

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
DECEMBER 8, 2008**

ATTENDANCE: Robert Curwen, Chair; Leticia Colon, Andre Baker; Daniel Martinez; Susan Brannelly, AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia (6:36 p.m.); Council President Thomas McCarthy (6:36 p.m.)

OTHERS: Acting Police Chief Gaudett; Ms. Dorie Price, Public Safety Coordinator; Council Member Valle, Council Member Walsh; Tom Sherwood, OPE; Council Member Lyons; Capt. Bob McNelis, Bpt. Fire Department

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Curwen called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

MINUTES SEPTEMBER 8, 2008

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BAKER MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 8, 2008 AS SUBMITTED.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER COLON SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

231-07 Modification of state section of FY 2009-2013 Capital Plan to utilize LoCIP entitlement funds for construction of communication tower at City Hall, 45 Lyon Terrace (\$383,900)

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia and Council President McCarthy joined the meeting at 6:36 p.m.

Acting Police Chief Gaudett came forward and greeted the Committee. He explained that the radio tower had been inspected and that the tower was not able to have any additional equipment added to it. A 110 foot lattice communication tower will be constructed on the City Hall property with a small shack for housing the equipment. Chief McNelis explained that if there is any money left over from LoCIP funding, that money can go back into the funding. A brief discussion then followed with the suggesting that this item be deauthorized from the bonding.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked about the security precautions for the equipment shed. Acting Police Chief Gaudett reviewed the details of this with the Committee.

Council Member Walsh said that the Capital Budget would be affected and that other projects that could have been funded with LoCIP funding might not be done. He said that he felt that the Council should review all the LoCIP funds and projects because the bond funding will not be available for two years.

Acting Police Chief Gaudett explained that there was a time concern and that there had been an 18 month extension. Chairman Curwen suggested that Council Member Walsh draft up a resolution to review the Capital Plan. Council President McCarthy agreed. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that while she did agree, this was a public safety issue and that the project should move forward.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 231-07 MODIFICATION OF STATE SECTION OF FY 2009-2013 CAPITAL PLAN TO UTILIZE LOCIP ENTITLEMENT FUNDS FOR CONSTRUCTION OF COMMUNICATION TOWER AT CITY HALL, 45 LYON TERRACE (\$383,900)**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ SECONDED.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Chairman Curwen stated that this item should be included on the Consent Calendar. Following this, Chairman Curwen then asked for a review of the Capital Plan for possible deauthorization.

232-07 Modification of state section of FY 2009-2013 Capital Plan to utilize LoCIP Entitlement funds for construction of communication tower at 1365 Sylvan Avenue (\$245,980)

Acting Police Chief Gaudett reviewed the details of the new monopole communication tower. The equipment will be housed in a near by building. Acting Police Chief Gaudett said that there would be growth in the future, but that there was no plan to add anything to this tower.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 232-07 MODIFICATION OF STATE SECTION OF FY 2009-2013 CAPITAL PLAN TO UTILIZE LOCIP ENTITLEMENT FUNDS FOR CONSTRUCTION OF COMMUNICATION TOWER AT 1365 SYLVAN AVENUE (\$245,980)**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ SECONDED.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Chairman Curwen stated that this item should be included on the Consent calendar.

191-07 Resolution re Request that the Office of Legislative Services be, and hereby is, unfunded by this City Council until such time as the City's finances are more solvent in nature.

Chairman Curwen reviewed the reasons why he had drafted the resolution and stated that he wished to have the resolution tabled at this time. Council President McCarthy said that he agreed that the Council should be building the Legislative rather than disassembling the department.

Council Member Valle said that she was not in favor of eliminating the office and was concerned about this issue. Council Member Lyons agreed with Council Member Valle about the value of the Legislative Office, as did Council Member Colon. Chairman Curwen said that he was very satisfied with Mr. White's work and that the resolution was drafted for another reason. He went on to say that he would not withdraw the resolution at this time. Council President McCarthy said that he understood why the issue needed to be tabled at this time. Discussion then followed.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA MOVED TO TABLE AGENDA ITEM 191-07 RESOLUTION RE REQUEST THAT THE OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE SERVICES BE, AND HEREBY IS, UNFUNDED BY THIS CITY COUNCIL UNTIL SUCH TIME AS THE CITY'S FINANCES ARE MORE SOLVENT IN NATURE.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER COLON SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED WITH THREE IN FAVOR (BRANNELLY, COLON AND VIZZO-PANICCIA) AND TWO OPPOSED (BAKER AND MARTINEZ).**

ADJOURNMENT

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

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted.

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET & APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
SPECIAL MEETING
DECEMBER 22, 2008**

ATTENDANCE: Robert Curwen, Chairman; Leticia Colon, Andre Baker;
Susan Brannelly, AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia (6:17 p.m.)

OTHERS: Council Member Maria Valle; Council Member Evette Brantley;
Michael Feeney, Director of Finance; Nestor Nkwo, Finance
Department; Dawn Norton, Comptroller; Thomas Sherwood, OPM
Director; Adam Wood, Chief of Staff; Council Member Robert
Walsh

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Curwen called the meeting to order at 6:15 p.m.

**UPDATE AND REPORTS FROM FISCAL ADMINISTRATION OFFICERS
RELATIVE TO THE STATUS OF CITY FINANCES.**

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia joined the meeting at 6:17 p.m.

Chairman Curwen greeted everyone and said that with the economic situation, he would be requesting a monthly update on the City's finances. Mr. Sherwood then made a suggestion about the scheduling of such a monthly meeting.

Mr. Feeney said that the monthly finance reports have been revamped. He stated that the new report indicates where the shortfalls are occurring. Mr. Feeney then reviewed the revenue increases and the expenditure decreases, which are actual savings. Currently the shortfall is 14 million.

Mr. Feeney then reviewed the Deficit Mitigation Plan with the Committee and mentioned some of the topics that are under discussion with the unions. There will be some items going before the full Council for approval in the next few weeks. Mr. Sherwood then viewed the details of the negotiations with the unions. Chairman Curwen asked if it would be possible to get a list of potential givebacks. Mr. Sherwood said that it would be possible, but added that the numbers would not be firm.

Discussion then followed about the tax status of Steel Point, Captain's Cove and Harbor Yards.

Mr. Feeney then distributed copies of a spreadsheet containing information regarding the Police Department Overtime. He then reviewed the details with the Committee. The recent reinstatement of the Traffic and Patrol has resulted in a reduction in overtime. The focus of the Department has also been readjusted to focus on traffic enforcement. The number of speeding tickets has increased but there is a turn around time because the drivers have to pay the fees. Mr. Nkwo said that he expected to see the ticket revenues increase.

The discussion then turned to the false alarm fee. Mr. Nkwo said that the new law has resulted in a drastic drop in revenue from the false alarms. Mr. Feeney and Mr. Nkwo then answered all the questions regarding the false alarm fee.

Several additional questions were brought forward about the police overtime. Mr. Sherwood explained that with only five months of information, it was not possible to change the forecast at the present time. He added that Acting Chief Galludet had only been in the office for about a month and a half. Once more information is available, the projections can be adjusted. Mr. Feeney said that he believed that there would be actual savings by the end of the year.

Mr. Feeney then suggested that he give a brief overview of the report of the revenue and Mr. Sherwood give an overview of the expenditures. Mr. Sherwood suggested that with the new format, the Committee review the report and note their questions. Chairman Curwen asked for a chart reflecting the savings from the departments. Mr. Sherwood then directed everyone's attention to the department break out in the early portion of the report. Discussion followed.

Chairman Curwen said that he would like to have monthly meetings to monitor the financial situation. He also had several questions about grant funding for the dental program, which Mr. Sherwood reviewed with him.

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BAKER MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER COLON SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services

City of Bridgeport
Budget & Appropriations Committee
Special Meeting
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**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET AND APPROPRIATION COMMITTEE
SPECIAL MEETING
JANUARY 12, 2009**

ATTENDANCE: Robert Curwen, Chair; Leticia Colon, Andre Baker, AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia, Daniel Martinez

OTHERS: Council President Thomas McCarthy; Stephen Tyliczszak

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Curwen called the meeting to order at 6:45 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS
COMMITTEE FOR THE DECEMBER 8, 2008 REGULAR MEETING
AND THE SPECIAL MEETING OF DECEMBER 22, 2008**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BAKER MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FOR
THE DECEMBER 8, 2008 REGULAR MEETING
AND THE SPECIAL MEETING OF DECEMBER 22, 2008 AS SUBMITTED.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER COLON SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**27 –08 Resolution to formally establish fees associated with licensing and permits
prescribed for the production of motion pictures.**

Chairman Curwen explained that he wished to draft up an ordinance to deal with the film company permits in Bridgeport. He commented that the resolution would have to be referred to the Ordinance Committee before it went to the full Council.

Mr. Tyliczszak said that when Connecticut had changed the laws regarding the making of films in Connecticut, the City had realized that many of the film companies would be from the New York area. Therefore the City adopted the same type of permit applications from New York. Also, those coming into the City for filming must fill out a Bridgeport Police Special Events Permit. One addition has been that the City of Bridgeport is also included in the insurance coverage. Mr. Tyliczszak said that New York does not charge for the permits and does not charge for the use of the police. Bridgeport has followed the no charge for the permit, but the other city services, including the police are billed directly to the film company. This was done to make the City a film friendly place.

If there is a specific location, a location fee is charged and has generated funds for the City. The film companies also provide additional revenue to the property owners via the rental of a parking lot, or a house to be used in a shoot.

Mr. Tyliszczyk reviewed the local municipalities who handle permits for the film companies.

Chairman Curwen asked why the information had not been drafted into an ordinance. Mr. Tyliszczyk said that there had been people in the previous administration had been working on it, but then when the administration changed, there was no follow up. Discussion about whether or not the policy should be made into an ordinance.

Council Member Colon asked if there were a lot of film companies that were interested in filming in Bridgeport. Mr. Tyliszczyk explained that there was a film union contract that is about to expire and there is the possibility of a strike, so that the companies are reluctant to plan anything until the contract is signed and the issues are worked out. Currently, the City has very few scheduled for the future and there is the possibility of one being done in a Bridgeport high school during the summer.

Mr. Tyliszczyk added that one film company from the area had just been cleared to build a facility on the east side of the City. The City needs to be in a position to encourage the film companies because the film industry is no longer solely centered in Hollywood.

Chairman Curwen said that the information was distributed to the Committee members for their consideration. He pointed out that New York City has its own movie district and numerous companies that are also located there, so they don't need to charge for permits. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that her major concern was that the taxpayers were not used or abused. It is also important to take care of the City, because the City is also a business.

Discussion about the amounts that various companies had paid out in the past followed. Chairman Curwen pointed out that Bridgeport has more history than nearly 95% of all the other cities across the nation. As members of the Budget and Appropriations Committee, the City Council members need to be pro-active in identifying revenue streams.

Chairman Curwen said that he would sit down with the City Attorney and take their guidance. If it was submitted the Ordinance Committee, the item would have to be submitted in ordinance form. Things would be clearer once the research is completed, it will be easier to determine what the appropriate fee would be. Otherwise, the City only has an unwritten policy governing the fees and application.

Council Member Colon has several questions about the forms, which Mr. Tyliczszak reviewed with the Committee. The discussion then moved to the fees associated with the parades that are held in the City.

The consensus of the Committee was that the research be done with the City Attorney and Mr. Tyliczszak to work on the proposed fees. Discussion then followed on the procedure for presenting this to the Ordinance Committee.

The discussion then moved to requesting credit for the City in the films. Mr. Tyliczszak pointed out that there were more films shot in Bridgeport than any other municipality in Connecticut. The City was recognized at the Cannes Film Festival as a location for filming. Mr. Tyliczszak said that once the filming company moves to Bridgeport, there should be even more exposure.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BAKER MOVED TO TABLE AGENDA ITEM 27 –08
RESOLUTION TO FORMALLY ESTABLISH FEES ASSOCIATED WITH
LICENSING AND PERMITS PRESCRIBED FOR THE PRODUCTION OF
MOTION PICTURES PENDING FURTHER RESEARCH.
** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA SECONDED.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BAKER 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

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET AND APPROPRIATION
REGULAR MEETING
JANUARY 22, 2009**

ATTENDANCE: Robert Curwen, Chair; Leticia Colon, Susan Brannelly

STAFF: Nelson Nkwo, Finance, Michael Feeney, Finance Director
Police Sergeant Cudo, Council Member Robert Walsh

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Curwen called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m. A quorum was not present.

**UPDATE AND REPORTS FROM FISCAL ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES
RELATIVE TO THE STATUS OF CITY FINANCES.**

Mr. Nwko then distributed copies of the November report to the Council Members and Mr. Feeney said that there had been a gain of two million dollars.

Mr. Feeney said that the City was expecting a 5.1 million dollar payment from Wheelabrator for an assessment. Currently all the efforts are focused on bringing down the debt to 8 million. Chairman Curwen asked how the City could end up with a 20 million dollar deficit. Mr. Feeney gave a brief overview. He added that the investment income had been derailed,

Chairman Curwen said he never received the Mayor's document regarding the 19 million dollar shortfall. Mr. Feeney said that it was in one of the previous packets. Mr. Feeney then went to get a copy for Mr. Curwen.

Sgt. Cudo explained that Chief Gaudett had implemented some strong budgetary measures and that the overtime was being reduced. He then explained that there were new detectives going into the bureau and that it would take about three months for the department to coalesce. He then reviewed how this would impact the budget. Overtime is indicative of the manpower deployment. Deployment has been used to reduce this, but it will take some time. Sgt. Cudo said that it would be important to have an entry level given in the near future because of upcoming anticipated retirements.

Sgt. Cudo then reviewed the reimbursement for the police officers involved with the FBI and the ATF.

Mr. Feeney said that he agreed with Sgt. Cudo about the reduction to 4.5 and that Chief Gaudett's overtime projections were lower than expected. Mr. Feeney said that the goal was to do 1.1 million in overtime per week, which would result in 4.4 to 4.5 million in overtime a month. The previous chief allowed the overtime to exceed this. Sgt. Cudo explained that Chief Gaudett was working to do more with less and that this results in a bare bones structure. The Narcotics and Vice Department brings in funding, but that has been curtailed because there is only one officer assigned and he can only work on the street level dealers. The forfeit assets happen at the higher level dealers.

Chairman Curwen said that he was happy with Chief Gaudett's plan and that he frequently received calls from the Chief about how the program is going.

Council Member Walsh joined the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Sgt. Cudo explained that the department was working on bare bones, but that the Department would have to have more officers to function properly.

Chairman Curwen then asked Mr. Feeney if he had the information that Chairman Curwen had asked for at the previous meeting. Mr. Feeney then gave a brief overview of the document giving an outline of the fund balance from 2000 to 2008.

Mr. Nwko then distributed copies of the 2004 Resolution 242-03 Contract with the New York Islanders Majority Interest in the Sound Tigers regarding the parking revenues. Chairman Curwen said that the contacts dealt with the Islanders, but that there were three additional parking lots. Mr. Feeney explained that the latter portion of the Contract dealt with the Bluefish parking.

Chairman Curwen asked why the item had not been changed when the contract was changed to the new owners. Mr. Feeney said that it had been the position of the administration to keep the status quo while the transfer was in progress. Discussion then followed about BridgeSports, which managed the parking lots and took in the revenue. Council Member Brannelly said that this had become extremely complicated and she thought that Mr. Pacahac and Mr. Tulluchek should come and review this contract with the Committee.

Council Member Walsh asked if the City was required to provide police outside of the building to direct traffic. Mr. Feeney said that he did not believe that the City was required to provide the traffic police. Council Member Walsh said that this might be used to force the arena to the table. Chairman Curwen said that the Ganim administration had ventured into an agreement regarding the police coverage and overtime. He asked Mr. Feeney to locate this agreement because it could shift the burden from the taxpayers to the arena. Chairman Curwen asked if this could be ready for next month.

Chairman Curwen asked whether there was a copy of the capital plan. Mr. Feeney said that this was the recent five year capital plan. Mr. Feeney said that Chairman Curwen was looking for a list of all the capital project, and the outstanding balances. Chairman Curwen said that if there was a complete list of projects so the Council could unfund some of the projects. The discussion then moved to a recent gateway to the City, where the project had been increased from 1.5 million allocated for a streetscape to 4 million by the previous administration.

Council Member Walsh asked why the administration insists on including language that allows the Mayor to spend the excessive funding after the project was completed. Mr. Feeney then reviewed the details of the bonding and how the funding is handled.

A lengthy discussion then followed about the details of the bonding rating and the City's current bond standing. The bond rating agencies are extremely concerned about the level of the fund balance and the rating.

Chairman Curwen then asked if there were any additional documents. Mr. Feeney said that he did not have any additional documents. He then reviewed the list of items that Chairman Curwen had requested for the next meeting.

Council Member Walsh asked about the NOR requirements and said that he had been told that the City had fallen below the threshold. Mr. Feeney said that he would research this.

A brief discussion followed regarding the various parade sponsoring organizers paying for the police participation.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Curwen adjourned the informal meeting at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services

CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET and APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
MARCH 9, 2009
6:30 P.M.

ATTENDANCE: Council members: Curwen, co-chair; Colon, co-chair; Baker, Brannelly, Martinez

NON-COMMITTEE: Council member Valle

CITY STAFF: M. Feeney, Director of Finance; D. Norton, Deputy Finance Director

OTHERS: J. Gaudet, Acting Police Chief; J. Gomes, Deputy CAO/CitiStat Director
C. Curry, CitiStat Department

Co-chair Curwen called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.

Council member Curwen announced that due to the city council meeting scheduled at 7:00 p.m., they were going to cut the meeting short tonight.

Approval of Committee Minutes of January 12, 2009.

Approval of Committee Minutes of January 22, 2009 (Special Meeting).

** COUNCIL MEMBER BAKER MOVED TO ACCEPT BOTH SETS OF MINUTES
** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ SECONDED
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

Update and reports from fiscal administrative offices relative to the status of city finances.

Council member Curwen stated that Council members Valle and Martinez crafted the resolution for the purpose of updating on CitiStat. He also noted that Mike Feeney was asked to submit a status of CitiStat.

Mike Feeney stated that the shortfall decreased and as of tomorrow, March 10, there will be a shortfall of \$5.5 million. They backed out the Board of Education and the amount is now \$1.5 million, not \$2 million.

They requested \$7 million and then they came back and told them they could come up with \$2 million, so currently; the amount is \$1.5 million. However, the amount may be less because it's not solid yet.

Mike Feeney distributed copies of the previously requested information for the City of Bridgeport Balance Sheet. He reviewed page 1 that outlined how much the BOE carried over from last year to this year's budget. The report highlighted that \$2.7 million was carried over to the current fiscal year.

Council member Martinez asked if he knew exactly what the original allocation was for. Mr. Feeney said they submitted a detailed list of that information and the Finance Department tracks the information.

Council member Curwen stated that the information distributed should be read and digested for further discussion within the next week.

Mr. Feeney stated that Council member Walsh had a concern about putting aside money for the BOE for a special fund. And Brian Mahoney, of the State Board of Education wrote back to say that could be done, noting that there is one way to generate and designate funds. And as long as the BOE gives their consent, the funds can be transferred.

Mr. Feeney urged the committee members to review the information and present any questions they may have at the next meeting.

45-08 Resolution requesting updated findings from CitiStat Department

It was noted that the makers of the resolution were Council members Valle and Martinez.

Council member Valle stated that she and Council member Martinez put the resolution together. She explained that the reason for the resolution was because CitiStat was created a year ago and there hasn't been any feedback given about their performance, to find out what is going on or what's not working. They also made the request to obtain information about what the city council can do to help them perform their job. Council member Martinez concurred that was the reason for the resolution.

Mr. Gomes said that since they received the resolution, they composed a brochure to outline the process of how they conduct the weekly meetings. The objective was to drive efficiency and accountability. Since then, they traveled to Baltimore to review their process and to bring this process back to Bridgeport. To date, they have worked with Public Facilities on roadway recycling, parks and sanitation and they have made some progress collecting data. For example, they found that they were collecting mileage weekly and they also tried to identify hot spots of concentration. He further stated that the brochure highlighted Info-211, they had a contract with the United Way, but they found out that the departments weren't given information

from them. So they took the process in-house at a savings. Currently, the calls go through a ticket system that results in them getting feedback and compiling information. Meetings are held bi-weekly and they plan to add anti-blight information to find out year-to-date achievements, due to the many citations being given out, but they subsequently found out that there isn't any closure to the number of tickets given.

Council member Curwen asked if they demonstrated any actual savings to Bridgeport. Mr. Gomes said they did to a degree, but he explained that since they started the project in January, the data illustrated inefficiency and through this process, they looked at ways to fix the problem, such as, savings on gas for routes for foremen and supervision; after this is done, savings can be allocated.

Council member Curwen asked if there was also a 311-info system implemented. Mr. Gomes said 211-info was contracted to United Way with a certain number of people, but the number of tickets generated wasn't accurate or consistent, so that's why they started the process in-house.

Council member Curwen mentioned that the system previously interfaced with the city council office. This process used to give a better idea of what was going on, but it's not being done now. Mr. Gomes responded that whoever is indicated on paper was informed.

Ms. Curry further explained that every ticket had an address, so depending on the situation; the council person can be copied for their information. Council member Curwen suggested that when they get a complaint, it would be good if it's forwarded to Tom White who will then notify the appropriate council person know.

Council member Colon asked if an analysis was taken on the number of calls coming in. Mr. Gomes said it was reported that there were approximately 11,000 calls that come in per year, but they found that number wasn't accurate, so now they are gathering more accurate information. They are also building data internally and for all the calls that come in, they are attempting to map them so they can see overall where the majority of them are coming from. He said that when they come in, he wants to make sure what they did coincided with the city's goal, as far as progressing. Since they are now in one location, they can collect the data at a greater speed.

Mr. Gomes emphasized that the CitiStat had an open door policy. He stressed that they could submit whatever information is requested.

Council member Colon asked what hours they operate. Mr. Gomes said they are open until 5:00 p.m., and noted that the majority of calls come in between 4:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.

Council member Colon asked if they received feedback, when they find an issue to be taken care of. Mr. Gomes said they work with people in the field, but they use their own language. And during the process, the idea is to look at the objective according to the budget book and the numbers collected. For instance, there are varied factors to determine what information to report.

Council member Vizzo-Paniccia asked about notification of any concerns from the taxpayers. She stressed that she liked to handle her now calls, so she informed Council President McCarthy that she would like the calls to come directly to her for the district that she covers.

Council member Vizzo-Paniccia asked if any credit was coming back to the city from 211-info. Mr. Gomes said not as far as he knew, but she should check with the ITT Department.

Council member Brannelly asked what the contract cost was to implement the 211-Info system. Mr. Gomes said the cost was \$22k per year and now it's \$269k per year.

Council member Brannelly asked if there was a schedule set of where they expected to be at a certain point. Mr. Gomes said no.

Council member Valle mentioned the tonnage notation outlined in the handout in regard to recycling and how people are doing more of it. She requested that more information about this be available at the next meeting. Mr. Gomes updated that recycling is currently weak among residents.

Council member Valle thanked Mr. Gomes and Ms. Curry for attending the meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

** COMMISSIONER BAKER MOVED TO ADJOURN
** COMMISSIONER COLON SECONDED
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

The meeting adjourned at 7:09 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Graham
Telesco Secretarial Services

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
APRIL 7, 2009**

ATTENDANCE: Robert Curwen, Chair; Leticia Colon, Co-chair; AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia, Howard Austin, Andre Baker, Susan Brannelly

OTHERS: Council Member Carlos Silva; Council Member Denese Taylor-Moye, Brian Feeney, Andrew Nunn

CALL TO ORDER

Council Member Curwen called the meeting to order and introduced all the members of the Committee, along with other Council members. Mr. Curwen said that the Mayor had been present at 6:00 p.m., but a quorum was not present. Council Member Curwen explained that there was a problem with the budget books and some information was omitted. Mr. Sherwood was currently working on correcting the omission and would be distributing updated and corrected budget books tomorrow.

MAYOR'S RECOMMENDED BUDGET

Mr. Feeney gave everyone a brief overview of the Mayor's Recommended Budget. The Mayor is proposing a significant budget reduction. Motor vehicles taxes will be decreasing as will the mill rate. Council Member Silva said that there was some areas of Bridgeport that had drastically increased mill rates. He then asked if this would self correct during the re-evaluation with the real estate depression. Mr. Feeney said that the current evaluation would be in effect for the next five years. Council Member Silva said that even if the mill rate dropped, there were homeowners that would be short changed. Mr. Feeney said that the real estate market would determine the value of the house. Council Member Curwen reminded everyone that the taxes and the value are determined not only by the mill rate, the size of the home and the location.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked if the tax appeals had been factored in when the tax pie charts were created. Mr. Feeney said that it had been included, and that the City would not know until the Real Estate Board of Appeals finished their work.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked why the motor vehicles taxes were decreasing. Mr. Feeney said that people weren't purchasing new vehicles and others had gotten rid of extra vehicles. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked if the out of state vehicles would still be pursued. Mr. Feeney said that they would.

Mr. Feeney said that the 19 million dollar short fall had been reduced to 5 million dollars and this was outlined on page 5. He then reviewed all the decreased amount for the various departments as outlined on page 5 with the Committee.

Debt Service currently is 70 million dollars. Mr. Sherwood and the Mayor reallocated the debt service back to the various departments to give a more accurate view of the true picture of departments budget.

The magnet schools and the Aquaculture Schools are 95% State funded and only 5% comes from the City.

Mr. Feeney then reviewed the Internal Service Fund as outlined on page 8. Now it is a one time allocation and the amount remains in the insulated fund. With the exception of last year, the health insurance service fund was always under funded.

Council Member Curwen asked for more details about the Board of Education insurance fund. Mr. Feeney said that there had been more claims and more retirees from the Board of Education than from the City.

Page 9 contains the Revenue Summary Sheets. Many of the business licenses fees were increased this past year and generated between 2 and 3 hundred thousand dollars. On pages 10 and 11, the conveyance fee tax has dropped dramatically because of the depressed real estate market. The economy has also affected the City's investment earnings funds.

In personal property, there has also been a decrease in the funds. Mr. Nunn said that the Governor's Appropriation Committee would be increasing some budget areas and decreased others, but this is subject to change. There will be fluctuations as the State proceeds through the budget process.

Council Member Bonny joined the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Mr. Feeney said that the current taxes are tracking approximately 1% ahead, but the taxes in arrears and delinquent taxes have not yet been calculated.

Mr. Feeney then reviewed the budget for the Nutrition Center. Previously there has always been an overage. Now whatever the BOE brings in to that budget is what they have to spend.

Council President McCarthy joined the meeting at 7:02 p.m.

The libraries have been reallocating the staff. Page 12 indicated the overall City staff reductions.

Council Member Curwen asked about the fund balance. Mr. Feeney reviewed the current situation. Council Member Curwen asked about the loan that has been taken out against the fund balance. Mr. Feeney said that that amount had been paid back. The City purchased back some of the property tax liens and increased the revenue for the City by doing so when the properties were sold. This contributed significantly to reducing the budget shortfall. Council Member Baker requested copies of those transactions.

Council Member Curwen said that he had not met with the outside auditors this year and had not received the CAFRA report. Mr. Feeney made arrangements to get the report to the Committee co-chairs and others who wished to review it.

Council Member Brannelly asked for clarification on the Special Revenue funds. Mr. Feeney said that the Special Revenue Funds were funds that were allocated to specific projects like CDBG funds or grant funding. Currently, there is 68.4 million in the Special Revenue Funds account. Council Member Brannelly had several detailed questions about the Fund, which Mr. Feeney answered for her.

Council Member Lyons asked about some Board of Education stimulus funding and what the funding could be used for. Mr. Nunn then reviewed the process that the City was taking in order to handle these funds.

Council Member Baker then asked several detailed questions about the break down of the funds. Mr. Feeney said that the detailed breakout would be sent to him.

Council Member Curwen then encouraged all the members of the Council to attend as many of meetings as possible in order to stay informed. Mr. Nunn said that the Mayor would like to express his appreciation for all the hard work that the Budget Committee would be doing.

ADJOURNMENT

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

**** COUNCIL MEMBER AUSTIN 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 Committee
Regular Meeting
April 7, 2009
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**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
APRIL 8, 2009**

ATTENDANCE: Robert Curwen, Chair; Leticia Colon, Co-chair; Howard Austin, AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia, Andre Baker (6:25 p.m.);

STAFF: Thomas Sherwood, OPM; Michael Feeney, Andy Nunn; Dr. Marian Evans, Health Department

OTHERS: Council Member Denese Taylor-Moye; Council Member Richard Paoletto; Council Member Carlos Silva; Council Member Warren Blunt; Council President Thomas McCarthy; Council Member Robert Walsh,

CALL TO ORDER

Council Member Curwen called the meeting to order at 6:20 p.m. He then introduced all the members of the Committee that were present and identified the other Council Members present at the meeting. Co-chair Colon announced that Council Member Baker was enroute.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Council Member Curwen then informed Dr. Evans that the process would be different. He explained that the Committee would be reviewing the Mayor's budget and reviewing the various aspects. This is found on page 47-1 of the updated budget book.

Dr. Evans then distributed copies of her department's requests to the Committee members. She explained that one of the security bills had been forgotten and then commented that the security system has already paid for itself because the Health Department was broken into twice this past year. The police were able to identify the perpetrator and he is currently in jail.

Council Members Martinez and Baker joined the meeting at 6:25 p.m.

Mr. Sherwood then reviewed the salary savings and the operating issues for this year. He then explained that now every department has the fringe costs that are associated with each of them. Debt service has also had the debt repayment for police, fire, public works and Board of Education.

Mr. Sherwood explained that on 47-5, there was one major reduction due to vacant position. He reminded everyone that next year is a leap year, so there will be one more day of pay. This is duly noted in the footer.

Dr. Evans then asked about a request for an advertising service line, which was removed. She explained that the advertising services were used for newspaper ads for health clinics and such.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked about the revenue. Council Member Curwen said that there was a page devoted to this. The Dental Assistant has been eliminated and there are no projected funds for this position in 2009-2010. Vital Statistics on 49-2 indicates a savings of \$400.

Mr. Sherwood explained that the Mayor had frozen certain line items and that as of June 30th; the amounts would be transferred to offset the deficit.

Council Member Curwen asked why Vital Statistics hadn't been moved. Mr. Feeney said that he believed that Mr. Carroll had inspected the site and that currently there were no funds for the move. Council Member Curwen said that Vital Statistics needs to be moved. Mr. Sherwood said that he had never received the figures for the move. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that the City would need to call Mr. Estrada and get the figures. Dr. Evans said that Mr. Estrada had been over to view the site and that there was a need for a vault. Mr. Nunn said that they would contact Mr. Carroll about this. Council Member Colon asked Dr. Evans to send copies of the former report to both Co-chairs of the Committee.

Mr. Sherwood then directed to the Communicable Clinics proposed budget located on page 50-1. Council Member Martinez then reviewed the figures for this budget and the changes that had been made.

Mr. Sherwood then directed everyone's attention to page 51-1, Environmental Health. Mr. Sherwood said that there were not many changes in this budget at all and reminded everyone that the increases in the various licensing fees were in this section.

Council President McCarthy and Council Member Walsh joined the meeting at 6:49 p.m.

Mr. Sherwood explained that when a group hosts a carnival or fair, the costs of the sanitarian or the fire inspector is covered by the fees. The license is not issued until the vendor pays up front. Dr. Evans explained that there have been problems with barber shops that are operating evenings or week-ends without a license. Mr. Sherwood said that the Health Department had been discussing this issue with the police about this. There are some issues with payment of the inspectors for evenings and weekends. Mr.

Sherwood reminded that there are many businesses that are closing because of the economy and the licensing fees are declining.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia then said that she had concerns about the various businesses that were unlicensed and operating illegally.

Council Member Colon asked how frequently the Health Department checks the barbershops. Dr. Evans said that the various barbershops were inspected once a year and that this was set by the State. Each barber should have their own license and the Health Department is inspecting the facility. Council Member Colon expressed concerns about businesses that were being used for other uses. She mentioned that one example was private clubs that were selling liquor or food without licenses.

Council Member Blunt said that barbershops are required to send in a list of the employees and the inspectors do have an idea of who should be working there. He said that as a sanitarian, when they find someone cooking without a license, the sanitarians would throw the food away. The sanitarians cannot issue fines, only the Health Department. Council Member Blunt then outlined the details of the sanitarians working at night on emergency situations. Dr. Evans then explained that these were contractual agreements.

Council Member Baker asked about the designation of overtime for the sanitarians. Mr. Sherwood explained that this was covered on 51-5; but this was for emergencies. Mr. Sherwood said that if this does become possible and the sanitarians are able to do these evening/night inspections, the Health Department will fine them in order to offset the costs.

Council Member Martinez said that he had concerns about people who are selling hot dogs or other foods from their backyard. Council Member Blunt said that he should call the Health Department because it is illegal. Dr. Evans said that in the event that it was a church, the Health Department may issue a temporary vendor license for that.

Council Member Curwen then directed everyone to page 52-1, Housing Code. Mr. Sherwood pointed out that the CDBG funds paid for most of the positions. Council Member Paoletto said that the department needs more funds for more inspectors in the field for C.A.Os. The C.A.Os generate revenue. The revenue is down due to the lack of personnel in the field. Currently there are only four inspectors and one secretary, which are funded by CDBG funds. Council Member Martinez had several questions about the vacant positions and the block grant funding available.

Council Member Martinez said that last year he had requested that this department be updated so that the inspectors can do their job without secretaries. Council Member Paoletto said that there had been numerous changes and that the administration has been

working on updating the department as a whole. Stamford and New Haven have already gone to electronic transmissions already.

Council Member Colon asked about possibly increasing the staff with stimulus funds. Mr. Sherwood said that the stimulus funding was not for personnel. Council Member Colon asked about some of the funding that would allow the Health Department to get some interns for filing or basic clerical work. Discussion then followed.

Mr. Sherwood pointed out that on page 52-3, it lists five housing inspectors, not seven, as originally believed.

Council Member Baker asked if there were any commonalities with anti-blight and housing. Mr. Nunn said that the administration had been working with Council Member Paoletto on this, but the budget deficit had stalled the process. Dr. Evans said that she had been working on something along these lines, also.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked if the Housing Inspectors issue fines and brings in revenue. Council Member Paoletto said that he only can issue fines for rooming houses, hotels and motels. Other than CAOs, anything else has to be handled by the State.

The Committee then moved to page 54, Clinics and Mr. Sherwood gave a brief overview of this budget. Dr. Evans then reviewed how the flu vaccinations are handled and charged.

The Committee then briefly looked at the school based budgets, which were transferred over to the Board of Education.

Mr. Sherwood then directed everyone's attention to Human Services on page 57-2. There were minimal changes in this department. Regarding Persons with Disability budget on page 58-1, Mr. Sherwood stated that the employee had retired. This position has been defunded. Council Member Baker asked whether this was a required position. Mr. Sherwood said that the responsibilities of the ADA employee have been absorbed by other employees. There may be some reports that need to be generated for the State; so some funding has been retained in the budget for this contingency.

There was no change in the Department of Aging on page 59-1. Ms. Hoyt left a report document about her department for the Committee members to read.

On page 60-1 Veteran's Affairs had no changes, other than the cost of diesel fuel. Mr. Sherwood said that the service indicators had just been started two years ago and that it was expected to level off in the future. Council Member Martinez asked about the new van. A discussion then followed about whether it would be fueled by gas rather than

diesel. Mr. Sherwood pointed out that there was only one Veteran's Transportation Coordinator, who actually drives the van.

The Lighthouse Program budget, on page 61-1, was then reviewed. Mr. Sherwood said that the coordinator was able to reduce her budget by not using outside agencies for programs.

Mr. Sherwood then directed everyone's attention to the Social Services budget which has some changes.

The Parent Aide Program, on 63-1 is being currently administered and paid for by the City. This will only continue until June 30th, after which the Board of Education will assume the responsibility and cost of the program.

Dr. Evans indicated that there was a possible misprint regarding the copiers contractual agreement. This correction was noted by the Committee members.

The Committee then thanked Dr. Evans and her staff for their input.

The Committee then had several questions about the previous issues discussed for Mr. Nunn.

Mr. Sherwood then reviewed the reason why new books had to be printed. He explained that during the printing process, the budget requests had gotten out of sync. He added that he had printed everything out double sided. Mr. Sherwood said that every single department had decreased. He said that several of the departments had worked very hard to decrease their budgets and had provided some excellent data for the budget presentation.

The discussion then moved the Board of Education and when this review would be scheduled. Mr. Sherwood said that it would be important to review the column titled "baseline". He then pointed out a significant salary savings for the Board of Education and encouraged the Committee to remember this when negotiating with the Board.

Council Member Austin left at 8:15 p.m.

Discussion then followed regarding possible changes to the calendar.

ADJOURNMENT

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

**** COUNCIL MEMBER COLON SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
APRIL 9, 2009**

ATTENDANCE: Robert Curwen, Chair; Leticia Colon, Co-Chair; AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia; Andre Baker; Daniel Martinez

STAFF: Thomas Sherwood, OPM; Michael Feeney

OTHERS: Adam Heller, ITS Director; City Attorney Mark Anastasi, Deputy Attorney Dulasky, Atty. Kascka

CALL TO ORDER

Council Member Curwen called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m. He announced that Council Member Austin would not be able to attend. Council Member Curwen said that Council Member Colon would be chairing.

ITS Department

Mr. Sherwood directed everyone's attention to ITS on page 23-1 and said that ITS had taken several severe position cuts. Despite this, the City is moving towards starting MUNIS and Mr. Sherwood added that in June, the City would have the payroll component up and running. The Voice over IP system is up and running. The Tax Collectors and Tax Assessor's Office has implemented the new components, which have improved service. The email will be upgraded and improved. Sharepoint will be implemented, which will also allow the various employees to have access to verify that their paychecks have been electronically deposited.

Council Member Curwen said that the emails that he has received are coming in scrambled. Discussion then followed about this, which is apparently caused by the sender generating the emails from the calendar format in Microsoft Outlook.

Council Member Baker then asked Mr. Heller if there were any major updates planned. Mr. Heller and Mr. Sherwood then said that there was a switch to a different type of server planned for July 1, 2009. This will replace the main frame. Council Member Baker asked if Mr. Heller monitors the grant funding opportunities. Mr. Heller said that he works with the Central Grants department on this. Mr. Heller then explained that he is working on evaluating the various departments' needs in utilizing software. Discussion then followed about the software needs of the City.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that several years ago, there had been discussions about switching from AT&T to Voice over IP (VOIP). She wished to know how far this project had progressed. Mr. Heller said that when he arrived, the equipment was not up to handling VOIP. Now the infrastructure has been put in place that can handle the new system.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked if the area where ITS is located was appropriate. Mr. Heller said that there were issues and that Public Facilities had been notified of these issues.

Council Member Curwen asked if all of the departments were up and running with the current systems. Mr. Heller said that the departments that he had upgraded were up and running. Right now, the focus is on the payroll and financial components. In the Tax Assessors and Tax Collectors Departments, the main frame was shared by both departments. Once these two systems were separated, it became easier to update the software and maintain the systems.

Mr. Heller said that before three years ago, the individual computers were not networked and outdated. The various servers could not talk to one another. Now the infrastructures have been installed and the various departments are being brought online. Mr. Feeney said that many of the employees aren't familiar with Excel or Word.

Council Member Colon asked about the five employees who left the department. Mr. Heller said that it strains the department in terms of support. This results in strict prioritization of repairs. Council Member Colon asked if the IT would have another position restored. Mr. Sherwood said that right now, everyone has to play the hand there are dealt.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked what the department needs. Mr. Heller said that if he had the five positions that were lost were restored, that would be a tremendous help. A support service manager is critical so that Mr. Heller is not tied up with those responsibilities and can work on planning and other items.

City Attorney's Office

Mr. Sherwood then directed the Committee's attention to page 12-2. He said that there were not many changes.

Attorney Anastasi said that the department had been lobbying for two paralegal positions for years. Atty. Anastasi said that now the department needs paralegals to assist with the increasing amount of paperwork that comes to the department. He added that the department supplies support to the Tax Collector, Labor Relations and other departments.

This makes this difficult for the attorneys without paralegals. There have been some difficulties with the Civil Services regarding numbers of positions.

Council Member Curwen said that Council Member Walsh had submitted a resolution to privatize the City Attorney's office. Atty. Anastasi said that the department had been working towards bringing more of the legal work back in-house. The City Attorney's office also handles the personnel cases, fire and police department cases and many other issues. Atty. Curwen said that there have been times when resolving a case in house early has benefited the case. Atty. Anastasi said that the City is taking an increasing number of cases to litigation.

Council Member Curwen then said that it was about time that this work had been brought back in house and that he was pleased that litigation was increasing. Atty. Anastasi said that there was a case that he needed to discuss with the Committee in Executive Session.

The discussion then moved to the role of City Attorney's Office with the WPCA issue. Atty. Anastasi said that the WPCA and the Tax Collector's cases are handled by the team. Atty. Dulasky said that there had been one commercial case that had been brought in house and the attorney who took the case found two interns, prepared a brief and managed to settle the case in the City's favor for an additional \$450,000 more than the best offer from the defendant.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked if there were copies of documents regarding the problem with Civil Service Department. Atty. Anastasi said that he would send copies of the documents to Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia and that he had discovered some additional documents about this issue.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked if there was a break out of what was paid to the outside legal firms and for which departments these charges were accrued. Mr. Sherwood said that the accounting for the City had changed from "in kind" to "direct billing". Discussion followed on what this entailed.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia left the meeting at 7:02 p.m.

Council Member Baker then asked if there was a list of the legal claims from the Board of Education. Mr. Sherwood said that he had never run that list before, but could generate it at a later time.

Council Member Baker then asked if there would be a primary contact person for the Committees. Atty. Anastasi said that the individual committees would probably be covered by the attorney that has a specialty in that field.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER CURWEN MOVED TO ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS POSSIBLE LITIGATION.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BAKER SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The Committee, Atty. Anastasi, Atty. Dulaski, Mr. Feeney and Mr. Sherwood entered into Executive Session to discuss possible litigation at 7:07 p.m.

Mr. Sherwood and Mr. Feeney left the meeting at 7:44 p.m.

The Committee returned to public session at 7:55 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BAKER MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER CURWEN SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS
REGULAR MEETING
APRIL 13, 2009**

ATTENDANCE: Robert Curwen, Chair; Leticia Colon, Co-chair; AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia, Susan Brannelly, Andre Baker

OTHERS: Council Member Denese Taylor-Moye; Tom Sherwood, OPM; Fire Chief Brian Rooney; Deputy Chief Petricelli, Dawn Norton, Dori Price; Andy Rooney

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Curwen called the meeting to order at 6:08 pm.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF MARCH 9, 2009

**** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MARCH 9, 2009 MEETING.
** COUNCIL MEMBER COLON SECONDED.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

76-08 Proposed Five-Year Capital Plan for Fiscal Years 2010-2014.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BAKER MOVED AGENDA ITEM 76-08 PROPOSED FIVE YEAR CAPITAL PLAN
** COUNCIL MEMBER COLON SECONDED.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA MOVED TO TABLE AGENDA ITEM 76-08 PROPOSED FIVE YEAR CAPITAL PLAN.
** COUNCIL MEMBER COLON SECONDED.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

93-08 Proposed General Fund Budget FY 2009-2010

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BAKER MOVED AGENDA ITEM 93-08 PROPOSED GENERAL FUND BUDGET FY 2009-2010.
** COUNCIL MEMBER COLON SECONDED.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

FIRE DEPARTMENT

Mr. Sherwood directed the Committee's attention to page 27-1, which outlines the budget for the Fire Department.

Mr. Sherwood explained that the department was down 19 positions and that the Civil Service Department did not have a list for the Fire Department to recruit from. He then directed the Committee to the pages where the expenses were listed and explained that retirement expenses had not been added. By using this method, it clarified the situation that the Fire Department was a 51 million dollar corporation.

Fire Chief Rooney said that he was comfortable with the budget. He added that the department was actually down 25 positions. Mr. Sherwood said that the City had been brought in a new class, but that the retirements had caught up with the over enrollment. He added that the Fire Department had a manning requirement of 61 firefighters on duty at all time. The bulk of the overtime is when there are not enough firefighters to cover all the houses during a shift.

Council Member Colon had several questions about entry requirements. Chief Rooney explained that Bridgeport was looking to use the Candidate Physical Aptitude Test (CPAT), which is used nationally. Council Member asked about firefighters working overtime. Chief Rooney said that the majority of the call for the Fire Department are now medical calls, however the serious fires require a real workout. Council Member Colon asked about the role of volunteers. Chief Rooney said that Bridgeport does not have any volunteers. Mr. Sherwood added that the towns that do have volunteers are finding it more and more difficult to find volunteers and that this resulted in a shift to all paid firefighters.

Council Member Baker then asked about the insurance payments from insurance companies. Chief Rooney explained that now that the City had instituted an ordinance about this, the insurance companies are now paying the bills to the City. A third company collection agency is involved in collecting these fees now. Chief Rooney then reviewed the details of this and the details of the various overtime categories with the Committee.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia then asked about the fact that the HazMat Inspector had been cut from the budget. Chief Rooney then said that the battalion chiefs would call the appropriate agencies, such as the DEP, the Coast Guard or others, and then maintain a stand by position until the agency arrives to handle the situation.

There was a question regarding the take home vehicles. Chief Rooney said that the number of take home vehicles had been reduced and there are now only four take home vehicles, one of which is his.

Council Member Curwen asked about the mutual aid agreements between the surrounding towns. Chief Rooney pointed out that last year, a Bridgeport firehouse was closed and the surrounding towns come in and cover the firehouses when Bridgeport has a major fire. Chief Rooney explained that this allows Bridgeport to operate safely with full coverage.

Council Member Curwen said that there had been some concerns about department applicants with felony convictions. Chief Rooney said that he had been against this practice from the start. Deputy Chief Petricelli said that the felony convictions are being reviewed. Discussion about this then followed.

Council Member Curwen then commended Chief Rooney on the stellar job that he has been doing in the department.

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL MEMBER COLON MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BAKER SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

The meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS
REGULAR MEETING
APRIL 14, 2009**

ATTENDANCE: Robert Curwen, Chair; Leticia Colon, Daniel Martinez, Andre Baker, Howard Austin

OTHERS: Thomas Sherwood, Charles Carroll, Public Facilities Director; John Ricci, Sikorsky Memorial Airport; Council Member Carlos Silva, Council Member Denese Taylor-Moye, Michael Feeney, Andy Nunn

CALL TO ORDER

Council Member Curwen called the meeting to order at 6:18 p.m.

PUBLIC FACILITIES

Mr. Sherwood then directed everyone's attention to page 32-2, which covers Sikorsky Airport. One position was eliminated and the staff is moving into smaller quarters as of May 1. The main terminal will be demolished after that. The electricity will be less and the security will go to two shifts.

Council Member Curwen said that he wholeheartedly supports the lawsuit against the U.S. Army regarding the land surrounding the airport. Council Member Curwen said that he regretted that the matter could not have been worked out otherwise.

Mr. Ricci then briefly reviewed the revenues and said that Westchester plane hangers storage fees were high and that he expected a number of the planes to come from Westchester.

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

Council Member Baker had several detailed questions about the upcoming building projects, which Mr. Ricci reviewed with him.

The discussion then moved back to the lawsuit and the safety of the airport in regards to fire suppression, which is a lease holding provision.

Mr. Sherwood then directed everyone's attention to page 31-2, Engineering. Mr. Sherwood said that the budget was basically the same, but one position had been added. Mr. John Acqity, who is the new Civil Engineer. The funds for the new position is being

moved from the fund side of the budget to the General fund. Mr. Acquity explained that the new position always had engineering responsibilities but was salaried from the grants funding. The City Engineer position is part time vacant. Mr. Cody is part time per diem. Civil Service is advertising for a City Engineer.

Council Member Martinez then asked about the number of applicants that had responded to the vacancy posting. Mr. Sherwood said that originally, there had not been enough of a response for the vacancy, but a better response was expected now with the economic downturn.

Council Member Baker had some detailed questions regarding the increase in the budget for the new position. Mr. Sherwood reviewed the details with him.

Mr. Sherwood then reviewed the position of the Harbormaster on page 32-2. Mr. Sherwood said that the City funds the position and that all the other expenses are paid by the fees.

Mr. Sherwood then reviewed Building Maintenance, which has a drop of six positions. Mr. Sherwood said that with the new buildings, the insurance had increased. Mr. Carroll said that the work might take longer but that the work would get done.

Council Member Baker asked if there had been any savings with the mason coming on board. Mr. Carroll said that he expected some savings because the electrician that had come on staff had saved money. A major renovation would require a bid because the City might not have all the tools, but a lot of the stone work could be done in house.

The discussion then moved to the needs of Vital Records and the possibility of moving the department to the Health Department. Mr. Carroll said that he would follow up on the need for a secured vault at the Health Department for Vital Records. He said that it may involve Capital funds and he would report back to the Committee about this.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked about the status of various projects. Mr. Sherwood said that the formal proposal had never been presented and funds designated for the projects. Mr. Graybarz had completed a report, but this report had not been given back to the Budget and Appropriations Committee.

Council Member Colon said that she had concerns about where the Health Department was because it looked depressing. She said that she felt that this was unhealthy and then suggested that the Health Department be moved to a better location.

Council Member Martinez asked about the status of the previous administration's plan for a Government Center and having all the departments in one facility. Mr. Nunn then said that Mayor Finch had started working on this project by having analyses done for

this, but the market needs to turn around before the project could even be proposed. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia then asked for the report that had been created about this. Mr. Nunn said that he would be happy to give copies, but he believed that the Council has already received a copy of it.

Council Member Colon asked why Barnum School wasn't being considered. Mr. Nunn said that the City needed to get the school buildings back from the Board before the buildings could be actively considered. Council Member Colon said that she felt that the Health Department should have windows and that the current building didn't.

Municipal Garage's budget was on pages 34-2. Mr. Sherwood said that there had been major changes in this department and there were only two changes in the budget. One is for diesel and another was the cost of using the fleet now. The new software program has been wonderful. Two staff members Fernanda Olivera and Yolanda had gone to the garage and bar coded every single part in the building, so that the inventory is now accurate. The fleet replacement needs to continue because some of the older vehicles can not run on the synthetic oils.

Discussion then followed about the amount of work-related injuries and the back to work program, which Mr. Sherwood said had cut the number of claims and the length of compensation down significantly.

Council Member Martinez had questions about the City owned vehicles. He had some concerns about the fact that the vehicles are not identified as City vehicles and that the ordinances require it. Mr. Sherwood and Mr. Carroll said that they would review this.

Mr. Sherwood then reviewed the budget for Public Facilities Administration. One position was unfunded, and there was a half position growth in this area. On the revenue side, the major change was due to the fact that the City is not receiving the CAR Pilot fees anymore.

Council Member Baker asked about the responsibility of the Illegal Dumping Coordinators. Mr. Carroll reviewed this and Mr. Sherwood said that there were two components of blight, one is the run down housing and the second was identification of unlawful depositing on the curb. Anti-blight handles the areas around and in back of the building. Mr. Sherwood explained that there was a difference between the identification of the blight and the actual legal actions against property owner or parties responsible.

Council Member Colon asked about some increases in the salaries. Mr. Sherwood explained that 2010 will have an extra day, which incurs extra costs. He then reviewed the difference between a salary "step" and a salary "increase" with the Committee.

The discussion then moved back to the notification of property owners, which one Council member felt had been done unprofessionally in the past.

Mr. Sherwood then gave a brief overview of the three different stages of blight and how the process works.

Council Member Baker asked what the process was for collecting citations and violations. Mr. Sherwood said that CityStat was tracking it and legal actions are being taken. Liens are then being taken out of properties and then the properties can't be sold until the liens are paid. The Collection Agency has reduced the WPCA outstanding fines significantly and the Department intends to work on this with the City's citations.

Council Member Baker asked about the Toters program and how it was working. A staff member reviewed the process and said that some people do not want to use the Toters. He then asked about the Special Projects. Mr. Sherwood said that there was one person who works on graffiti. He then gave a brief overview of the special projects underway.

The discussion then moved back to the Toters program and the problem of garbage falling out of the Toters, along with the privatization of garbage removal. It was pointed out that the City was saving hundreds of thousands of dollars by picking up the garbage at the condominiums. The tipping fees have decreased dramatically.

Council Member Martinez asked why the payroll and account payables were not handled in one centralized office. Mr. Sherwood said that the departments know what they need and know how to order it. Council Member Martinez asked why the payroll clerks weren't listed under Finance, but under their departments.

The Committee then moved to page 36-2, which outlines the Roadway Maintenance. Mr. Sherwood gave a brief overview of the budget and some of the changes in the divisions. The Parks Maintenance Division and the Golf Course divisions now have seasonal employees, which do not have benefits, in the department for the summer months. Several questions about the details of this budget were asked.

The discussion then moved to alternate side of the street parking and some problems that had been encountered.

Mr. Sherwood then directed everyone's attention to page 41-2, which covers the Connecticut Zoological Society. Mr. Sherwood said that originally, the park had been designated as a state park, and the State then moved the zoo to Tourism. Mr. Dancho then came forward and gave the Council an update on what the State's situation is. He then distributed copies of the 2007 Annual Report to the Committee members. Mr. Dancho then reviewed the current situation of the State budgeting process. Mr. Dancho then

distributed car magnets and invitations to Legislative Day. This is geared towards Legislatures from all the towns and other elected officials.

The discussion then moved to the front gate landscaping. Mr. Dancho reviewed the names of the landscaping companies that were helping.

RECESS

Council Member Curwen declared a recess at 8:20 p.m. The Committee reconvened at 8:25 p.m.

Mr. Sherwood directed the Committee's attention to Sanitation/Recycling on page 37-2. He explained that every item in recycling reduces the cost of the tipping fees. The department will be using some light duty workers for advertising and marketing to move the program forward.

There were major changes in renegotiations at the solid waste disposal and the City is saving \$14/ton. The Waste Treatment Plant is now taxable. Another major savings was the change from having private companies hauling condo trash to doing it in house.

Council Member Baker asked about whether the switch from the City to the Board of Education had worked out. Mr. Sherwood said that there were savings on the City side, but that the Board needed to work harder regarding the amount of garbage. He added that it was important to close the lid on the Toters to keep the water out. That reduces the weight of the garbage significantly.

Council Member Martinez left the meeting at 8:35 p.m.

If the residents can recycle just 10% in each household, over the course of year, it could save a quarter of a million dollars.

Council Member Curwen then directed the Committee's attention to page 39-2, Recreation Program. Mr. Sherwood said that people are applying for lifeguards programs and that the programs for Seniors were underway. Council Member Curwen asked about charging per game. Mr. Carroll then informed the Committee that New Haven charges by the hour. Mr. Sherwood said that it would be impossible to enforce. The discussion then briefly moved to the reduction of the staff

Mr. Sherwood then directed everyone's attention to Parks Maintenance on page 40-9. Mr. Sherwood said that there were only 17 full time staff members, but the Mayor had put in one hundred thousand dollars in the Parks for seasonal workers because the park use will be up this coming season. Veteran's Park will be opening up and Winfield will be having restrooms constructed.

Council Member Silva asked about hiring felons. Mr. Carroll said that the only applicants that they review are the ones that Civil Services vets. Mr. Carroll said that he would evaluate each conviction and how long ago it occurred.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked if the trees could be trimmed in a particular section of Main Street. Mr. Sherwood suggested calling the Tree Warden. Mr. Carroll said that the work was contracted out and that there were power lines involved.

Council Member Curwen then directed everyone's attention to the Fairchild Wheeler Golf Course on 42-2. Mr. Sherwood said that the staff at the Golf Course provides some of the best statistics in the City in terms of accuracy and analysis. There are numerous seasons included in the budget.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked about when people damage the course, whether they are charged for the damage. Mr. Carroll said that when the City knows who did the damage, they are billed.

Mr. Carroll said that he was very pleased with how Mr. Sherwood had worked with his department.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BAKER MOVED TO CANCEL THE MEETING ON THE CAPITAL BUDGET ON APRIL 15TH.
** COUNCIL MEMBER AUSTIN SECONDED.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL MEMBER COLON MOVED TO ADJOURN
** COUNCIL MEMBER AUSTIN SECONDED.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET AND APPROPRIATION COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
APRIL 16, 2009**

ATTENDANCE: Leticia Colon, Chair; Susan Brannelly, Andre Baker, Thomas McCarthy, Council President

OTHERS: Council Member Carlos Silva; Tom Sherwood, John Gomes, CitiStat; Adam Wood, Fleeta Hudson, City Clerk; Anne Murray, Asst. City Clerk; Alma Maya, Town Clerk; Tom Erichetti, Jim O'Donnell, President of the Library Board, Scott Hughes, Head Librarian

CALL TO ORDER

Council Member Colon called the meeting to order at 6:19 p.m.

CITISTAT

Mr. Sherwood directed everyone's attention to page 25-2, which contains the CitiStat budget. Mr. Sherwood said that there was an increase because the benefits were added and that this is a new department.

Council Member Baker then asked Mr. Gomes about the amount of savings that the department had been able to identify. Mr. Gomes said that at the last meeting, this issue had been discussed. In cities like Baltimore and Hartford, where the system was already in place, it took a period of time before the savings had become evident. At this point in time, the department is still compiling information.

Mr. Sherwood pointed out that Mr. Gomes had identified the fact that the City did not have to use the United Way for complaints, which resulted in savings of thousands. Mr. Gomes said that once the information is gathered from the Public Facilities, the garbage truck routes will be analyzed to see if it is the most efficient use of the truck and the gas.

Council Member Colon asked how the public would know how to contact City Hall when there are concerns about something like flooding. Mr. Gomes said that the calls now come through a central number and a staff member then follows through to insure that the problem is resolved. There is also a random follow up call where the individuals are contacted to determine whether or not the issue was resolved satisfactorily. Council Member Colon asked if there was an advertising campaign for the public to know how to contact the appropriate parties. Mr. Gomes said that if someone calls 211, they will hear a recording directing the caller to call another number. Beginning in July, the department

will be looking to have the vacant position filled and roll out the program more completely.

Council President McCarthy then asked how soon it would be before the Council Members could find out about the various issues in their individual districts. Mr. Wood then gave a quick review of the history of the department and reminded everyone that there had been no marketing budget identified for the department in the first year because it was not deemed necessary. However there are ways that the City will be able to advertise during parades and other festivals without incurring costs.

Council Member Silva asked about the amount that had been saved by switching from United Way to in house service, which basically paid for the department this year. Council Member Silva asked whether or not CDBG funds could be used for CitiStat. Mr. Sherwood said that as the information is compiled, there will be more and more opportunity for CDBG funding. Mr. Gomes explained that Public Facilities has the biggest impact citywide in areas like potholes and basic services. Once that information is organized, then the Tax Assessor's and Tax Collector's office would be next in line. As that information becomes available, issues such as blight and community needs would be collected.

Council Member Silva said that he would like to be informed about the various issues that are discussed at the CitiStat meetings. Mr. Wood said that any Council Member could sit in on the meetings.

Council Baker asked about the impact of the recent layoffs on the statistics and the information gathered from the various departments such as the Tax Collector. Mr. Gomes said that the number of employees may change, but the level of service must remain the same in offices such as the Tax Collector. Regardless of how many employees there are, the

CITY CLERK

Mr. Sherwood then directed everyone's attention to page 11-2, which contains the budget for the City Clerk's Office. Ms. Murray then distributed a document to the Committee dated April 16, 2009. Mr. Sherwood said that one position had been eliminated and that other than this, the budget had not changed.

Council Member Baker then asked about the budget and asked how the number of the lay-offs could be justified since the office performs such vital functions.

Council President McCarthy said that the letter states that there had been no responses or input from the Council Members. He reminded everyone that he had met with City Clerk's staff several times. Ms. Murray said that in order to keep the information flowing

for the Council, the office functioning was vital. The budget was never very padded and that currently the department could not pay one of the bills. Discussion then followed about the various line items in the department budget. Ms. Murray will be writing a letter to request the amount needed to pay the outstanding bill. Council President McCarthy said that if there was a problem with this transfer, the Clerk's office should come back to the Council Committee about the issue. Mr. Sherwood said that he would guarantee that the needed transfer for advertising would be approved and the sum would be transferred. Council President McCarthy then had several detailed questions about the budget line items. He then asked Mr. Sherwood to give him a breakdown of the budget. Mr. Sherwood said that this would not be a problem.

Ms. Murray said that the staff was working hard, but couldn't keep up the pace much longer. The office that maintains the records for the Council needs support. With so few staff members, funerals and illnesses severely limit the ability of the office to provide services in a timely manner. Ms. Hudson said that there needs to be another staff member in the office because the requests for information are piling up and there simply isn't enough staff to handle the workload.

Ms. Hudson reminded everyone that she is not a union member and because the union didn't give any concessions, it was being taken out on her office. Council Member Colon said that it was not personal. She added that it sounded like the office needed more than one person in the office. Ms. Hudson said that one person would be wonderful and more would be great, but that she recognized that the City had financial issues.

TOWN CLERK

Mr. Sherwood then directed everyone to page 18-2 for the Town Clerk's budget. Mr. Sherwood said that there was more than \$18,000 drop in revenues because of the drop in real estate. The next issue is that the department lost a part time clerical assistant and one full time typist. Ms. Maya said that the department had to close for a half day because of staffing issues. During the half day closures, the staff is there and processing the paperwork. She then reviewed the details of the positions that were cut.

A grant has been approved for preserving the maps, but the process needs to take place before June 30th. The office is being renovated. Most of what the Town Clerk's office does is regulated by State Statutes. Ms. Maya reminded everyone that there had been request to have the office open until 5 p.m., but this is not possible because there isn't enough staff and that keeping the staff there until 5 p.m. would involve overtime. She also pointed out that there was an election coming up and that the office hours would be cut even further because the Clerk's office has to count the absentee ballots.

LIBRARY

Mr. Sherwood reviewed the Library budget on pages 64-2. Mr. O'Donnell said that the library has struggled with the budget and managed to keep the library open with the reduce the 10% cut. The library is leasing books rather than buying them. This required the elimination of all the top management. In order to accommodate the cuts, the staff has struggled. Due to the type of services that the library offers, the hours run from early morning into the evening hours. There are two unions involved and one of the unions has a 35 hour a week limit. Like the City Clerk's office, the library requires minimum staffing for the buildings. In order to facilitate the reduced budget requires changes. The Board has chosen to make certain to have what resources that the library has are available as much as possible.

Council President McCarthy said that last year, the Council had stepped up to insure that the library budget wasn't destroyed. However, the funding that was allocated never arrived via the revenues. Mr. Erichetti said that Mr. Sherwood had worked long and hard to help resolve the issues. Previously, the staff had been prioritized over the books, but this past year the books became the priority and the staffing was cut. He asked that the budget not be cut any further than it already has.

Council President McCarthy asked about the level of fund raising. Mr. Erichetti said that he did not understand the world of grant funding and that the Board needed to have someone who was good that this. Mr. Hughes said that he preferred to write his own grants. He reminded everyone that people feel most comfortable giving to the "Friends of the Library" which is a separate entity. He then said that he had developed a campaign plan, but the key is sustainability. Keeping the budget flat would signal the City's commitment.

The first thing that the Library needs to do is to have a business plan, which has been done. Mr. Hughes then gave an illustration regarding the computers at the library, which are being fully utilized by the residents. Additional computers were added through a grant and those are also being fully utilized by the patrons.

Council Member Brannelly then asked about the summer hours, which Mr. Erichetti reviewed with the Committee. The discussion then moved to the staff issues.

Council Member Brannelly asked if CitiStat would benefit the Library. Mr. Sherwood said that the Library was one of the departments that had extremely good statistics. Mr. Hughes then added that there was already a business plan and it required reasonable goals.

Council Member Brannelly then asked if there was any talk of regionalization. Mr. Hughes said that Connecticut was a model of regionalization. Bridgeport Library was once the top library, but as the surrounding libraries improved, the other libraries improved. Mr. Sherwood pointed out that when the students are doing research, they go

to the libraries to do research, and so he felt that some educational funding dollars should go to the libraries, particularly since the school libraries don't remain open during school vacations.

Council Member Baker asked about the library buildings that are leased. Mr. Hughes pointed out that this had originally been considered for the Morin building, but that the idea had died. Mr. Erichetti said that the Library wasn't wedded to the building and that if there was a City building available that would work, that would be fine. Mr. O'Donnell said that the Board was looking at many different possibilities for better locations.

Council Member Baker asked about the Capital Plan for fixing the Burroughs roof and the other library roofs. Mr. Sherwood said that once the market picks up, the bonds will be sold. The roofs on the libraries are a priority, but until the bond funding can be raised, the City will not have access to the funds.

Council Member Silva suggested that every single Council Member should donate a few hours at the library as volunteers. Mr. Hughes said that there are three ways that the Council could help would be to get a library card and use it. If the Council Members belong to any civic groups, have the meetings in the library. Finally, the Council Members could become A Friend of the Library for only \$10.00.

Mr. O'Donnell said that the Library had received a targeted grant for a Library Staff member to obtain a CDL for the Bookmobile. Discussion then followed about the possibility of having City Staff with CDLs volunteering to drive the bookmobile.

The discussion then moved to the possibility of having the Council Members have a tour of one of the libraries and become Friends of the Library at that time.

Council Member Colon then commented that it would be nice to work together with the Libraries and the Adult Center at Kossuth Street in handling the Adult Education programs. Discussion then followed.

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT MCCARTHY MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BAKER SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted
Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services

City of Bridgeport
Budget and Appropriation Committee
Regular Meeting
April 16, 2009
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**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS
REGULAR MEETING
APRIL 24, 2009**

ATTENDANCE: Robert Curwen, Chair; Thomas McCarthy, Council President;
Howard Austin, AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia, Andre Baker,
Daniel Martinez (6:21 p.m.)

OTHERS: Michael Feeney, OPM, Dawn Norton, Finance Comptroller, Anne
Kelly-Lenz, Tax Collector, Elaine Carvollo, Tax Assessor

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Curwen called the meeting to order at 6:14 p.m. and introduced the members of the Committee.

FINANCE DEPARTMENT

Mr. Feeney stated that the Mayor's intention is to fully fund the Comptrollers Office and said that the City is implementing a new 2.5 million financial management system, called MUNIS, which will transform the way that the City does business and pays bills.

Mr. Feeney directed everyone's attention to page 3-2. There has been a major reduction in revenue due to the removal of the Steel Point Project from the debt service account. It was also discovered that a \$450,000 in the copy account, which was a place that departments put funds that that not been allocated. The Council Members had several questions about how this occurred. Mr. Feeney said that he did not have the detailed information with him.

Council Member Martinez joined the meeting at 6:21 p.m.

The discussion then moved to the PILOT payments from the Port Authority.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia had some questions about the tracking system for the various deposits. Mr. Feeney then explained that there are about 17 different departments that take in cash and the money comes through Finance. There have been issues with various departments who do not turn in their deposits for Finance to reconcile the bank statements. Discussion then followed on the financial development and the software that was chosen.

Mr. Feeney explained that the MUNIS system is a web-based system while the current Advantage system runs off a main frame. He then gave a detailed overview of the benefits of the City using MUNIS.

Council Member Baker had several questions about various line items, which Mr. Feeney reviewed with him.

Chairman Curwen asked why the department did not have a comparison to the 07-08 Fiscal year were included. Mr. Feeney said that he did not know why this was, but also pointed out that none of the other departments had the comparison either.

Chairman Curwen asked about the reduction of the 4.5 million from Steel Point. Mr. Feeney said that the funds had been transferred to the Tax Collectors and would show up there as a plus.

Chairman Curwen asked about the revenues from copies. Mr. Feeney said that he would be happy to print out a line item for 06-07, 07-08 and 08-09 for the Council. A former employee as a miscellaneous account for undesignated funds used this account. This will no longer be allowed.

Chairman Curwen asked about the ongoing investigation. Mr. Feeney explained that it was an open case and that the Police Department was working on this case. He then explained how the control processes have been corrected and the security issues that had been implemented.

The Committee then moved to page 4-1, and reviewed the overall budget. The Committee had no questions about this budget.

Mr. Feeney then directed everyone's attention to 5-2, which covers the Print Shop. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked why some of the mail still had .42¢ stamps on them rather than being bulk mailed. She also said that she would like to see two or three copy rooms rather than having copiers in each office.

The Committee then moved to page 6-2, which had the Purchasing Department. Mr. Feeney said that there were currently two vacant positions, and one of those will be defunded.

Page 7-2 contains the Treasurer's Office Budget and Mr. Feeney explained that there was a major drop in the earnings on investments. Currently the City has just over 10 million dollars for investment and with the interest rates so low, the revenues generated from this have dropped.

The Tax Collector Department Budget was on page 8-2. Mr. Feeney said that there had been a 17 million dollar increase in the current taxes. Last year's budget was 215 million and the Mayor's proposed budget was 241 million. The increase is 17 million dollars, which also included the 4.5 million from CRRA.

Chairman Curwen asked Mr. Feeney if he could gauge the number of the Board of Assessments appeals. Mr. Feeney said that the number of appeals are counted and the value of the property before and what it is projected to be next year. He then explained the formula that he uses to gauge the amount and said that the appeals should be concluded by the end of the month. Discussion then followed about the assessment process. The multi-million dollar assessments will most likely be settled in court.

Council Member Martinez asked where the Boot-Finder program revenue was listed. Mr. Feeney explained that for every car that was booted, a \$95.00 fee was tacked on to the outstanding taxes collected. The fee is for the vendor that administers the program. Council Member Martinez said that the marshals were to be doing the booting when the program was presented to the Council. Mr. Feeney said that the marshals had administered the original program but that had fallen by the wayside, so the vendor now handles the program.

Council Member Baker asked for a break out of the real estate, personal property and vehicle taxes. Mr. Feeney said that this would be provided to the Council Member. He added that if the City aggressively pursued arrears, that the amount of arrears would eventually dwindle significantly.

Chairman Curwen asked how much the revenue from City owned properties generated. Mr. Feeney directed the Committee's attention to page 20, which stated that it was 1.1 million dollars of expected revenue. He added that the real estate transactions had not been finalized yet.

Council Member Martinez left the meeting at 7:38 p.m.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked about some of the companies that had owed taxes to the City and later moved out of the City. Ms. Kelly-Lenz said that she would check into this.

Council President McCarthy drew everyone's attention to a line item for 3030 Park, because a number of people had expressed concern about the revenues associated with it. Discussion then followed about taxes on rentals and lease companies.

Council Member Baker asked about the reduced payment to the marshals. Mr. Feeney then reminded everyone that the marshals were not longer used for the boot finder

program so that the line item had been reduced. There were several other questions about various companies that were involved in court actions for outstanding taxes.

The discussion then moved to the anti-blight policy, which allows a property owner who had thousands of fines because of blight, to correct the condition. Once the condition is corrected, the accumulated fines are forgiven. If the conditions are not remedied, then a lien is put on the property and the new owner would have to pay the liens along with the purchase price.

Chairman Curwen said that he appreciated all the work Ms. Kelly-Lenz had done in the Tax Collectors. He then suggested that perhaps one of the departments with more staff might be able to move some staff down to the Tax Collector's. Council President McCarthy said that the Tax Collector's department had been deeply impacted by the layoffs and the union bumpings.

Mr. Feeney said that Page 9-1 has the Tax Assessor's budget information. Mr. Feeney said that the Re-evaluation had been a major cost to the City. He added that the Tax Assessor's Department had lost employees and that one position had been defunded.

Chairman Curwen said that he would like to hear from Ms. Carvollo. She then gave a quick overview of the process and explained that she can not legally become involved. The grand list has the budget summary on page 23 and shows the 26% increase. The 26% increase is partially because of the 17 million dollar increase.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked if there was a listing of tax-exempt properties and what that costs the City. Ms. Carvollo said that she would email the Chair with the list and the assessments.

Council President McCarthy said that he would like to compliment Ms. Carvollo on the fact that there originally had been a director, an assistant director and Ms. Carvollo's position. Ms. Carvollo was now running the department and had ably taken over the department during an assessment. Chairman Curwen concurred and said that he had heard many people compliment the attitude in the office.

Council Member Baker said that he had experienced some negative things in the offices before and that the department had become much more friendly and helpful. He said that the directors were doing a good job.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked about a break out between the regular current taxes, current interest and the arrears taxes. Ms. Carvollo said that this was included in her budget breakout.

Mr. Feeney said that page 17-1 has the budget for Pensions/Fringe Benefits. He then reviewed the figures and said that the pre-1980 Police and Fire Pension Plan A had been bonded and that the City had been able to meet the 78.6% requirements. In order for the City to go forward, the Mayor will be going before the State Legislation for relief until 2012. OPM fully supports this. If the legislation does not go forward, there will be a major cost probably in excess of 20 million, to the City to keep the Pension Plan A funded. This has occurred because of the market situation. Mr. Feeney said that the Mayor believes that there will be relief from the State. State Secretary Genaurio is recommending passage. However the City would have a large liability to pay in the next three to five years. Currently there are almost 1,000 employees and spouses that are still active. Discussion followed about who manages the various pension plans.

The Committee then moved to 65-2, which outlines Debt Service. Mr. Feeney briefly reviewed the figures and where the various breakouts were located in the section. If nothing else is added on to the City, the debt service will start dropping in 2011. The City Bonded 350 million dollars for the pension fund that equates to about 31 million of the overall 70 million in debt service. If the bonding amount was removed from the equation, the City would only have 40 million in total debt service. This would be a tremendous financial status for the City.

Chairman Curwen then asked about the various schools that would be coming on line, such as the Aquaculture School, the Discovery School and other ones. Chairman Curwen asked for a debt schedule for these project.

Council Member Baker then asked about the interest for the bonding. Mr. Feeney said that the interest rates have been fixed. The City does not do variable rates or get involved in "swops" with their bonding.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked about the WPCA increases. Mr. Feeney said that he believed that their proposed budget had been recently released. All the fees are passed through to Trumbull as well.

Chairman Curwen had requested Mr. Feeney to randomly select some properties in each of the districts. Mr. Feeney said that he had just used the GPS coordinates to select properties and generated a list. The Council Members then selected a number of streets that they wanted Mr. Feeney to compile and add to the list.

Chairman Curwen asked what the mill rate equates to. Mr. Feeney said that the mill rate was 6.618. Chairman Curwen said that he would need to know what it would be with a .1 decrease and a whole point reduction. He then listed a number of others dollar figures that would be needed.

Council President McCarthy left the meeting at 8:40 p.m.

Mr. Feeney then reviewed the lists and documents that the Committee had requested.

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BAKER MOVED TO ADJOURN**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER AUSTIN 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
REGULAR MEETING
APRIL 25, 2009**

ATTENDANCE: Leticia Colon, Chair; AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia, Howard Austin, Susan Brannelly, Daniel Martinez, Andre Baker Thomas McCarthy, Council President; Michelle Lyons, Carlos Silva (12:15 p.m.); Robert Curwen (12:20 p.m.)

CALL TO ORDER

Council Member Colon called the meeting to order at 11:45 a.m.

BUDGET OVERVIEW

Chairwoman Colon directed everyone's attention to page 1-2, the Mayor's Budget. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked if all the positions were required in the Mayor's office. She said that it appeared that there were overlapping positions. Council Member Baker said that he would like to see the '08 & '09 Personnel summaries. Discussion then followed about some of the staffing shifts and eliminated positions that have taken place during the last few months. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked that Mr. Sherwood provide the Council Members with a written list of '08 and '09 personnel and the justification for shifting several of the positions around.

Council Member Baker said that he would like to see more savings in the Mayor's Office. Council Member Baker then pointed out that there were other departments that provide direct services had been cut severely. Discussion then followed about attendance, job titles and responsibilities.

Council Member Silva joined the meeting at 12:15 p.m. Council Member Curwen joined the meeting at 12:20 p.m.

Council President McCarthy suggested to the Chairs of the meetings that Mr. Wood and Mr. Nunn come to the meeting for the CAO/OPM/Mayor's Office review. Discussion then followed.

The Council then moved to page 2-2, Central Grants. Council Member Curwen pointed out that Central Grants is self-sustaining. Council Member Brannelly pointed out that the binders do not have pages 2-3 & 2-4. Council Member Curwen said that he would see that each Council Member received the missing page. Council Member Valle asked about how the administration funds were handled. Council President McCarthy explained that there were HUD and CDBG requirements. Council Member Valle said

that she wanted it noted that her questions regarding the funding were simply for clarification of the funding sources and where the funding is located in the budget. Her questions have nothing to do with employees that may hold any given position.

Council Member Baker said that he would like to see a list of all the employees who have grant funded salaries. Council President McCarthy agreed and added that there are a number of positions that are paid for by grants. He added that some of the positions are paid for by several different grants. Council Member Baker said that he felt that it would be important to have more accuracy. Council Member Curwen agreed and commented that it is also important to remember that the Council had authorized the approval of several grants or additions to the staff. Council Member Curwen said that Council Member Baker was talking about the issue of transparency and that it would be good to have this in a different document. That is why it is important to maintain consistency on the Budget and Appropriation Committee because the members often know why certain decisions were made. Discussion followed about having the entire City budget, including both the grants and the Capital budget funding.

Council Member Curwen then passed around a document that listed the impact of a mill rate increase and decrease on various addresses in the different districts for the Council Members to review.

Council Member Silva pointed out that there were a number of departments where the staffing had been severely reduced but other departments had 90% staffing. Council President reminded everyone that many of the layoffs had resulted from negotiation issues with the unions. One union did not give anything back to the City and the Council needs to be careful that they don't unintentionally reward that union by restoring positions.

Council Member Curwen directed everyone's attention to pages 3-2, which is the Comptroller's Office. Council Member Curwen said that there had been a request for the '08 budget and positions. He then reviewed two items, the copy account and the ongoing criminal investigation along with the other details with the Council Members.

Council Member Curwen directed everyone's attention to pages 4-2, which is the Finance Department. There was very little change in this department. The discussion then moved to page 5-2, which is the In House Printing.

Council Member Curwen directed everyone's attention to pages 6-2, which is the Purchasing Department. There have been some layoffs in that department and that the department is now computerized.

Council Member Curwen directed everyone's attention to pages 7-2, which is the Treasury Department. There was a brief discussion about the issues associated with this department.

Council Member Curwen directed everyone's attention to pages 8-2, which is the Tax Collector's Department. Council Member Curwen said that he had discussed with Mr. Feeney about what the tax growth were. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia explained that the revenue tax amounts for vehicles, real estate and personal property had been combined into one line item and that the Council Members had requested a break out. Council Member Silva expressed concerns about those residents who had out of state plates on the vehicles. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia explained that the State law had changed and the out of state vehicles needed to be assessed as personal property by the City Tax Assessor rather than a vehicle.

Council Member Curwen directed everyone's attention to pages 9-2, which is the Tax Assessor's Department. Council Member Curwen said that there were currently 1,500 appeals that were scheduled to be completed by the end of the month. The grand list grew last year, probably more than any other city in Connecticut.

Council Member Curwen directed everyone's attention to pages 10-2, which is the Registrars of Voters, which had not been reviewed yet. The Committee then moved on to page 11-2, the City Clerk's Office.

Council Member Curwen directed everyone's attention to pages 12-2, which is the City Attorney's Office. Council Member Curwen said that Atty. Lasky was now litigating many more cases and the City was winning. A request was made regarding having a list of the outside counsel and the fees associated with this issue. Council Member Brannelly said that there were no goals listed for the Department. Council Member Curwen said that there was discussion about how the department was managed and there had been a major revamping of the department.

Council Member Curwen directed everyone's attention to pages 13-2, which is the Archives Budget. There were no changes in the Department. The Council members then moved to page 14-2, the Civil Service, which has not been reviewed yet. The discussion then moved to the Charter Review process. Council President McCarthy said that he had put in a request to the City about this process. Council Member Lyon asked if the Council could have outside counsel on this process.

Council Member Curwen directed everyone's attention to pages 15-2, which is the Grants Personnel/Benefits Administration. No changes, no review yet.

Council Member Curwen directed everyone's attention to pages 16-2, which is the Labor Relations Department. Council Member Martinez said that he had a concern about the

budget. Council Member Curwen reviewed the position and pointed out that the particular position in question was an attorney who handled negotiations. Council Member Martinez asked if there could be a list of the number of cases handled and the amount of money saved.

Council Member Curwen directed everyone's attention to pages 17-2, which is the Pensions and Benefits Account. Council Member Curwen then reviewed the details of the debt obligations that the City has. He also explained that Pension Plan A services almost 1,000 employees. The city is obligated to fund the plan at 76%. With the economic situation, the Mayor is requesting the State waive the funding rate. If the State does not approve this, the City will be liable for 20 million dollars for each year. This might require a mid year tax increase of 4 mills. One mill equates to 6.6 million. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia pointed out that it would be important to have the fact that this retirement plan was put in place many years ago and the stock market had a dramatic impact on this. Council Member Curwen said that the City of Bridgeport suffered a lesser impact on the fund than many of the other towns in Connecticut.

Council Member Austin left the meeting at 2:15 p.m.

Several Council Members expressed strong concerns about the amount of taxes that could be levied on the residents before the watershed mark was reached and the number of foreclosed and vacant properties outnumbered the occupied residents. Other concerns were expressed about ECDC decisions to give viable, taxable properties to non-profits. Discussion then followed the process for the sales or release of the various properties.

Council Member Curwen then announced that the Police Department would be held on Monday and that the Board of Education would be held on Tuesday.

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ MOVED TO ADJOURN.
** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY SECONDED.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services.

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS
REGULAR MEETING
APRIL 27, 2009**

ATTENDANCE: Robert Curwen, Chair; Leticia Colon, AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia, Andre Baker, Susan Brannelly, Thomas McCarthy, Council President

STAFF: Thomas Sherwood, OPM Director

OTHER: Police Chief Gaudett, Sgt. John Cueto; Dorie Price, Director of ECC; Andy Nunn, Charles Carroll, Director of Public Facilities and Parks

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Curwen called the meeting to order at 6:15 p.m. He introduced all those present.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Mr. Sherwood then directed everyone's attention to page 26-2, which covers the overall Police Department budget. Mr. Sherwood said that there had been a number of lay offs. Currently there is no class or list for hiring, which is overseen by Mr. Jacobs.

Chief Gaudett explained that the Department is under a Federal Wind Down Order, which will be in effect for the next eighteen months. Grants have been applied for and Chief Gaudett hopes to have a class of twenty before the next year finishes.

Council Member Colon asked about some of the candidates who were upset about the lack of the list. Chief Gaudett explained that in April the President had made funds available until July 9th for hiring police officers. Chief Gaudett asked Mr. Jacobs to work on this. However, because of the timing, the class with the individuals who took the test, will have to re-qualify and take the test from the beginning.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked if this process had been documented. Mr. Sherwood said that there was a letter from the Federal government about this. Council Member Brannelly said that the test had been taken two years ago. Mr. Carroll explained that having the names on the list and having the list expire occurs all the time.

Council Member Baker asked about a number of items that had zero in the line item. Chief Gaudett said that these were new ordinances and that previously, all the permits had been lumped together in one category.

Mr. Sherwood then directed everyone's attention to 27-7, which gives the overall breakout. This includes the amount for the debt service for the items like the Academy and other big ticket items.

Council Member Curwen asked the Chief to outline his goals. The Chief then pointed out that there was a significant reduction in overtime, reinstated the Traffic Division, and made several promotions. Many of the operations have been streamlined. The Chief indicated the large wall chart, which had been updated from last year's chart. Mr. Sherwood pointed out that there had been a comfortable reduction in overtime. A precinct and two gas stations have been eliminated. In order to comply with the wind down order, a request has been made for a new class of 40 candidates. Training is being implemented. The Department continues to use the JAG funding to lift some of the financial burden from the City.

Chief Gaudett said that the two year old police cars are still in pristine condition and encouraged the City to continue to work on the vehicle refresh program. Currently, there are negotiations regarding the uniforms and the Chief said that he wants to see uniformity in this area. He then listed several other improvements that the Department had made in the last year and went on to list some of the programs he hoped to implement. This will include covering the parks full time with a special unit. It will be important to have consistency with the officers in the parks rather than rotation. The Department has discovered that the holsters that were originally chosen are defective and need to be replaced. This is being undertaken now.

Chief Gaudett said that he was also interested in the youth programs including the drum and bugle corps.

Council Member Curwen asked about a ticket surcharge to help defray the cost of the police overtime at the Arena. Mr. Nunn said that the Arena has contacted the City about this issue and that he expected to have something definite in the next few weeks. Mr. Nunn said that he would notify the Council Members when the issue was clarified.

Council Member Curwen then asked about the ticket revenues. Chief Gaudett said that there had been some discussion about adopting the entire Motor Vehicle statutes as a City ordinance. He has been advised by the City Attorney that this would not be possible. However, when the Police ticket a vehicle for certain violations, the City receives a \$10.00 reimbursement for each one. This is not a significant source of revenue. So the Police will be having a list of City ordinances having to do with quality of life that they will be enforcing.

Council Member Curwen asked cameras in the vehicles. Chief Gaudett pointed out that the cameras would require large amounts of memory, archiving, and other issues that would not be covered by funding.

There was a brief discussion about the School Resource Officers.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia then asked several questions about the uniform negotiations, the current rental of some property and the cost of the replacement holsters. Sgt. Cueto explained that the cost of the holster will be mostly be underwritten by the company because the company recognizes that there is a defect.

Council Member Curwen said that there was an issue with a boot on a vehicle on Main Street. Chief Gaudett said that he would look into this.

Council Member Curwen asked about the mounted patrol. Chief Gaudett explained that part of the parks detail includes the mounted patrol. He added that the horses are working horses and bring in a tremendous amount of revenue.

Council Member Baker then asked if there were any positions listed that were located outside of the Police Department.

Council President McCarthy asked how much the horses cost. Sgt. Cueto pointed out that \$6600 was allocated for the veterinarian services, which covers the horses, the police dogs and all the animals in the shelter. The Department works through the grant funding to acquire the animals. He said that he believed that it cost the City \$60,000 per year for the horses, with the farrier costs added in. Sgt. Cueto said that the parking violations alone cover the cost of the \$60,000. The horses are the most non-aggressive means of moving a large crowd of people. Often people at the Arena ask where the horses are because their children want to see the horses.

Council Member Brannelly then said that it was important for the Council Members to be able to address the issue of the horses to their constituents.

She then asked about the audits for the pension program. Mr. Sherwood said that there were annual actuary reviews on the pension fund for the Police Department.

Council Member Martinez said that he does not like rubber bullets. Chief Gaudett agreed. He then asked about the Assistant Chief, which was apparently tabled at Chief Gaudett request pending further clarification.

EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION CENTER (ECC)

Mr. Sherwood then directed everyone's attention to page 29-2. Last year, the ECC was set up and now the full staffing is needed. The other increase is the operations costs. Without 12 staff, there will be overtime.

Ms. Price then said that the staffing is key and last year all the positions were not needed until the project reached this stage. The Center needs to be staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 52 weeks a year. There are about 100,000 911 calls coming into the Center.

Council Member Brannelly asked if it was possible to qualify the cost of doing business today without overtime. She said that currently the overtime for the police and fire might end up as a wash simply from the overtime. Mr. Sherwood then said that he would try to work that into a report.

Council Member Curwen then asked about the salaries. Mr. Sherwood explained that the Civil Service and other towns helped to flesh out the true cost of the positions. The center is now staff by the police and fire overtime.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked about the Community Services Department. Chief Gaudett then said that the SROs are all able bodied officers and there are three officers in the Community Services Department, who have various duties.

ADJOURNMENT

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

**** COUNCIL MEMBER COLON SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS
REGULAR MEETING
APRIL 28, 2009**

ATTENDANCE: Leticia Colon, Andre Baker, Susan Brannelly, AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia, Daniel Martinez

STAFF: Thomas Sherwood, OPM Director

OTHERS: Dr. John Ramos, Bridgeport Public School Superintendent,
Robert Henry, Bridgeport Schools Chief of Staff;

CALL TO ORDER

Council Member Colon called the meeting to order at 7:12 p.m.

BRIDGEPORT PUBLIC SCHOOLS BUDGET REQUEST 2009-2010

Mr. Sherwood directed the Committee's attention to page 68-1 in the main Budget binder. Mr. Sherwood said that the Mayor's proposed budget was flat and that the Governor was recommending a flat amount for the next two years for this. There may be funds from Federal aid. The Committee may have to revise the figure for ECS down when the State announces the final amount before the Council votes on the budget.

Dr. Ramos asked Mr. Sherwood about the ECS funding. Mr. Sherwood said that it was his understanding that the funding would come in as a direct check.

Dr. Ramos acknowledged that there were Board members present and named them for the Committee. He said that the Mayor's budget and the request from the District were different. He said that Bridgeport was the least funded and poorest funded District in the State. Dr. Ramos pointed out that there were contractual increases in union contracts. He added that there was also an upcoming evaluation to factor in. This budget is requesting less than 2% increase, which is the first time that this has happened in Bridgeport in over 20 years.

Dr. Ramos then outlined what the consequences of a flat line increase would have on the Districts, which would eliminate five assistant principals in the District. If the budget is reduced, then there possibly could be school closures. Dr. Ramos said that it would be important to insure that neither the Council nor the Board becomes the bad guys in this.

Mr. Henry, the Chief of Staff for the District, came forward and presented a PowerPoint program to the Committee. He reviewed the general figures for the recommended Budget and the Enrollment history from 2004 through to the budget request for 2009-2010.

Council Member Martinez asked about the slight decrease from 22,335 in 2004 to 20,168 in 2008-2009. Mr. Henry said that while the number of students may have decreased, the services that the students need have associated costs, which have risen.

Mr. Henry then reviewed the Historical Budget Comparisons including the ECS funding. He pointed out that the nurses and recycling have been moved from the City side of the Budget to the District side, which have increased costs.

Page 5 contains a breakout of the revenues from 2008-2009 and the estimated revenues for 2009-2010. With the state and federal grants factored in, the district is looking at a budget of \$271,417,081. He reminded everyone that the state and federal grants are used to supplement and not supplant. Mr. Henry then reviewed the various major programs that are supported by grant funding.

Slide 9 lists the various cuts that would be required if the flat budget was approved. Dr. Ramos then explained that the District had been working on standardizing the high schools with various practices to increase efficiency. Some of these changes might be maximizing classes, combining classes, and other measures.

Mr. Henry said that there was no reduction in the contracts negotiations, there would have to be elimination of teaching positions.

Mr. Henry said that if the budget was less than the current budget of \$215,800,000, there would be six possible options for closing various schools.

Dr. Ramos then said with the listing of the possible schools for closure, there was no ranking or priority. He re-emphasized the fact that the stimulus money cannot supplant the programs, but could supplement programs.

Dr. Ramos said that the District had worked hard to find ways to utilize the grant funding to the best possible use.

Council Member Baker had a question about whether the reductions in the budget were a reflection of the school closures. Dr. Ramos said that the school closure were if the budget were less than the current budget amount. Then the associated costs and savings for closing one school were reviewed.

Council Member Baker asked how many teacher vacancies there were at the present. He was told that there were less than 20.

Council Member Martinez then asked about the flat funding budget. Dr. Ramos explained that the schools would only be closed if the budget was less than \$215,800,000. Council Member Martinez pointed out that he was concerned about the fact that all the reductions were from the main staff rather than the Administrative staff. Dr. Ramos replied that there had been a number of Central Office staff cuts in the past and that the staff was at the bottom in terms of reducing the staff. There has to be an infrastructure to run the system and there is not enough staff to monitor what occurs in the various buildings.

Dr. Ramos said that if the District had their own legal counsel, they would be able to send the work to that attorney rather than send the issues outside. This is not being asked for, because the District understands the situation that the economy is in. The first thing that the people want when there are cuts to be made is to reduce the administration. He added that the Bridgeport District has the lowest ratio of administrative staff to students in the State. Council Member Martinez said that if the Council were to give the BOE the additional 4 million dollar this would mean an additional 4 million dollars in cuts for the City. That would entail cuts of services for the City.

Council Member Martinez asked about the take home vehicles for staff on the BOE. Dr. Ramos asked the Council to weigh their decision in light of the fact that the biggest contribution to the prison population is that the prisoners are uneducated. As far as take home vehicles are concerned, there are vehicles that are tied to contract or to the job offers. Mr. Henry said that there are only five or six vehicles that are take home vehicles. Measures have been taken to curtail their use and the use of fuel in order to be accountable.

Council Member Brannelly asked about the various cost saving initiatives that the City has implemented. Mr. Sherwood said that the settlements of 10 out of 11 contracts with the unions in record time. Mr. Sherwood said that there has been a matrix worked on by the District. Mr. Sherwood then reviewed the baseline recommendation in the budget book. He added that the City does not negotiate the District's union contracts.

Council Member Brannelly asked if the audit on the Health Benefits that was being done on the City side was being done for the District. Mr. Sherwood said that it was.

Council Member Brannelly said that she had met with Dr. Ramos as the Chair of the Educational Committee. She said that Dr. Ramos as the Superintendent already answers to the Board of Education. Because of this, she feels that the Council is secondary. Council Member Brannelly said that she felt Dr. Ramos and Mayor Finch were both very smart individuals but there was a lack of communication. Council Member Brannelly said that she appreciated the fact that there had been no threats over closing of schools, particularly as the public hearing would be held on April 29th.

Council Member Brannelly said that the children deserve the efforts, but she felt that the District and the City should partner together to provide the energy to the District. Council Member Brannelly said that right now the Council was just trying to make it through to next year, when hopefully the economy would be better.

Dr. Ramos said that everyone in the administration was relieved that there did not need to be a school closure last year, but if it had been necessary to close the school, the District would have done so. He added that he agreed that there was a synergy that works with the Mayor, the Council and the District. He said that there had been some movement in this direction. Council Member Brannelly said that she had hoped that there would be a way to exchange information so that the process was less adversarial.

Council Member Baker said that last year he had asked about savings. He asked where the initiatives for savings were located in the budget. Dr. Ramos then said that there had been some savings through furloughs, not filling positions, and other measures that were not reflected in the budget book. He then listed a number of items where there were savings.

Council Member Baker asked about the recycling efforts. One of the officials reviewed the efforts that were being made to recycle the various items such as cardboard, paper, and others.

Council Member Baker asked about the savings on the gas cards. Mr. Henry said that there had been a reduction and he would get that figure to the Council.

Council Member Brannelly asked if the Council could see a break down of the cost savings for the schools. She was told that this would be provide to the Council.

Council Member Baker then asked about the legal services breakout. Mr. Sherwood then indicated where the information was located on page 68-5.

Council Member Colon asked about the Summer School program and why the parents were charged for this. It was explained that there was a high school summer school for credit recovery in order to advance a grade or graduate. The parents are charged for the courses and the money is given to the City general funds. There is another summer school program for K-3 that is funded by the grants, along with other programs that were grant funded. The District does not offer middle school summer school, this is provided by the neighboring towns.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked about the staggered hours for the high school students. She was told that the Aquaculture School had staggered hours. There are also students who have early dismissal. However, those students who have the rotating

schedule, there is the possibility that the students could be arriving later in the morning. The rotating schedule was actually mandated by the state because the students were not receiving enough classroom time.

The discussion then moved to summer school for K-3. These classes are 15-1 ratio and the students who are in danger of not being promoted to the next grade are in these classes. If the students can avoid being retained, they are more likely to be successful in school. The NCLB guidelines mandate the K-3 programs. The number of the students in summer school are larger and the students are required to attend.

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BAKER MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS
PUBLIC HEARING
APRIL 29, 2009**

ATTENDANCE: Robert Curwen, Chair; Howard Austin, Andre Baker,
AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia, Susan Brannelly; Leticia
Colon (6:45 p.m.)

OTHERS: Council Member Denese Taylor-Moye; Council Member James
Holloway

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Curwen called the meeting to order at 6:08 p.m. He reviewed the rules and requested that all speakers keep their remarks to three minutes.

PUBLIC HEARING ON THE BUDGET

Chairman Curwen opened the public hearing at 6:09 p.m.

Dr. John Ramos, the Superintendent of Schools, came forward and stated that the budget that the District had submitted requested a 1.9% increase due to energy costs and contractual obligations. He reviewed the reasons for this and said that it would not allow the District to provide the best services to the students in Bridgeport. He reminded everyone that Bridgeport was the poorest and least funded District in the State. He then reviewed the possible consequences if the budget remained at 0%, including the reduction in the number of assistant principal positions. If the budget was cut below what the current funding is there could be potential school closings. Dr. Ramos reiterated the fact that one major contributor to the prison population was the lack of education. He then pointed out that the City must provide their residents with an education, which will help He thanked the Committee for allowing him to address the issues.

Mr. Max Medina, president of the Board of Education came forward and greeted the Committee. He said that he had served for sixteen years and this was his final year. He then asked the Committee to reject the perception that Bridgeport had a failing school system. He then listed a number of colleges that Bridgeport graduates would be attending this coming year. He said that some of the students arrived in the school system from another country and did not speak English. He said that while this was wonderful, he worried about he 25% of the students who needed special services, so that they would also be able to attend colleges also. Mr. Medina said that there were smart cuts and dumb cuts to the budget. Any cut to the educational budget is always a dumb cut because it harms the students and the residents. Good education makes money for the

City of Bridgeport. Smart business decisions require that the City invest in education. Smart schools are just as rewarding as safe streets.

Ms. Laura Herwitz came forward and said that she was present to read a letter into the record for Representative Auden Grogins, who resides at 155 Brewster Street and was not able to be present at the meeting. (See Attached)

Mr. Gary Bellishet came forward and said that he was president of the Bridgeport Education Foundation. He said that he was present to ask that the educational system not be cut because it sends a message to people that Bridgeport is not the place live and work.

Mr. Rob Trager came forward and said that he lives by Bridgeport Hospital and is a Bridgeport teacher. He said that he was present to speak on the education budget. Mr. Trager said that last year he waited two hours to speak while this year at twenty minutes to six there were only two or three people in the room. While the parents believe that the schools are doing good work, they have lost faith in the process. He said that the City should be spending more money on education than the surrounding suburbs and this is wrong. He said that it would be important to give the children the opportunity to thrive and succeed.

Ms. Marilyn Ondraasik from Bridgeport Child Advocacy Coalition came forward and distributed a printed statement. She said that she was a resident and a taxpayer in Bridgeport. She then read her statement into the record. (See Attached).

Ms. Ondraasik said that she had seen an article in the newspaper about the Board of Education not utilizing their funding well and should cut the administration more. This could not be further from the truth. Ms. Ondraasik pointed out that there were a number of charts included with information that disproved this. She thanked the Board for listening.

Mr. Clyde Nickerson came forward and said that he was present to request support for the school system. He said that he had watched this same process happen repeatedly where the education system takes cuts, which is not fair to the children. He said that there was a problem with the number of nurses available to the schools because they have to drive from school to school. Mr. Nickerson expressed several concerns about the budget cuts. He then pointed out that there were two City Halls and that this was not right because the funds used for the Annex could be used elsewhere.

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

Mr. Nickerson asked why there was not some type of penalties for those students who drop out of school. He said that the federal government finds money for the wars and such but that they can't find money for education.

Council Member Curwen asked if there was anyone from the public that wished to address the Committee. No one came forward. He repeated this twice. No one came forward.

Council Member Curwen then closed the public hearing on the budget at 6:49 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL MEMBER AUSTIN MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BAKER SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET AND APPROPRIATION
REGULAR MEETING
APRIL 30, 2009**

ATTENDANCE: Robert Curwen, Chair; Leticia Colon, Co-chair; Andre Baker, Susan Brannelly

STAFF: Thomas Sherwood, OPM

OTHERS: Council Member Richard Bonney; Andy Nunn, Ed Lavernoich, Deputy Director OPED; Don Eversley, OPED Director; Peter Paajamen; Council President Thomas McCarthy; William Minor

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Curwen called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. He introduced all the members of the Council present.

OFFICE OF PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Sherwood then directed everyone's attention to page 43-2. He said that there was a sharp drop in the debt service, which was lumped in with the other debt service.

Mr. Eversley then gave a brief overview of the department's vision for the City. He said that it would be important to get more businesses into the city, creating economic activity, and helping to get the vacant buildings back onto the tax rolls and economically productive. He said that he hoped that this would continue through to the third quarter of next year for the major sites, aside from Steel Point.

Council Member Curwen asked about the large influx of funds for Administration Services. Mr. Sherwood then reviewed the figures, and reminded everyone that the debt service was now reflected for the cost center. He directed everyone's attention to page 65-1, where the debt service was normally recorded and explained that he had categorized the debt service for each department. He reminded everyone that the Board of Education has debt service of 16 million and it will go up 2.6 million next year for the debt service.

Council Member Curwen asked what the big ticket items were assigned for OPED. He said that items like the Steel Point land acquisition, the Pequonnick apartment acquisition for the parking lot for the Arena, the Streetscape project for downtown. Discussion followed about the various projects and their associated costs. Council Member Baker wanted to know what the costs were for outside attorneys' fees.

Council Member Colon asked about the Congress Street Plaza income, which Atty. Lavernoich reviewed with the Committee. Mr. Eversley then reviewed the upcoming property sales.

Council President McCarthy joined the meeting at 6:52 p.m.

Council Member Colon expressed concerns from other Council Members regarding having the North End turned into a business center and the current downtown center turning into residential areas. Mr. Eversley explained that North Main Street could have smarter development, which will prevent it from competing with downtown and becoming big buildings. Council President McCarthy commented that the commercial zones on Main Street needed to have adequate buffer zones. Mr. Eversley said that he shared the Council's concern.

Council Member Bonney asked about the Steel Point project and the Talmadge Brothers. Atty. Lavernoich reviewed the details of the court settlement with the Committee. Mr. Eversley reminded everyone that public funding dollars have dried up and how that had influenced the project. This is under discussion with the developer.

Council Member Curwen asked how much grant money OPED receives. Mr. Sherwood explained that the department receives project based grants like the funding for clean up of brownfields. Atty. Lavernoich explained that previously, the grants used to have some administrative costs factored in, but in the last few years, this has not been the case. Council Member Curwen asked if the grant funding could be extended. Atty. Lavernoich explained that there were some grants like the brownfield clean up project was extended and covered administrative costs because the ground water wells needed to be monitored.

Council Member Brannelly asked if there was an update on the State Street Hubbell site. Mr. Eversley said that there had been some contractor planning, including increasing the size of the parcel and moving the tenant that is located there. He then reviewed some of the details and issues that are under consideration at the present time.

Council Member Curwen asked about the progress of blight, future development and other issues. This resulted in having three positions added, but they are still vacant. Mr. Eversley said that the OPED department had only 40 slots, with is significantly less than Hartford and New Haven. Mr. Eversley said that when he arrived, he wanted to become more comfortable with the operations of the department. Shortly after that, the City was facing the budget crisis, so his department pulled back out of respect for those who were being laid off and also to save money for the City. Those positions have now have had the documentation prepared and postings have been prepared. Civil Service is in the process of determining the position qualifications. The staff has been working very hard, but there are a number of positions that have been put on the back burner because the staff does not have time.

Council Member Curwen asked about integrating the various departments. Mr. Eversley said that there should be better interfacing with the Health Department and the housing inspections. He said that the CityStat project would also be helping in this when the project becomes functional.

Council Member Baker asked about the job titles that been added last year. Mr. Eversley then indicated where these positions were located. The discussion then moved to the condemnation specialist position, which did not appear in the book. Mr. Eversley said that they would review the paperwork and report back to the Budget Committee.

Council Member Baker said that the department goals appeared to focus on anti-blight and the NRZs. He asked if the department should be focused on bringing these positions into the general fund if the block grants started to dry up. Mr. Sherwood said that the regulator positions always need to be monitored carefully in case the funding does slow down or stop. Mr. Eversley said that it is critical in this economic environment, it is important to bring down the burned out shells and deal with the buildings that are in poor repair. Council Member Curwen asked where the funding came from to pay for the demolitions. Mr. Sherwood said that this was covered under the Capital Plan and funded by bonding. Mr. Eversley said that there are seven or eight buildings that are on the first round of the demolition process. There is an additional fifteen or more buildings that could be demolished tomorrow, but the cost exceeds the available funding. This is because some buildings have lead or asbestos abatement issues.

Council Member Colon asked where the fines from the anti-blight issues were in the budget. Mr. Sherwood said that there were three tiers, the ones that pay the fines immediately, the ones that have to do structural changes and the other that will ignore it completely. It was stated that there was about \$60,000 that had been collected. Council Member Colon had several additional questions about the legal process regarding burned out buildings.

Council Member Curwen said that there were some Council Member who were in favor of changing the ordinances regarding this in order to implement the collection of anti-blight fines.

Council Member Curwen then reviewed the efforts that have been made to encourage the development of downtown. This would mean making the process to be more friendly and helpful in attempting to coach people through the process. Council Member Curwen then suggested a moratorium on the sale of City properties to non-profits.

Mr. Eversley said that he had found that most of his staff is operating in emergency mode and that he was hopeful that having more staff would help with this. Another issue is

correcting the idea that Bridgeport is a difficult place to develop a project. Mr. Eversley said that he was focused on marketing Bridgeport in a more positive manner.

Mr. Eversley said that he agreed with Council Member Curwen about the non-profit property and he was hoping to explore some of the PILOT programs that other towns have done. All the non-profits receive City services and this is a concern. Mr. Eversley said that when one of the schools went out for RFP, the applications that were for profit and would keep the building on the tax roll were given preference.

Council President McCarthy then said that the absentee landlord issue is an ongoing issue across the nation. Hartford had a program where the owner occupied properties are given a discount. Mr. Eversley said that while it does reduce the tax revenue but has many advantages to the homesteading since the owners are onsite. Discussion then followed about the details of this type of program. Mr. Nunn said that OPED should look into this type of program.

Council Member Curwen then said that there had been a request to the Administration to have a corporate surcharge for the commercial businesses for the City. Mr. Eversley said that this becomes contentious with the businesses. He listed a number of advantages but said that it needed to be considered carefully.

Council President McCarthy said that during the last re-evaluation there had been a lively discussion about a commercial surcharge. He said that the residents were over-taxed. The business community had promised to do a quarter million dollars worth of marketing for the City of Bridgeport if no surcharge was enacted. Nothing has happened. He added that this was evident in the Bluefish field, which has seen a drop in advertising in the outfield.

Mr. Eversley said that there had been a new effort by the BRBC to do marketing for Bridgeport and highlighting Bridgeport as a location with a beach, a zoo, an Arena and various other assets. The next meeting will be in the coming week. Mr. Nunn said that the Administration has made it clear to the business community that they have failed in their support of the City and attracting businesses to Bridgeport.

Mr. Sherwood then directed the Committee's attention to page 43-3, Land Use. Mr. Sherwood said that the department has many divisions. These sections are not fiscal, but are part of the OPED department.

The Committee then turned to 43-4 that has the Building Department Budget. Mr. Paajamen said that the building permit activity was very high, but that the projects were on a much smaller scale. Mr. Sherwood said that people are remodeling and bringing facilities up to code. There was a major drop in building permits in mid February, but since then the permits have moved back up to the average of 50 per month. Mr.

Sherwood said that the budget broke out the various permits into categories. Discussion then followed regarding the details of this and how violations are handled.

The Committee then moved to 46-2, the Zoning Department. Mr. Sherwood said that there were three unfunded positions in the department and four remaining positions. Discussion then followed about the process and how it could be made more efficient.

Council Member Baker asked about the break down on the Neighborhood Revitalizations funding. Mr. Sherwood said that he would be giving the Committee a breakout on that.

Council Member Colon asked what happened to the Kuzma building. Mr. Eversley reviewed the situation regarding the financing of that project.

Council Member Bonney then asked about number of developers who are required to incorporate or follow the ME ordinances. Mr. Eversley said that it is required and that it is monitored by a Contract Compliance Coordinator. Mr. Nunn then listed the members of the of Contract Committee. The City is looking to the Block Grant funding for an additional staff member.

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT MCCARTHY MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER COLON SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Service

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
MAY 1, 2009**

ATTENDANCE: Robert Curwen, Chair; Leticia Colon, Co-chair; Andre Baker
Thomas McCarthy, Council President

STAFF: Thomas Sherwood, OPM; Andy Nunn, CAO; Adam Wood,
Michael Feeney

CALL TO ORDER

Council Member Curwen called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

MAYOR'S OFFICE

Mr. Sherwood then directed everyone's attention to the section of the budget that covers the Mayor's Office.

Council President asked about the positions of Legislative Liaisons. Mr. Wood then reviewed the responsibilities of the legislation liaison position, including the fact that the staff member is allowed on the floor of the Senate and the House, while a lobbyist is not.

Council Member Baker pointed out that Mayor's Office did not have many cuts. Mr. Wood pointed out that the department took furloughs and pay cuts rather than laying off people because the staff members have families and children. One position, the Press Secretary, was eliminated in the Mayor's Office. Many of the responsibilities that were part of the Press Secretary have been moved over to the Legislative Liaison and one of the Legislative Liaison positions was eliminated. No salary increases were taken this year by the staff.

Council Member Baker asked about the department goals. Mr. Wood explained that many of the goals will remain the same because they will take a few years to implement. Mr. Wood then went on to review the Mayor's Priority Goals for the City, including increasing the minority contractors ratio, reduce the carbon footprint, and work with the redevelopment of Bridgeport's neighborhoods.

Council Member Baker asked about the impact of CityStat on the Mayor's priorities. Mr. Wood said that the staff had been able to analyze some of the information from CityStat to see which Districts the calls to the Mayor's Office were coming from and whether they were being addressed. Mr. Wood said that the Mayor's Office was pleased with the work

that CityStat had produced and was looking forward to having the program fully implementing.

Council Member Colon asked what would happen if a position that was funded by CDBG funding had the funding cut. Mr. Wood said that the City was looking at a way to supplement the funding. Council Member Colon said that there was a program that would place two part time people in the office to assist in basic clerical tasks. Mr. Wood said that there had been some issues in the past with non-bargaining non union members are doing the work of bargaining unit members.

CAO OFFICE

Mr. Sherwood directed everyone's attention to page 22-2, which covers the Chief Administrator's Office. He gave a brief overview of the three positions in that department. There were no changes in the CAO's.

Council Member Colon asked about the CityStat. Mr. Nunn said that the department reports to him.

Council Member Baker asked about the large figure for memberships. Mr. Sherwood explained that the CAO's Office has the membership for CCM and the National Organizations of Cities. Previously, these figures were with the debt service section. The CCM membership was the largest cost.

Council Member Baker then asked Mr. Nunn about his job responsibilities. He said that he was responsible for the daily running of the City. All the departments report to Mr. Nunn. Council Member Baker asked how many policies and procedures were implemented. Mr. Nunn said that one had been implemented, which had to do with the Minority Business contracts. He listed the

Council Member Baker asked why the "BPT" licenses were removed from the take home vehicles. Mr. Nunn said other than the Police vehicles, the vehicles all had the BPT tags. Council Member Baker asked why there was no insignia on the vehicles. Mr. Nunn said that this had originally been discussed, but he would check into what happened.

OTHERS

Council Member Curwen said that Mr. Timpanelli had requested to speak. He asked if the Council was considering a commercial surcharge. Council Member Baker expressed concerns about this.

Council Member Baker left the meeting at 7:03 p.m. A quorum was no longer present.

Mr. Timpanelli said that he was concerned about the discussion regarding a tax surcharge. He said that had a draft report and would give copies of this to the Council Members.

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT MCCARTHY MOVED TO ADJOURN. adjourn.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER COLON SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
SPECIAL MEETING
MAY 1, 2009**

ATTENDANCE: Robert Curwen, Chair; Leticia Colon, Co-chair; Andre Baker
Thomas McCarthy, Council President

STAFF: Thomas Sherwood, OPM; Andy Nunn, CAO; Adam Wood,
Michael Feeney

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Curwen called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m. He introduced the members of the Committee that were in attendance.

CAPITAL PLAN

Chairman Curwen announced that the first order of business would be the Capital Budget. Mr. Sherwood then reviewed the key points in the Capital Budget, including paving, and the infrastructure of the building. The Capital Plan comes to a total of four million dollars. Because of the cost of gas and asphalt last year, the paving was not done. Mr. Wood said that there are many areas that are major road concerns and these will be addressed.

Council Member Baker asked about the Steel Point development. Mr. Sherwood said that originally the project was included in case the City received some stimulus funding, but the Governor had not allocated the funds. Discussion followed about the allocation of the stimulus funding.

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT MCCARTHY MOVED TO AMEND THE CAPITAL PLAN TO THE ITEMS LISTED ON PAGES 1 & 2.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER COLON SECONDED.**

Discussion then followed about the Mayor's wish list documentation, which was attached to the Capital Plan.

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT MCCARTHY MOVED APPROVE THE CAPITAL PLAN AMENDED TO THE ITEMS LISTED ON PAGES 1 & 2.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER COLON SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED WITH THREE IN FAVOR (CURWEN, MCCARTHY AND COLON) AND ONE OPPOSED (BAKER).**

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT MCCARTHY MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER COLON SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
MAY 5, 2009**

ATTENDANCE: Robert Curwen, Chair; Leticia Colon, Howard Austin, Andre Baker, Susan Brannelly, Council President Thomas McCarthy, Amy Marie Vizzo-Paniccia

STAFF: Thomas Sherwood, OPM; Michael Feeney, Finance Director

OTHERS: Council Member Robert Walsh

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Curwen called the meeting to order at 6:15 p.m.

Chairman Curwen said that he had received two phone calls from Mr. Timpanelli regarding the document that he had submitted to the Committee on Friday. Mr. Timpanelli would like to come to the Committee and speak about the document. The document shows the effect that a 15% commercial surcharge would have on the business community. Mr. Feeney has been asked to provide the Committee with the impact of a 2% surcharge and other amounts up to 15%.

Currently, the City has a reduction in taxes because of the reevaluation. The Mayor's budget would result in 39 mill rate, which would be a reduction to the current 44 current mill rate.

There was a brief discussion regarding the scheduling of the Council Vote on the Operating Budget. A Special Meeting will be scheduled for Monday, May 11th at 7:00 p.m.

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

Chairman Curwen reminded everyone that it now takes 6.6 million to reduce the mill rate by one point.

Mr. Feeney and Mr. Sherwood joined the meeting at 6:33 p.m.

Chairman Curwen said that the final decisions from the Board of Appeals had not been sent down yet. He added that he had not received a break down in tenths of a mill either.

The discussion then moved to the Copy Account. Mr. Sherwood then gave Chairman Curwen a break out printout of the funds that had been deposited in the account and explained that the staff was working on allocating those deposits to the appropriate department.

Council Member Brannelly asked what the previous mill rate was and Mr. Sherwood replied that 5.38. Mr. Sherwood directed everyone's attention to page 23 of the budget binder, which indicates the growth, and the increase in the taxes. He added that page 15 lists the revenue shortfalls, such as permits and licenses and other sources.

Chairman Curwen asked what the status was with the Board of Assessment Appeal. Mr. Feeney said that they have a number of items to finish off. He said that the Board will typically allow the larger commercial appeals to go directly to the courts. Most of the residential appeals under a quarter of a million dollars will be handled by the Board.

Mr. Sherwood pointed out that the State had taken 2.7 in PILOTs from the City. That has already occurred but there is a possibility that an additional 2.7 in PILOTs will be taken in the future.

Mr. Feeney then reviewed the impact of the various mill rates reduced by tenths. The Committee then moved on to the list showing numerous parcel locations throughout the city with the 2007 and 2008 tax comparisons. Discussion followed.

Mr. Feeney then distributed copies of a list with all the various types of exempt real estate properties, such as federal, municipal, and cemeteries with the percentages between 2007 and 2008 assessments. He then reviewed a list of personnel jobs funded by grants with the Committee.

Council Member Baker then asked about the staffing in the Comptroller's Office. Mr. Sherwood directed the Committee's attention to page 3-2.

The Committee then moved to page 66-1, which covers the sale of City owned properties. Mr. Sherwood then reviewed the details of the information on the page with the Committee.

Mr. Feeney then gave an overview of the Tax Anticipation Notes (TAN) process and reminded everyone that this is approved by the Bond Consul and governed by State regulations. Mr. Feeney is looking for the 30 million to cover the month of July and an additional 30 million in January. At the each of each of those months, the tax revenue is available and he can pay back the amounts. In order not to require a TAN, the City would need about 30 million in the bank. Chairman Curwen said that he would schedule the meeting to vote on the TAN resolution.

Mr. Sherwood reminded everyone that the City had constructed new schools and now the principal payments were due. He directed everyone's attention to page 62-1 Debt Service. Discussion then followed on whether the bonds had been issued on the magnet schools and aquaculture school. Mr. Feeney said that while approval has been given to go out for bonding, the bonds had not been issued yet.

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

Mr. Sherwood then gave the Committee a brief summary of the State budget from the most recent reports.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked if the City could wait on building the next three schools. Mr. Sherwood said that these three schools has been grandfathered in at the present reimbursement rate and that if the City held off, then the reimbursement may be drastically reduced.

Chairman Curwen asked for the commercial breakdown. Mr. Feeney then distributed a three page document containing the legislation regarding commercial surcharges. He then reviewed the details and explained that if a vehicle is not registered, it is considered personal property.

The discussion then moved to the status of commercial properties. Mr. Feeney said that he did not believe that this would be new tax generation. Council President McCarthy said that it would be shifting the burden from the residential properties to the commercial properties.

The city is also mandated to have a study done after the first year of implementation and hold public hearings.

Mr. Feeney said that there were numerous questions that the City Attorney was working on. A 5% surcharge on commercial would equal 3 million dollars. A 10% surcharge would 6.1 million and 15% would be 9.1 million off of the assessed value of 6.1 million.

Chairman Curwen said that if the Committee could reduce the mill rate by an additional half mill, he felt it would give some tax relief to the residents. He asked Mr. Feeney to calculate the effect of a half mill reduction.

ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services.

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS
REGULAR MEETING
MAY 6, 2009**

ATTENDANCE: Robert Curwen, Chairman; Leticia Colon, Co-chair; Andre Baker, Susan Brannelly, AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia; Council President Thomas McCarthy

STAFF: Thomas Sherwood, OPM Director

OTHER: Council Member Robert Walsh

CALL TO ORDER

Council Member Curwen called the meeting to order at 6:25 p.m.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked about the Registrars of Voters. Mr. Sherwood said that the Registrars had not submitted a budget and the Mayor had made recommendations, which are listed on page 10-1. Mr. Sherwood reviewed the figures with the Committee. Discussion followed about the supplies and provisions of the machines and the associated with elections. It was agreed to reinstitute the \$64,000 to the budget. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia stated for the record that she had not spoken with anyone from that department.

The discussion then moved to page 12-5, the City Attorney's Department. Council Member Baker had several questions on the costs for the outside legal services. Mr. Sherwood gave Council Member Baker several illustrations of how the internal legal representative was saving funds. He explained that the Fire Department, the Police Department, and Public Works are the largest source of lawsuits against the City. Mr. Sherwood then said that he would compile a list of the various cases.

Council Member Walsh then requested that Committee transfer all the salaries out of the salaries and transfer it to Legal Services. This would privatize the department. Discussion then followed about this issue. Mr. Sherwood said that Atty. Anastasia was still a union member and that his title was determined by Civil Services.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia recommended that two assistants be cut from this department and more accountability be requested. Council President McCarthy said that the City had just hired two litigators and that these two employees have reduced the workload significantly.

Council Member Silva joined the meeting at 6:50 p.m.

Council Member Curwen said that the two newly hired lawyers had begun to process the case backlog. Mr. Sherwood said that there had been significant reductions in expenses due to this.

Council Member Brannelly asked if the City was able to quantify billable hours to analyze the department. She then suggested that this would make it easier to compare. Mr. Sherwood said that attorney's department usually has a client code in the phones and that helps with the tracking. The department is talking with IT about this.

Council President McCarthy said that when the City goes to outside counsel, the City pays premium. He added that union rules require that the part time attorneys would be the first laid off, but they are the best investment for the City because of their pay scale. He then reminded everyone of a very costly City case that the outside counsel had lost. Mr. Sherwood pointed out that the amount of contracts and other legal services that the City processes routinely through Purchasing.

Council Member Walsh said that the selection of the outside firm would be a bid process rather than a payback game. He then pointed out that the City has spent two years on Steel Point contract and wasted the money. He said that there was also a question of law versus policy and that too much time was spent on policy rather than researching the law. Discussion followed.

Council President McCarthy then pointed out that there had been major changes in the department. Mr. Sherwood then gave a brief overview of the recent changes and how this has impacted the legal cases and distribution of cases. Mr. Sherwood went on to explain that the Board of Education had issues also.

Council Member Baker said that he had asked for the analysis because he wanted to know how much various department OPED were using. Mr. Sherwood said that this type of plan was already underway. He then gave an overview of who the assigned attorneys were for which department. However, there are situations that need specialty attorneys.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked for a listing for the potential outstanding claims and labor.

Council Member Curwen said that he believed that tonight would finish up the laundry list and that on Friday, the Committee would clarify any outstanding issues. Council Member Silva then pointed out that the Mayor's Budget reduced the mill rate by 4 mill. Council Member Brannelly said that the Grand List had increased.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia then outlined her suggestions for shifting the staff to provide the departments that had lost the staffing. Discussion then followed.

Council Member Austin joined the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that she wanted to see all the leased copiers, printers and water coolers. Council President McCarthy said that Labor Relations pays for all their water.

Council Member Baker recommended that two positions be moved to Vital Statistics. He then reviewed the financial details on page 49-2 and reminded everyone that it was a revenue producing department.

Council Member Walsh then requested that everyone turn to page 43-2, OPED Admin Services. He said that there was nothing going on with Economic Development and that there would not be in the coming year. Therefore, Council Member Walsh was requesting that the development funding be defunded. Discussion then followed about the vacant positions. Mr. Sherwood explained that the vacant positions were frozen to close the budget gap.

Council Member Baker asked how the Council could reduce the number of take home vehicles. Mr. Sherwood explained that some were covered by contract. He reminded everyone that the Mayor had turned the assignment of Police Department take home vehicles to the Police Chief. The Police Chief then cut the number of his take home vehicles in half. Mr. Sherwood then reviewed the details of having a stipend for travel rather than having a City vehicle.

Mr. Sherwood then directed everyone's attention to page 25-2. Mr. Sherwood said that the Minority Contracting department was one position that had evolved out of the Community Policing. The CityStat department was created as a separate department. The CityStat position was previously the Assistant CAO position. Council Member Curwen asked that the CityStat department be moved back into the CAO department. Discussion then followed about this change and moving 3-1-1 back into the CAO department.

The discussion then moved to whether or not the CityStat position should continue to be funded. Council Member Brannelly said the program was only a year old. She added that she had a problem where the head of the department claims that the other department heads are withholding information. She pointed out that the City is a 500 million dollar corporation and this issue needs to be managed appropriately. Council Member Brannelly said that she believed that CityStat would bring inefficiencies to light.

Council Member Silva pointed out that CityStat had already saved the City some \$200,000 by discontinuing 2-1-1. Council Member Silva then reviewed the details of the situation and said that the Council controls the budget. He added that the City needs the program and that the director had requested call takers so that the information can be analyzed. The discussion then became quite heated. Council Member Colon said that she wished to clarify her earlier statement in that the CityStat director was frustrated because there were too many needs and not enough cooperation.

Council Member Silva left the meeting at 8:45 p.m.

The discussion then moved to what the formatting of the budget would be with the changes.

Council Member Curwen asked if there were others who wished to have the leased machines consolidated. He said that doing this might give those who have trouble focusing on work more excuses to leave their desk. Mr. Sherwood said that the City was working towards reducing the amount of paper and transmitting documents electronically.

Council Member Baker left the meeting at 8:50 p.m.

Council Member Curwen said that bulk printing was done by the Print Shop. Council Member Brannelly said that her company had done this and warned the Committee members about the lease terms. She said that the City might be able to head in the direction of centralized printing, but that this might not be able to be done right away.

The discussion then moved to page 47-2, the Health and Human Services Department. The issue of sanitary inspectors being on call at night and on the week-ends was mentioned. The Committee then turned to page 51-2 and discussed unfunding a sanitarian. The Committee decided not to change the staffing.

The staffing for the East Side Senior Center then was mentioned. Mr. Sherwood then explained that the Senior Center had grant funding involved and this made the situation somewhat complicated.

Council President McCarthy cautioned the Committee about adding some of the positions back could upset the reconciliation of the budget shortfall. Mr. Sherwood then pointed out regarding page 35-2, that in order to get the two year 0% increases from the unions, the trade off was no lay offs.

The discussion then moved to IT and adding back two staff members. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that she felt it would be important have more staff there to moved the

City technology forward. It was decided that one staff member would be moved from OPED to IT.

Council Member Curwen then mentioned that the Tax Assessor's and Tax Collector's needed more staffing. Council Member McCarthy then said that he felt that it would be best to have some "floater" positions in Human Resources. This was agreeable to all.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia then suggested that there was duplication in the Mayor's Office and recommended that an assistant and an aide be cut. Council President McCarthy said that he felt that the staffing in the Office should be left alone. Discussion followed.

Council Member Curwen reviewed the fact that the Registrar of Voters needed to have funding. The discussion then moved to the City Attorney's Office. Council President suggested that Legal Services on page 12-5, be reduced to zero and the funding transferred to the Registrar of Voters.

The discussion then moved to OPED. Mr. Sherwood then reviewed the details of the staffing shifts that will be implemented. Discussion then followed on the various positions and whether they should be eliminated.

Mr. Sherwood then reviewed the 14% would have a decrease of \$139.00 in their taxes. 19,000 of property owners would have a decrease.

From those who would get a credit to those who would get a credit through those who would have a \$500 tax increase, 18,500 residents would fall in this category. That is 57% of the property owners. Council Member Walsh then asked for the specific details for the break out which Mr. Sherwood gave him.

Regarding the discussion on vehicle taxes at the previous meeting, Mr. Sherwood said that the cars were estimated to be at \$80.00, but the actual change would be a \$38.00 per car.

Council Member Curwen said that Mr. Sherwood had given the Council the Mayor's recommended budget. Mr. Sherwood then reviewed some minor adjustment that could be made by adjusting the Tax Collection Rate upward by .2 and also revising the Board of Assessment Appeals downward. This might reduce the mill rate slightly.

Council Member Curwen pointed out that the State was considering two scenarios that would strongly impact the City. He then encouraged everyone to consider a surcharge on businesses not to exceed 2.5%. This will shift the tax burden to the businesses. He said that he would never even consider 5% surcharge never mind a 15% surcharge. The Committee will discuss this at tomorrow's meeting.

Council Member Walsh left the meeting at 10:17 p.m.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia had some detailed questions about the reduction the Board of Appeals and increasing the .2 increase in the Tax Collection projection.

She also stated that she was not in favor of a surcharge. Council Member Curwen said that if the mill rate was reduced from 39.08 as proposed in the Mayor's Budget to below 38.99 the business surcharge would be a wash for the businesses because that is what they would be paying if the Mayor's budget passed.

Council Member Austin left the meeting at 10:20 p.m.

Council Member Curwen asked for a tax delinquent list for the last two years. Mr. Sherwood said that he would get that for the Committee.

Council Member Colon then asked for details regarding Steel Point. Mr. Sherwood then directed everyone's attention to page 12. On page 18, he reviewed the new tax category with everyone.

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MCCARTHY MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER COLON 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 AND APPROPRIATIONS
REGULAR MEETING
MAY 7, 2009**

ATTENDANCE: Robert Curwen, Chair; Leticia Colon, Co-chair; Andre Baker, Howard Austin, Susan Brannelly, Daniel Martinez, AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia

OTHERS: Council President Thomas McCarthy; Thomas Sherwood, OPM; Michael Feeney, Finance Director

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Curwen called the meeting to order at 6:25 p.m. and introduced all those who were present.

Mr. Sherwood distributed copies of the updated General Fund Budget to the Committee members. He stated that he was in the process of analyzing the mill rate in regard to the expected Board of Assessment Appeals decisions.

The Mayor's proposed budget resulted in a 39.085% mill rate for the City and with the adjustments made by the Committee, the mill rate would drop to 38.973%.

CITY COUNCIL VOTE NUMBER 1 – 93-08a

Budget & Appropriations Committee Vote of General Fund Revenue Increases

Mr. Sherwood then read the following into the record:

LEGISLATIVE INTENT REVENUE INCREASES

310-1800-R375 The legislative intent of this increased revenue item is to recognize this revenue as a separate source from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 and NOT treated as State of Connecticut ECS funding. It is yet to be determined by the legislature if this funding can be used as proposed by the Governor in her proposed budget. To date, no direction has been received as to the treatment, in any, of how municipalities are to budget for these funds.

GENERAL FUND DECREASES

Pursuant to the City Charter, the City Council Budget & Appropriations Committee reports its changes to the Council as a whole in the form of budget amendment resolution.

The City Council has the power to reduce or delete any item in the budget recommended by the Mayor by a majority vote of the council members present and voting.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BAKER MOVED TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING AGENDA ITEM:**

CITY COUNCIL VOTE NUMBER 1 – 93-08A BUDGET & APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE VOTE OF GENERAL FUND REVENUE INCREASES:

THAT THERE MAY BE ADJUSTMENTS TO THE MAYOR’S RECOMMENDED BUDGET FOR GENERAL FUND PURPOSES AS DETAILED BY THE CITY COUNCIL’S BUDGET & APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE.

AGY	ORG	APPROP	DESCRIPTION	MAYOR PROPOSED	COUNCIL ADOPTED	CHANGE
REVENUES						
310	1800	R375	State Fiscal Stabilization Fund		23,548,036	23,548,036
Total Revenue Increases					\$23,548,036	\$23,548,036

**** COUNCIL MEMBER AUSTIN SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

CITY COUNCIL VOTE NUMBER 2 – 93-08b Budget & Appropriations Committee Vote of General Fund Revenue Decreases

Mr. Sherwood then read the following into the record:

LEGISLATIVE INTENT REVENUE DECREASES

310-1800-R020 The legislative intent of reducing this revenue item is to recognize that these funds are actually from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 at that treating them as proposed by the Governor in her proposed budget as ECS aid may be improper as to the intended purpose for federal compliance. Until the legislature concludes its budget process and the City receives clear direction in writing on these funds, the City Council will recognize these as separate funds and will adjust the Board of Education’s Appropriation and establish a restricted use account in the budget. (see appropriation increases).

001-2010-R193 From the actions to decrease appropriations, the current tax need is reduced by \$1,014,838.

Mr. Sherwood explained to the Committee that the resolution contains the same language as the Town of Stratford and other municipalities are using at this time.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER COLON MOVED TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING AGENDA ITEM:**

CITY COUNCIL VOTE NUMBER 2 – 93-08B BUDGET & APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE VOTE OF GENERAL FUND REVENUE DECREASES

THAT THERE MAY BE ADJUSTMENTS TO THE MAYOR’S RECOMMENDED BUDGET FOR GENERAL FUND PURPOSES AS DETAILED BY THE CITY COUNCIL’S BUDGET & APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE.

AGY	ORG	APPROP	DESCRIPTION	MAYOR PROPOSED	COUNCIL ADOPTED	CHANGE
REVENUES						
310	1800	R020	Education Cost Sharing	157,344,801	133,796,765	-23,548,036
001	2010	R193	Current Taxes: Real Estate	258,613,671	257,598,833	-1,014,838
Total Revenue Increases				\$415,958,472	\$391,395,598	-\$24,562,874

**** COUNCIL MEMBER AUSTIN SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

CITY COUNCIL VOTE NUMBER 3 – 93-08c

Budget & Appropriations Committee Vote of General Fund Appropriation Increases

Mr. Sherwood then read the following into the record:

LEGISLATIVE INTENT APPROPRIATION INCREASES

004-1050-11050PS The legislative intent is to increase the part-time seasonal appropriation for the primary and general election needs in the Registrar of Voters Office.

005-1055-11055PS The legislative intent is to provide increase the appropriation for an additional staff member, transferred from Public Facilities Administration.

005-1055-11055EX The legislative intent is to provide appropriation increase for advertising.

009-1075-11075FB The legislative intent is to increase the personnel budget for 2 Clerk A floater positions.

015-1106-11106PS, 015-1106-11106FB, 015-1106-11106EX, 015-1106-11106SS

The legislative intent is move the Citistat department (less the value of one Assistant Special Project Manager) proposed by the Mayor’s budget back under the CAO’s budget.

016-1108-11108PS The legislative intent is to increase personal appropriation to move the Project Manager, OPED to the IT budget.

017-1107-11107PS The legislative intent is to increase the personal appropriation for the unfunded position in the Citistat budget and provide for bi-lingual outreach and coordination.

310-1825-11825PS The legislative intent is reserve the stimulus funds until the Legislature concludes the state budget process and the City receives written direction on use of these funds.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BAKER MOVED TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING AGENDA ITEM:**

CITY COUNCIL VOTE NUMBER 3 – 93-08c BUDGET & APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE VOTE OF GENERAL FUND APPROPRIATION INCREASES

THAT THERE MAY BE ADJUSTMENTS TO THE MAYOR’S RECOMMENDED BUDGET FOR GENERAL FUND PURPOSES AS DETAILED BY THE CITY COUNCIL BUDGET & APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE.

AGY	ORG	APPROP	DESCRIPTION	MAYOR PROPOSED	COUNCIL ADOPTED	CHANGE
APPROPRIATIONS						
004	1050	11050PS	Registrar of Voters Personal Services	334,996	398,651	-63,655
005	1055	11055PS	City Clerk Personal Services	194,842	227,616	-32,774
005	1055	41055EX	City Clerk Operational Expenses	23,401	27,401	-4,000
009	1075	11075PS	Benefits Personal Services	410,084	468,734	-58,650
015	1106	11106PS	CAO Personal Services	264,751	491,007	-226,256
015	1106	31106FB	CAO Fringe Benefits	69,851	140,420	-70,569
015	1106	41106EX	CAO Operational Expenses	128,773	143,845	-15,072
015	1106	61106SS	CAO Special Services	100,045	100,837	-792
016	1108	11108PS	ITS Personal Services	789,723	873,576	-83,853
017	1107	11107PS	MBE Personal Services	83,853	128,401	-44,548
335	1825	11825PS	BOE Dedicated Personal Services		23,548,036	-23,548,036
Total Appropriation Increases				\$2,400,319	\$26,548,524	-\$24,148,205

**** COUNCIL MEMBER AUSTIN SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED WITH FOUR IN FAVOR (AUSTIN, BAKER, COLON, AND BRANNELLY) AND TWO OPPOSED (VIZZO-PANICCIA AND MARTINEZ).**

CITY COUNCIL VOTE NUMBER 4 – 93-08d Budget & Appropriations Committee Vote of General Fund Appropriation Decreases

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

Mr. Sherwood then read the following into the record:

LEGISLATIVE INTENT APPROPRIATION DECREASES

006-1060-11060SS The legislative intent is to reduce the outside Legal Service appropriation and use to fund the seasonals needed in the Registrar of Voters.

030-1215-11215PS The legislative intent is to reduce one Clerical Assistant and move the funding and position to the City Clerk's Office.

018-1109-11109PS, 018-1109-31109FB, 018-1109-41109EX, 018-1109-61109SS

The legislative intent is move the Citistat department (less the value of one Assistant Special Project Manager) proposed by the Mayor's budget back under the CAO's budget.

021-1250-11250PS The legislative intent is to include a value for the attrition of five officers.

022-1240-11240PS The legislative intent is to include a value for the attrition of five firefighters.

040-1165-11165PS The legislative intent is to unfund the Director of LUCR which is moving to a new position and to transfer the Project Manager, OPED to the ITS Department.

130-1150-51150RC The legislative intent is to reduce the required reserve and still maintain the contingency account.

310-1800-11800PS The legislative intent is to reduce the Board of Education proposed appropriation until the legislative process concludes and we receive written direction on use of federal stimulus funds

Council Member Brannelly stated that she still had strong feelings about the Citistat staff being reduced. Mr. Sherwood explained that the position was still there, but the City would have to wait to see if the former employee could be rehired.

Council Member Baker had some questions about Board of Assessment Appeals. Mr. Feeney explained that he was still waiting for the final figures. Mr. Sherwood reviewed the decision process for the Board of Assessment Appeals and reminded all the Committee members that the property holder is required to pay 90% of the tax while the decision is pending. Those funds go into the current tax account. Property owners who

have taxes in arrears and make payments have the funds are deducted from the arrears tax base.

Council Member Baker then asked about the change in the collection rate. Mr. Sherwood then reviewed the information and explained that the information was based on two years of actual collection and the current collection rate. This changes the collection rate from 96.18% to 96.38%.

Council Member Baker then asked about the situation in Vital Statistics and their chronic staff shortage. Mr. Sherwood reviewed how the floating staff positions would be utilized to offset this shortage.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER AUSTIN MOVED TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING AGENDA ITEM:**

CITY COUNCIL VOTE NUMBER 4 – 93-08D BUDGET & APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE VOTE OF GENERAL FUND APPROPRIATION DECREASES

THAT THERE MAY BE ADJUSTMENTS TO THE MAYOR’S RECOMMENDED BUDGET FOR GENERAL FUND PURPOSES AS DETAILED BY THE CITY COUNCIL BUDGET & APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE.

AGY	ORG	APPROP	DESCRIPTION	MAYOR PROPOSED	COUNCIL ADOPTED	CHANGE
<u>APPROPRIATIONS</u>						
006	1060	61060SS	City Attorney Special Services	\$575,800	\$512,145	\$63,655
030	1215	11215PS	Public Facilities Personal Services	\$1,145,821	\$1,113,047	\$32,774
018	1109	11109PS	Citistat Personal Services	\$270,804		\$270,804
018	1109	31109FB	Citistat Fringe Benefits	\$70,569		\$70,569
018	1109	41109EX	Citistat Operational Expenses	\$15,072		\$15,072
018	1109	61109SS	Citistat Special Services	\$792		\$792
021	1250	11250PS	Police Personal Services	\$27,420,462	\$27,170,462	\$250,000
022	1240	11240PS	Fire Personal Services	\$17,547,943	\$17,297,943	\$250,000
040	1165	11165PS	OPED Personal Services	\$1,440,861	\$1,279,520	\$161,341
130	1150	51150RC	Finance Reserve/Contingency	\$1,321,682	\$821,682	\$500,000
310	1800	11800PS	School Personal Services	\$94,113,118	\$70,565,082	\$23,548,036
Total Appropriation Decreases				\$143,922,924	\$118,759,881	\$25,163,043

**** COUNCIL MEMBER COLON SECONDED.
 ** THE MOTION PASSED WITH FOUR IN FAVOR (AUSTIN, BAKER, COLON, AND BRANNELLY) AND TWO OPPOSED (VIZZO-PANICCIA AND MARTINEZ).**

**CITY COUNCIL VOTE NUMBER 5 – 93-08e Budget & Appropriations
Committee Vote of General Fund Budget**

Mr. Sherwood then reviewed the total changes and final figures with the Committee along with how this would reduce the mill rate.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER COLON MOVED TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING AGENDA ITEM:**

**CITY COUNCIL VOTE NUMBER 5 – 93-08E BUDGET & APPROPRIATIONS
COMMITTEE VOTE OF GENERAL FUND BUDGET**

OVERALL TOTAL

DESCRIPTION	MAYOR PROPOSED	COUNCIL ADOPTED INCREASES	COUNCIL ADOPTED DECREASES	COUNCIL ADOPTED BUDGET
REVENUES				
REVENUE ADJUSTMENTS	\$490,486,497	\$23,548,036	-\$24,562,874	\$489,471,659
TOTAL COUNCIL ADOPTED REVENUES				\$489,471,659
APPROPRIATIONS				
APPROPRIATION ADJUSTMENTS	\$490,486,497	-\$24,148,205	\$25,163,043	\$489,471,659
TOTAL COUNCIL ADOPTED APPROPRIATIONS				\$489,471,659
NET BUDGET SURPLUS / (SHORTAGE)		-600,169	600,169	

**** COUNCIL MEMBER COLON SECONDED.
** THE MOTION PASSED WITH FOUR IN FAVOR (AUSTIN, BAKER, COLON, AND BRANNELLY) AND TWO OPPOSED (VIZZO-PANICCIA AND MARTINEZ).**

Chairman Curwen then announced that there would be a special meeting on Monday at 6:30 p.m. to vote on the TANS (Tax Anticipation Notes) issue followed by a Special Meeting of the City Council at 7:00 p.m. for the final vote on the budget.

Chairman Curwen said that he and Council President McCarthy had spoken with the CAO and Mr. Nunn about the problems and issues with various departments. He added that they had also mentioned the responsibility shifting from the Administration to the Council regarding unfunding positions. He suggested that the Budget and Appropriations Committee collectively write a letter to the Administration regarding these issues.

Council Member Colon said that she felt that the proposed budget showed the Council's weakness and strengths. She said that she had received many calls from seniors begging her not to raise the taxes because that would mean they would lose their homes.

Council President McCarthy thanked everyone for their input and said that a number of tough decisions had been made. He also thanked the staff for all their hard work.

Chairman Curwen thanked Mr. Feeney for his level of cooperation and said that Mr. Sherwood was an amazing asset to the City.

Council Member Martinez also thanked everyone for their hard work on this budget.

Mr. Sherwood commented that he had been through this process 23 times and this was the first time that a mayor had proposed a budget that lowered taxes. He also reminded everyone that the City had reduced the staff over the years. Mr. Sherwood also said that he had received a call from State Senator Genuario asking how the City managed to settle 10 out of 11 contracts with zero increases.

Chairman Curwen said that he had requested Mr. Feeney to investigate the commercial surcharge concept and said that this would need to be considered carefully. He added that there had been statements made that the City was going to impose a 15% surcharge and that this Committee had never considered that percentage at all. He added that the only percentages that had been discussed were up to 4%, which would equate to approximately \$65.00 per business per year. He added that this was not included in the budget.

ADJOURNMENT

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

**** COUNCIL MEMBER COLON SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services

City of Bridgeport
Budget and Appropriations
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May 7, 2009
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**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
MAY 11, 2009**

ATTENDANCE: Robert Curwen, Chair; Andre Baker, Susan Brannelly, Howard Austin, AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia

OTHERS: Council Member Carlos Silva, Council President Thomas McCarthy, Michael Feeney, Finance Director

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Curwen called the meeting to order at 6:41 p.m. and proceeded to introduce everyone present.

Approval of Committee Minutes of April 7, 2009; April 8, 2009; April 9, 2009; April 13, 2009; April 14, 2009; April 16, 2009; April 24, 2009; April 25, 2009; April 27, 2009; April 28, 2009; April 29, 2009 (Public Hearing); April 30, 2009; May 1, 2009 (Special & Regular); May 5, 2009.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BAKER MOVED TO CONSOLIDATE THE VOTES ON ALL OF THE MINUTES LISTED FROM APRIL 7, 2009 THROUGH MAY 5, 2009 INTO ONE VOTE.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER AUSTIN SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BAKER MOVED TO APPROVE THE COMMITTEE MINUTES OF APRIL 7, 2009; APRIL 8, 2009; APRIL 9, 2009; APRIL 13, 2009; APRIL 14, 2009; APRIL 16, 2009; APRIL 24, 2009; APRIL 25, 2009; APRIL 27, 2009; APRIL 28, 2009; APRIL 29, 2009 (PUBLIC HEARING); APRIL 30, 2009; MAY 1, 2009 (SPECIAL & REGULAR); MAY 5, 2009.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER AUSTIN SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

97-08 Proposed Resolution to enact a moratorium on the exemption of property taxes on building and land in the City of Bridgeport.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BAKER MOVED TO table AGENDA ITEM 97-08 PROPOSED RESOLUTION TO ENACT A MORATORIUM ON THE EXEMPTION OF PROPERTY TAXES ON BUILDING AND LAND IN THE CITY OF BRIDGEPORT UNTIL FURTHER INFORMATION IS PROVIDE BY THE CITY ATTORNEY.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER AUSTIN SECONDED.**
**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

98-08 Approval of General Obligation Tax Anticipation Notes - To Pay Current Expenses and Obligations of the City.

Mr. Feeney then said that this issue had been discussed at the last meeting, and that the easiest way to illustrate the cash flow was to chart a graph. He then distributed a Cash Flow Chart from 2009-2010 for the TANS. This is a snapshot of how the money flows through the City through the year. He explained that on July 1st, the city will have a cash shortfall and also has a debt service payment to make. He then reviewed the two major dips, which occur in June/July and in December thru February, when the taxes are due. The cash peak in May is when the ECS funding arrives. Mr. Feeney then reviewed when the TANS would be repaid. He also explained that there are GANS (Grant Anticipation Notes) that can be issued, which is basically borrowing against the grant funding that will be coming in. The last TANS note had an interest rate of about 2.2%. The GANS interest rate was about 2.9%, but Mr. Feeney reminded everyone that a year has passed since they were last issued. He said that the City tries to issue checks to vendors within 30 days.

Council Member Baker asked how long Mr. Feeney anticipated using TANS. Mr. Feeney said that until the Fund Balance was at sixty million, the City would either have to issue TANS or raise taxes.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 98-08 APPROVAL OF GENERAL OBLIGATION TAX ANTICIPATION NOTES - TO PAY CURRENT EXPENSES AND OBLIGATIONS OF THE CITY.**
**** COUNCIL MEMBER AUSTIN SECONDED.**
**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Chairman Curwen requested that this be included on the consent calendar.

ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted
Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services

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Budget and Appropriations Committee
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**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
JUNE 8, 2009**

ATTENDANCE: Robert Curwen, Chair; Leticia Colon, Co-chair; Susan Brannelly,
Andre Baker

OTHER: Ann Kelly Lenz, Tax Collector, Council Member Robert Walsh

CALL TO ORDER

Council Member Curwen called the meeting to order at 6:40 p.m.

AGENDA

Approval of Committee Minutes of May 6, 2009.

Approval of Committee Minutes of May 7, 2009.

Approval of Committee Minutes of May 11, 2009.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BAKER MOVED TO APPROVE THE COMMITTEE MINUTES FOR MAY 6, 2009, MAY 7, 2009 AND MAY 11, 2009.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER COLON SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE COMMITTEE MINUTES FOR MAY 6, 2009, MAY 7, 2009 AND MAY 11, 2009 AS SUBMITTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

27-08 Resolution to formally establish fees associated with licensing and permits prescribed for the production of motion pictures.

Council Member Curwen stated that Atty. Anastasi was not present to present this resolution.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BAKER MOVED TO TABLE AGENDA ITEM 27-08 RESOLUTIONS TO FORMALLY ESTABLISH FEES ASSOCIATED WITH LICENSING AND PERMITS PRESCRIBED FOR THE PRODUCTION OF MOTION PICTURES.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER COLON SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

97-08 Proposed Resolution to enact a moratorium on the exemption of property taxes on building and land in the City of Bridgeport.

Council Member Curwen said that he had received a verbal opinion from the City Attorney. He said that he may ask the Committee to make a judgment call in the future about curtailing the number of non-profits in the City. Currently the City has 35% of the properties in the City as non-profit. If the areas that are brownfields are added, it is well above 45% of the properties that have been moved off the tax rolls.

Council Member Curwen said that Attorney Anastasi had said that the resolution was too broad in scope and that it would open the City up to litigation by the non-profits. He said that until a written opinion is issued this item should be tabled.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY MOVED TO TABLE AGENDA ITEM 97-08 PROPOSED RESOLUTION TO ENACT A MORATORIUM ON THE EXEMPTION OF PROPERTY TAXES ON BUILDING AND LAND IN THE CITY OF BRIDGEPORT.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER COLON SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

119-08 Municipal Suspense Tax Book .

Ms. Kelly Lenz came forward and said that pursuant to State Statute 12-165, she can not collect on those who are deceased or those who are in bankruptcy. Due to this, these uncollected amounts are included in the overall tax amount and cloud the actual amount of taxes that would be collected. If it is put into suspense, then when the case clears probate, the City could receive some of the funds. Ms. Kelly-Lenz said that other towns put the entire year of collections into suspense, but that she would prefer to have to have documentation regarding the prior years owed and still outstanding along with each individual case.

Council Member Baker asked if it could be personal property and vehicles, but not real estate. Ms. Kelly Lenz said that this was so.

Council Member Walsh joined the meeting at 6:48 p.m.

Ms. Kelly Lenz said that when someone has declared bankruptcy, then the City would most likely never collect, but at least the records would be clear that the amount was not collectable. In regards to probate, if the estate owes taxes, the papers are filed as a claim for the City in the event that funds are discovered for the estate. She said that currently, the total amount of these uncollectible debts was \$24,000.

Council Member Curwen said that it was establishing a municipal tax book but wished to know who would be responsible for deciding what would go into the book. Ms. Kelly Lenz said that the auditors check the book and that she would only be adding the cases where there was documentation, such as a death certificate or a declaration of bankruptcy to the list. The suspended cases must remain on the book for fifteen years.

Council Member Colon asked about abandoned properties. Ms. Kelly Lenz then reviewed the process and reminded Council Member Colon that the real estate taxes could not be put into suspension. The City could sell a piece of real estate, which is a physical asset. The starting auction price on a piece of real estate property with a tax lien would be the amount of the taxes owed to the City.

Council Member Brannelly asked when the cases would be filed. Ms. Kelly Lenz said that it would be done in June of each year. Council Member Brannelly asked how the other bad debts were handled. Ms. Kelly Lenz explained that the City had just hired a new collection agency and they were working on tracing the various debtors.

****COUNCIL MEMBER BAKER MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM
119-08 MUNICIPAL SUSPENSE TAX BOOK
** COUNCIL MEMBER COLON SECONDED.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Council Member Curwen requested that this item be included on the consent calendar.

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BAKER MOVED TO ADJOURN.
** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY SECONDED.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services

City of Bridgeport
Budget and Appropriations Committee
Regular Meeting
June 8, 2009
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CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
JOINT COMMITTEE ON BUDGET AND MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS
OCTOBER 26, 2009

ATTENDANCE: AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia Co-Chair; Leticia Colon, Co-Chair;
Thomas McCarthy; Denese Taylor-Moye, Robert Curwen,
Richard Paoletto, Susan Brannelly

OTHER Elaine Carvalho, City of Bridgeport Tax Assessor's Office

Call to Order

Ms. Colon called the meeting to order at 5:40 p.m. and introduced the committee members in attendance as listed above.

Agenda Item

150-08 Petition from Mr. Manuel G. Jerez & Ms. Maria Jerez re: Tax Abatement for Property Location: 427 Hollister Avenue # 429.

Ms. Lyons introduced Ms. Carvalho, Acting Tax Assessor from the City of Bridgeport, who gave a brief background on the item and stated that the property was purchased in December 2008 and the owners are not residents of Bridgeport, but reside in New York. She added that the property was rehabbed and purchased as investment with an assessed value of \$87,720 and total delinquent and current taxes of \$3,398.29

Mr. Paoletto asked why the item was brought before the committee, and Ms. Vizzo-Paniccia responded that it was from the City Clerk's office. Mr. Paoletto restated the question, as who submitted the petition to the committee, and Ms. Colon answered the homeowner is filing the tax abatement under CT State Statute Section 12.124 as unable to pay.

Ms. Colon stated that the property owner was present and requested Mr. Jerez to approach the committee to answer questions. Mr. Jerez requested an interpreter, and Ms. Colon answered that she would translate Spanish for him. Mr. Paoletto asked for a description of the house and if the house is rented, and Ms. Carvalho answered that it is a two-family house that is rented on one side.

Mr. McCarthy asked how financial need is determined for a CT property when the homeowner resides in New York, and Mr. Paoletto restated that this is nor a normal petition. Mr. McCarthy suggested that the book of statutes be referred to, and suggested a recess so that he could obtain the CT book of statutes.

- ** MR. PAOLETTO MOTIONED TO TAKE A TEN-MINUTE RECESS IN ORDER TO OBTAIN THE CT BOOK OF STATE STATUTES.**
- ** MS. BRANNELLY SECONDED.**
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting recessed at 5:50 p.m.

- ** MR. CURWEN MOTIONED TO RECONVENE FROM THE RECESS AND RE-ENTER PUBLIC SESSION**
- ** MS. BRANNELLY SECONDED.**
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting returned back into public session at 5:55 p.m.

Mr. McCarthy read Section 12.124 of the CT State Statutes regarding the definition of tax abatement requirements and unable to pay. Mr. Curwen asked Mr. Jerez if they had purchased the property as an investment and for the reasons why they were not residing at the property. Mr. Jerez stated through Ms. Colon's translation that they had bought the house as an investment last year before the poor economy, and they had looked into living at the property but due to the current economy had decided to live in New York. Mr. Paoletto asked how much the rental income was, and what they were doing with the rental income and why they were not renting the other part of the house. Ms. Carvalho stated that the rental income was approximately \$1,168.00 per month, and Mr. Jerez answered that this was the only family income and they were unable to find a renter for the other half of the unit.

Mr. Paoletto stated that it was an unfortunate situation, however all too common that a property owner is unable to pay taxes; but that due to financial circumstances of the City property investors must comply with the tax laws and financial requirements of property ownership. He added that it would be unfair to the general public and other tax payers and home owners to approve such a petition, and stated he would recommend denial of the item.

- ** MR. PAOLETTO MOTIONED TO DENY ITEM 150-08 PETITION FROM MR. MANUEL G. JEREZ & MS. MARIA JEREZ RE: TAX ABATEMENT FOR PROPERTY LOCATION: 427 HOLLISTER AVE# 429.**
- ** MS. TAYLOR-MOYE SECONDED.**
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

- ** MR. PAOLETTO MOTIONED TO INCLUDE THE DENIAL OF THE ABOVE ITEM AS PART OF THE AGENDA AND MINUTES OF THE NEXT MEETING FOR THE RECORD.**
- ** MS. TAYLOR-MOYE SECONDED.**
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

ADJOURNMENT

- ** MR. CURWEN MOTIONED TO ADJOURN.**
- ** MS. BRANNELLY SECONDED.**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 6:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn Knox
Telesco Secretarial Services