowlton /Barnum Waterfront.

Mr. Sherwood said that the documents went to the bond counsel today.

Council Member Silva asked about the funding for projects that did not utilize the full amount. Mr. Sherwood said that the BOE had reviewed their projects that had either been completed or had been scrubbed. Mr. Sherwood said that the BOE had submitted a list of de-authorized projects. Discussion followed about the cash management for these types of projects.

Council Member Martinez asked about the Knowlton/Barnum Waterfront Development. Council Member Curwen explained how the five year projections worked in the Capital Plan. Mr. Sherwood said that in the coming weeks, Parks and Public Facilities would be coming to the Budget Committee with a request and more details on the projects.

Council Member dePara distributed copies of the Facilities/Technology Project spreadsheet, which has been already submitted into the record.

Mr. Sherwood said that this was a good example of modification He said that previously, a lump sum had been given, but this was no longer being handled in this matter.

Council Member Curwen asked about the two pages of language at the back of the original Capital Plan where the Bond Counsel had a summary.

Council Member Curwen said that he would not be comfortable de-authorizing the various projects unless the various department directors were present to answer questions and to verify that these projects are either completed or have been scrubbed.

Council Member Curwen said that he has the last six years worth of Capital Plan for reference if Council Members or Committee members had questions

Council President McCarthy announced that Ms. Wilson would be bringing copies of the updated Capital Plan to the City Council meeting.

RECESS

**** COUNCIL MEMBER SILVA MOVED TO RECESS FOR THE SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING.**

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT MCCARTHY SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION FOR RECESS FOR VOTE PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting went into recess at 6:50 p.m. Council Member Curwen reconvened at 7:40 p.m.

CAPITAL PLAN DISCUSSION CONT'D

Council Member Curwen gave a brief overview of the proposed cuts. The Committee then reviewed the changes on pages 26, 34, 42, 48, 52, 58, 68, 72, 76, 80, 84, 86, 92, 320, 88, 92, 98, 101, 104, 109, and 112.

The discussion moved to the vacancies in the budget. Mr. Sherwood pointed out that the budget book was a snap shot in time and that the vacancies and new hires changes from day to day. Council President McCarthy pointed out that some of the vacancies need to be considered carefully because when they cut too many positions, the work does not get done. Council Member Taylor-Moye pointed out that when one department came forward and explained that one position had been vacant for years because the candidates were not qualified.

The Committee then reviewed pages 118, 122, 126, 132, 136, 140, 157, 170, 172,

The discussion then moved to the CDBG funding. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that she felt that it should be cut and have the organizations work at raising funds. Council Member dePara said that he had proposed creating a capacity building program.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER DEPARA MOVED TO ELIMINATE ALL LINE ITEMS FOR PROPOSED CDBG STAFF FROM THE GENERAL OPERATING BUDGET.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED WITH FIVE IN FAVOR (CURWEN, MCCARTHY, DEPARA, VIZZO-PANICCIA AND SILVA) AND TWO OPPOSED (MARTINEZ AND BRANNELLY).**

Council President McCarthy left at 9:55 p.m.

Mr. Sherwood said that he would like to update the Committee on their earlier questions regarding the various line items:

In the Treasury Department, the Banking services line item covers the Reimbursement by WPCA. OTHER services covers the Connecticut Post advertisement requirements. There are no other reserve codes in budget.

In the Assessor's office, the Appraisals line item covers the Land appraisals that are required. Under Collections, the line item has to do with the security is for changing the locks. The second line item has to do with required online State communications.

In Purchasing, the Other services line item is for the annual online "Bidsync" contract, which is where the request for the RFPs and RFQs are published.

Council Member Martinez left 10:00 p.m.

Council Member Brannelly asked about some consolidated object codes, which Mr. Sherwood answered.

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 10:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET & APPROPRIATION
BUDGET HEARINGS
MAY 3, 2012**

ATTENDANCE: Robert Curwen, Co-Chair; Angel dePara, Co-Chair; Howard Austin, Lydia Martinez, Carlos Silva, Susan Brannelly, Amy Marie Vizzo-Paniccia, Council President Thomas McCarthy

OTHER: Council Member Andre Baker

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:28 by Council Member Curwen.

CDBG FUNDING DISCUSSION

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ MOVED TO REOPEN THE DISCUSSION ON THE CDBG COMMUNITY BLOCK GRANT FUNDING.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER AUSTIN SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Council Member Martinez distributed a document to all members present. Discussion followed. Council Member Martinez said that she had had a long discussion about this funding with Mr. Sherwood. Council Member Curwen asked Council Member Martinez whether the mill rate could be kept at 1.5 or lower with the positions she described factored in. Council Member Brannelly said that she would like to see these positioned in the general fund for the next fiscal year. Council Member Curwen explained that, in order to retract a previously made motion and have it reconsidered, the person who made the motion must be present as well as the people who were present for the vote. He then recounted the people who had been present for the vote for Council Member Martinez. Councilman Curwen announced that there had been a request from a college to restore the funding for \$383,819.65 without analyzing what was in the budget.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER DEPARA MOVED TO RECONSIDER THE MOTION.**

Council Member dePara said he would like to have a discussion regarding the usage of the designated funds. He said the designated funds would go a long way towards helping services provided to their constituents across the city and/or to continue the good work of programs and organizations that would benefit from the reintroduction of the designated funds into the general fund.

RECESS

- ** COUNCIL MEMBER AUSTIN VOTED TO RECESS THE MEETING.**
- ** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY SECONDED THE MOTION.**
- ** THE MOTION FOR A RECESS PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting entered into a recess at 6:42 p.m. The meeting reconvened at 6:53 p.m.

- ** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY MOVED TO ENTER HANDOUT OF DOCUMENT CDBG 5-3-12 EXHIBIT #1 INTO EXHIBIT WITH THE BOTTOM OF PAGE TWO STRICKEN FROM THE RECORD.**
- ** COUNCIL MEMBER AUSTIN SECONDED THE MOTION.**
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Council Member Martinez was asked to walk the council through the hand out. Discussion on the handout followed. Council member Curwen said that Council member Martinez had called him earlier that day and informed him that adjustments had been made to the CDBG budget and located 247,000 dollars that had been allocated to these positions and asked if the committee could reconsider or consider funding 150,000 dollars to find the balance for the funding in these positions. Council member Martinez said that the administration wishes to act and give the money the budget or restore it to CDBG. Councilmember Silva spoke, at length, about his concerns regarding the mayor's comments about the tax rate. Discussion followed about the various programs. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia noted that there was an anticipated increase in WPCA fees and an upcoming re-evaluation.

Ms. McDermott joined the meeting 7:22 p.m.

RECESS

- ** COUNCIL MEMBER AUSTIN MOTIONED TO RECESS.**
- ** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY SECONDED THE MOTION,**
- ** THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUS.**

The meeting entered into recess at 7:27 p.m. Council Member Curwen reconvened the meeting at 7:38 p.m.

Ms. McDermott stated that the CDBG funds can only be used for Bridgeport residents. Council Member dePara asked about the increased need for services due to the economic downturn. Council Member dePara asked for descriptions of several of the programs which Ms. McDermott reviewed with him. Ms. McDermott then reviewed the benefits of moving the staff positions back to the general fund. After the conclusion of the discussion the committee members

expressed their feelings about rescinding the original vote. Council Member Curwen then reviewed the steps for a reconsideration vote.

**** THERE WAS A MOTION TO RECONSIDER THE PREVIOUS VOTE REGARDING MOVING THE FUNDING FROM THE MAYORS PROPOSED BUDGET BY COUNCIL MEMBER DEPARA.**

**** THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY.**

**** THE VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.**

**** THERE WAS A MOTION TO RECONSIDER THE ITEM REGARDING THE MAYOR'S PROPOSED BUDGET FOR \$383,819.65 TO BE ADDED BACK INTO THE MAYOR'S PROPOSED BUDGET AND PROPOSED TO NOT BE ELIMINATED FROM THE MAYOR'S PROPOSED BUDGET BY COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ**

**** THE MOTION SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER CURWEN**

****THE MOTION PASSED WITH FOUR IN FAVOR (MARTINEZ, AUSTIN, DEPARA, AND BRANNELLY) AND TWO AGAINST (SILVA AND VIZZO-PANICCIA).**

The discussion then moved to the allocations for the building department.

Council Member Austin left the meeting at 8:09 p.m.

The discussion returned to the OPED budget.

RECESS

**** COUNCIL MEMBER SILVA MOVED FOR A RECESS.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The Committee entered in a recess at 8:10 p.m. Council Member Curwen called the meeting back to order at 8:16 p.m. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia was not present when the meeting returned from recess.

Discussion moved to the un-funding of one of the vacancies in the building department. The discussion then moved to the second on the ZBA. The committee continued to review proposed department budgets.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia returned at 8:19 p.m. and Council President McCarthy entered the meeting at 8:19 p.m. and left at 8:20 p.m. He returned, along with Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia at 8:41 p.m. and Council Member Blunt joined the meeting at 8:45 p.m.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that the budget book was not consistent and that this should be taken up with Mr. Sherwood. She said that she did not know where some funding for the Barnum Museum and there was no supporting documentation in the budget book. She said that she wanted to have at least two years worth of budget information, if not five years in the binder. Council member dePara was able to access the previous year's budget via computer. It was determined that previously the Barnum Museum and the Probate Court had been combined into one line item, but details about both entities were explained in the supportive detail summary.

Council Member Curwen said that there was an agreement reached with the State that the City would contribute to the Probate Court via a State mandate. Council Member Brannelly asked for a copy of the State mandate. Discussion followed about the details of this issue. Council Member Curwen reminded everyone that this was the year that a number of items were broken out from some broad categories and then put into individual line items. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia requested the supportive documentation for the Probate Court and the Barnum Museum.

Council Member dePara said that there had been a request by Council President McCarthy for documentation on the financials, both grant funding and operating funds. Nothing has been received as of date. Council Member dePara said that he had seen Mr. Errichetti recently and reiterated the request. Council Member Curwen said that it was a dedicated line item and that the Council had no authority to touch that funding. Council President McCarthy reminded everyone that the Library Board self-appoints.

The discussion then moved to the Board of Education as outlined on page 379. Council Member then reviewed the figures for debt service, the cost of a sanitation truck for the Board of Education, the cost of snow removal, the Lighthouse Program and other items prepared for the State. A lengthy discussion regarding the amount that the State would be contributing versus the amount that the City was expected to contribute, both financially and via direct services.

Council Member Martinez left the meeting at 10:05 p.m.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that she was in favor of only giving the BOE the amount of funding required by the State and that she would prefer that the money be held in escrow until the new staff proves they are accountable and transparent. She reminded everyone that Superintendent Vallas would continue on with the programs regardless of the amount of funding the Board received. Council Member Brannelly said that she understood something else. Council President McCarthy said that he had been at another meeting out of state and people were very impressed that Superintendent Vallas was in Bridgeport. He went on to say that he supported Council Member Brannelly and felt that the City needed to support the new Board of Education because if they can't fix the problem, probably no one can. He said that the 3.5 million from the State should be pulling out and that the City should put in 5 million.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia recounted that the last two Superintendents had come to the City making great promises, but ended up having to be bought out. She said that she supported the education, but wanted to see the documentation that showed there was some type of success. She pointed out that the parents and students that were succeeding were the ones that overshadowed by the failing students.

Council Member dePara said that he saw both Council Member Brannelly and Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia's points of view. He said that asking the tax payers to carry a heavier burden in terms of taxes and add additional funds to the educational system, it should require a plan showing the anticipated cost cutting and policies and procedures that would mirror the City's wellness plans or something similar to the monthly financials.

Council Member Brannelly said that she was aware that the new administration had worked very hard to bring down the deficit and produced a budget that covered future projections. She pointed out that the City Council did not have confidence in the Board of Education and as Superintendent Vallas shows the reforms, the private funding will flow forward.

Council President McCarthy suggested a dedicated line item for the education budget.

Council Member Curwen said that he wanted to address the in kind budget. He said that he had had lengthy discussions with the OPM director and that the City does provide full funding. The City provides over \$3,000 per student when the in kind services are factored in. He suggested that this funding be set in the dedicated line item. Superintendent Vallas said that he would be willing to sign an MOU that he would be willing to pay it back to the City. Council Member Curwen said that for the first time in many years, after talking to Superintendent Vallas, he had more confidence in the Board. He did not support 7 million dollars, but would be willing to match 3.5 million that the State gives. Discussion followed.

Council Member Silva said that he agreed with Council Member Curwen and match the 3.5 million. He then listed his reasons for this and said that the mill rate needs to be lowered. He pointed out that while the State has not given Bridgeport their fair share, the City had continued to give its share. He said that it wasn't a coincidence that people were calling to say they can't pay their taxes. Discussion followed regarding using the dedicated line item and the fact if the funds were in a dedicated line item, that amount will not be added to the MBR. Discussion followed.

Council Member Curwen said that he had just received a document from Superintendent Vallas about the future plans for the schools.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that the current administration was rehiring former members of the staff. She said that Superintendent Vallas was doing the same things that previous administrations had done, which was rehiring retired staff as consultants. Council

Member Brannelly asked why this had not been discussed with Superintendent Vallas. She brought out several points about why a rehire might be wise. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that she would contact Superintendent Vallas about this.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked what was in the document. Council Member Curwen gave a very brief overview. When asked by Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia when he had reviewed the document, Council Member Curwen stated that he had looked it over while Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia was speaking about the rehiring of retired school staff. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia replied that was fine since she was busy answering emails while he was speaking earlier.

The discussion moved to the fact that the administration had agreed to sell one of the buildings and give the money to the Board of Education, but that the City.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that she would like Mr. Sherwood to be at the next meeting

ADJOURNMENT

- ** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY MOVED TO ADJOURN.**
- ** COUNCIL MEMBER DEPARA SECONDED.**
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 11:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET & APPROPRIATIONS
BUDGET HEARINGS
MAY 5, 2012**

ATTENDANCE: Robert Curwen, Co-chair; Angel dePara, Co-chair; Susan Brannelly, AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia; Council President Thomas McCarthy, Lydia Martinez

STAFF: Thomas Sherwood, OPM Director

OTHERS: Council Member Denese Taylor-Moye; Council Member Andre Baker; Council Member Michelle Lyons

CALL TO ORDER

Council Member Curwen called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m.

FY 2012-2013 GENERAL FUND BUDGET

Mr. Sherwood said that he had made the change from the CAO's office to the Mayor's Office as requested.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER DEPARA MOVED TO ENTER THE DOCUMENT DISTRIBUTED BY MR. SHERWOOD AS BUDGET 05/05/12 EXHIBIT #1
** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA SECONDED.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Council Member Curwen said that the Committee had worked very hard last night and made progress on which line items to consider for reduction.

Mr. Sherwood gave a brief overview of the document he had distributed and indicated where the job shift between offices occurred.

The Committee then moved to page 68 to consider the partial funding of a position. Concerns were expressed about the department's customer service. Council Member Curwen said that perhaps these concerns should be passed back to the administration. Mr. Sherwood agreed and suggested that this concern be forwarded to Mr. Nunn.

The discussion then moved to page 132. Council President McCarthy reminded everyone that IT was undergoing changes in terms of jobs as the department shifted from a mainframe to individual servers.

The Committee then reviewed the changes that were made on page 142 regarding overtime and staffing. Discussion followed about the details.

Council Member Curwen then indicated that page 157, and noted for the record that Mr. Sherwood had made a goof. Mr. Sherwood said that he had forgotten to bring the supportive documents.

The Committee then reviewed page 172 and the removal of two vacant positions. On page 180, it was noted that one position was partially unfunded.

Council Member Curwen directed everyone's attention to page 214. One vacant foreman position was eliminated. Mr. Sherwood explained that the road crews have a high turn over and added that the City required a CDL (commercial driver's license) before hiring. Five road crew positions were vacant when the budget was compiled, however, they have since been filled. Council President McCarthy gave an overview of the requirements for the department. He added that the department had a very good track record with bringing in seasonals and the promising workers are encouraged to get more training and recruited as a full time worker for the City.

Mr. Sherwood said that the Mayor had removed the vacancies in Sanitation/Recycling. The Committee then moved to page 234. Council Member Curwen said that the position of the golf course manager had been removed. Additional positions have been removed on pages 267 and 274.

The discussion then moved to the Harbor Master's Department. Mr. Sherwood then read an email about the pumper boat. There is a matching grant. The goal is prevent boaters from discharging waste into the harbor. There was a recommendation to reduce the request to \$30,000.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked whether the City would be obligated to hire someone to captain the boat. Mr. Sherwood explained that the Harbor Master and the Port Authority handle that in. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that she would like to have the documentation on the Port Authority and the Harbor Master. Council President McCarthy stated that the Harbor Master was appointed by the Governor. Mr. Sherwood added that the Port Authority revenue was a special revenue line and the City does not have access to that information. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that she wanted the City protected from future problems.

The Committee then moved to OPED on page 286. The discussion moved to the Deputy Director of OPED and how long the position may be vacant. Discussion followed. It was decided that this position would remain as it.

On pages 300, 310, 314, the Committee discussed the vacant positions and partial reductions. It was noted that there would be a language adjustment regarding "Marketing" on page 367. Discussion followed. Mr. Sherwood said that this budget has to do with the reserve. If it is touched for any reason other than strict emergency, Wall Street will immediately downgrade the

City's bond rating. He reminded everyone that in the event of a disaster requiring a transfer of funding from that reserve fund, he would have to come before the Council for approval. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that she wanted to have documentation stating that the reserve fund could not be used for marketing and send it to all the Council Members, the Mayor and the administration so that there could be no question about this from anyone.

The discussion then moved to Other Financing. Council President McCarthy reminded everyone that the Probate Court was mandated by the State and the Barnum Museum was covered by contract.

Council Member Baker asked why the budget book only had one past year rather than the previous budgets where there were three or five years on the report. Mr. Sherwood said that legally, he was obligated to provide one past year, the current year and the coming year in the report. He also stated that the City had switched to the MUNIS system in 2010. However, he could generate a separate report with multiple years.

Council Member Curwen then said that the last item for discussion was about the Board of Education. He gave a summary of the previous discussions on this subject.

RECESS

Council Member Curwen called a recess at 11:50 a.m. The meeting was called back into order at 12:10 p.m.

FY 2012-2013 GENERAL FUND BUDGET CONT'D.

Council Member Curwen said that the Committee needed to decide whether to allocate 5 million or 3.5 million to the Board of Education. Council Member Silva said that he would support 3.5 million. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that she was in favor of the 3.5 million. Council President McCarthy said that he would support 5 million. Council Member Brannelly said she would stay with 5 million and spoke about her reasons for doing so. Council Member Martinez expressed concern that she did not see the programs for the students in the documents. Council Member Curwen said that this was a budget reduction for this current year to reduce the deficit.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER DEPARA MOVED TO ENTER A DOCUMENT TITLED BRIDGEPORT PUBLIC SCHOOL 2011-12 BUDGET DEFICIT REDUCTION PLAN AS BUDGET 05/05/12 EXHIBIT #2.**

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT MCCARTHY SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Council Member Lyons said that she saw new copiers brought into her school, but her grandson had no teacher in the classroom. She added that some teachers had been hired back at a high cost. She said that she was seeing the students suffering. Council Member Lyons said that she

had asked for assistance numerous times with no result. Council President McCarthy pointed out that the copier re-negotiation had resulted in savings of \$350,000 for the district.

Council Member Baker asked about some of the items that the City had picked up for the Board. Mr. Sherwood said that the City would cover items such as garbage, snow removal and additional services to provide financial relief. Security management will move under the Police and the Public Facilities will supervise the buildings. Mr. Sherwood then listed a number of other items.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that she was in favor of the 3.5 million because she wanted to see more results before giving more money to the District. She added that she had investigated the re-hiring practice from the District after hearing about this.

Council Member Martinez asked if the funding could be held in reserve. Mr. Sherwood said that the funding was going into the dedicated line item. If the District failed to live up to expectation, then the money remains on the City side.

Council Member Silva said that while he did favor education, he was cautious about allocating 5 million. While the new superintendent had come through with numerous items, there were areas where he has not performed as well.

Council Member dePara asked if there were additional services that the City was planning to offer the Board of Education. Mr. Sherwood said that the City was not planning to offer anything additional to the District.

Council President McCarthy left the meeting at 12:40 p.m.

The discussion then moved to remove all unaffiliated raises in the book for this year.

Council Member Brannelly said that after reviewing the past history when there were two years with no raises, and this would impact fringe benefits, retirement and health care issues. Council Member Silva said that the unaffiliated staff was either elected officials or Mayoral appointments, they should be willing to make a sacrifice, just like everyone else. A consensus on this item was not reached at this time.

Council Member Curwen said that there was a request to unfund all line items under \$2,000 in the budget. Discussion followed. It was decided to leave this line item intact.

Council Member Curwen said that there had been a request to unfund the two Mayoral aides. These aides oversee all the material coming into the Mayor's Office. All the NRZs along with the Federal and State legislative are handled through this position. It was decided to leave this line item intact.

The discussion then moved back to the unaffiliated. Council Member dePara said that he would never begrudge anyone a salary, and acknowledged the intent of the cost cutting, he said that it would weight too heavily on the budget. He said that the Committee needs to adjust the ordinance. After a prolonged discussion, it was decided to leave these line items intact.

RECESS

Council Member Curwen declared a recess at 1:10 p.m. Chairman Curwen called the meeting back into order at 1:32 p.m.

FY 2012-2013 GENERAL FUND BUDGET CONT'D.

Council Member dePara said that one of the questions that he had about the BOE budget that was handed to the Council in the early portion of the budget meetings that caused him concerns. He suggested that the Budget committee request another meeting with the BOE after the new budget year started.

Council Member Martinez asked about the State education funding. Mr. Sherwood reviewed how the Federal and State funding is allocated to Bridgeport.

Council Member dePara reiterated his earlier comments about the importance of education and hearing the concerns of his colleagues, he stated that he would support the 5 million allocation for the education.

Mr. Sherwood then distributed copies of the proposed FY 2012-2013 General Year Fund Budget.

Council Member Curwen then said that the Budget Committee would pursue putting the BOE funding in a dedicated line item.

With the reductions made by the Committee, it reduces the projected tax increase from 2.7 mills to 1.48 mill.

Council Member Curwen then thanked everyone for their hard work. Council Member Silva said that he would like to have a statement about the Committee moved the budget from the Mayor's proposal to the final Council Budget. Mr. Sherwood said that it would be important to make a statement as a Committee about the key issues such as police overtime, not eliminating the positions in Public Safety and Public Facilities. Council Member Curwen then listed a number of items that would be included in the statement of intent.

70-11(a) - Budget and Appropriations Committee Vote of General Fund Revenue Increases

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT MCCARTHY MOVED TO APPROVE 70-11(A) BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE VOTE OF GENERAL FUND REVENUE INCREASES.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE 70-11(A) BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE VOTE OF GENERAL FUND REVENUE INCREASES PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

70-11(b) Budget and Appropriations Committee Vote of General Fund Revenue Decreases

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 70-11(B) BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE VOTE OF GENERAL FUND REVENUE DECREASES.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER DEPARA SECONDED.**

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that she was concerned about the fact that the Council was only reducing the budget by less than 1 mill. Mr. Sherwood pointed out that originally the proposed mill was over 2.7 mills. The reduction down to 1.48 is significant.

Council Member dePara asked about ECS funding. Mr. Sherwood then reviewed that issue with him.

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 70-11(B) BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE VOTE OF GENERAL FUND REVENUE DECREASES PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

70-11 (c) Budget and Appropriations Committee Vote of General Fund Appropriations Increases

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 70-11(C) BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE VOTE OF GENERAL FUND APPROPRIATIONS INCREASES.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER SILVA SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 70-11(C) BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE VOTE OF GENERAL FUND APPROPRIATIONS INCREASES PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

70-11 (d) Budget and Appropriations Committee Vote of General Fund Appropriations Decreases.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 70-11 (D) BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE VOTE OF GENERAL FUND APPROPRIATIONS DECREASES.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER DEPARA SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 70-11 (D) BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE VOTE OF GENERAL FUND APPROPRIATIONS DECREASES PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

70-11 (e) Budget And Appropriations Committee Vote Of General Fund Budget.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 70-11(E) BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE VOTE OF GENERAL FUND BUDGET.**

Council Member dePara said that he and Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia would like to change one of the numbers on the final budget sheet.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY RESCINDED HER MOTION.**

Council Member dePara pointed out that total council revenues of \$8,999,556 would look better if it was rounded up to \$9,000,000. Council Member Curwen pointed out that all the previous votes would have to be rescinded to adjust the figures. He also indicated that the figure was a revenue figure. Council Member dePara reiterated that it would still look aesthetically better with the rounded up figure of \$9,000,000.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 70-11(E) BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE VOTE OF GENERAL FUND BUDGET.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that everyone had worked very hard along with the administration. Hopefully, everyone will be able to communication to their constituents and clarify the statements made by the media.

Council Member Martinez thanked everyone and said that her only difficulty was with the CDBG funding.

Council Member dePara said that he would also like to express his thanks for everyone's hard work, particularly as some members had some medical challenges.

Council Member Silva thanked everyone on the Committee for doing what was right for their constituents. There were moments when there was lack of agreement, but at the end of the day, everyone came to a consensus. This budget wasn't the easiest that the Committee had tackled in his years on the Committee. He said that he still feels that there were some choices to knock the budget figures lower, but knew that the Mayor would veto the budget, which would negate all the work done by the Committee. The Committee needs to come out with a prepared statement with the key issues relevant to this vote.

Council Member Curwen said that he appreciated everyone who worked hard during the budget process particularly as several people had medical issues to deal with.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA SECONDED THE MOTION TO
ADJOURN.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 2:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services