

**COMMITTEE on BUDGET and APPROPRIATIONS
CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
DECEMBER 13, 2004**

ATTENDANCE: Council members: Curwen, Mojica, Webb, Silva, Freer

ABSENT: Council members: McCarthy and Walsh

OTHERS PRESENT: Council members: Andres Ayala, Mulligan, Pivrotto

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

243-03 Funding Allocation request Special Officer-City Hall

It was stated that this item has been a lingering issue concerning Special Officers and the city has no intention to change the modus operandi in looking at funding security officers; because there is no specification to fund them.

Council member Curwen agreed there were no funds identified for that position. He asked for a motion to table the matter.

Council member Mojica said this issue had been mulled over for a while, but there were no funds found for the position. He said that perhaps in the year 2005 there may be, but he felt there was no point going back and forth on the matter when there are no funds available.

Council member Webb said that since the matter was on the agenda; he wanted to speak to the issue of there not being any funds for street lights. And now, they're being told there are no funds for a special officer either. However, he mentioned that city officials in the administration have received raises, so he felt these issues went hand in hand.

The response was that as far as the raises go, this was an issue that was brought up in Mr. Cummings newspaper article, that one raise was passed by ordinance by the City Council, but it wasn't for this year. It was further stated that the 2% raises were given out before the ordinance and it was not done in this fiscal year. It was repeated that the administration does not want to fund a security guard in one building, without considering doing it for all buildings. Councilmember Webb reiterated that they found money for raises though.

It was further explained that the Special Officer position had been vacant for a long time, because the officer took a job in the library and filled the position of another person. But two years ago, the position was eliminated and for the last two years, they have had a police officer present in City Hall, but then that post was eliminated. Then two people were put in place to meet and greet people.

Councilmember Webb questioned where funds were for lights, specifically in his district. Councilmember Andres Ayala said that during the Public Safety Committee meeting last week, the issue came up about the lighting policy in the city. There is a city issue of paying out large sums of money to United Illuminating. He further stated that Councilmember Webb put in two resolutions for lighting in his district, but again, there is the matter of meeting the obligation to UI. However, there is a legitimate need for lighting in Councilmember Webb's district, so there is a question whether the city should develop a standard policy on lighting or keep the policy the way it is, by means of submitting a resolution, but they need to determine where the budget item should go.

It was asked if there was a list of what was approved, but not installed. Councilmember Andres Ayala said he wasn't sure. He explained that normally, an order is put in for lighting and United Illuminating follows up with the installation.

Councilmember Curwen asked if new additional lights were being proposed. Councilmember Webb said there were supposed to be six (6) lights proposed around Connecticut Avenue back down to Stratford Avenue where new sidewalks were put in.

Councilmember Curwen asked if the lights were to be installed when the gateway went in. Councilmember Andres Ayala said that was a state project in 1995, but he wasn't sure why it was never done.

Councilmember Andres Ayala stated there was a discussion regarding 25 to 30 lights that need to go up, but he cautioned that if they agreed to put lights up, they will eventually have a bill to pay.

**** COUNCILMEMBER FREER MOVED TO DENY THE RESOLUTION FOR A SPECIAL OFFICER**

Councilmember Pivrotto mirrored Councilmember Webb's comment regarding the necessity of lights for public safety. She expressed however that they never had a security officer in the building she worked in. She mentioned that City Hall was close enough to the police station should something happen.

**** COUNCILMEMBER MOJICA SECONDED**

Councilmember Mojica questioned if United Illuminating would have a list of the lights that went in.

Councilmember Mulligan said the matter was taken up at the Public Safety meeting and it was stated that there were no monies in the budget for them.

Councilmember Andres Ayala asked the committee to consider tabling the matter in committee, instead of denying it. He pointed out that it may not be the best message to send to the public. Councilmember Freer said the matter had been tabled for three or four months already.

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

299-03 That the Budget and Appropriations Committee of the City of Bridgeport make recommendations to the City Council regarding future appropriations to the Recreation and Parks and Recreation Departments

Councilmember Freer explained that every spring, the Budget Committee gets a 300-page budget book and they have six weeks to review department's requests and approve their budgets. But the Common Council feels they should start the process sooner. He stated that the committee thought they should learn about the daily activities of the Parks and Recreation Department, so they were asked to attend tonight. However, he said that as a council, he felt they should form a task force to look at various departments beginning with Parks and Recreation. They need to discuss how the task force would be comprised, so he deferred the matter over to Councilmember Andres Ayala.

Councilmember Andres Ayala said they have been receiving monthly financials. They want to get more people involved in the budget process, so he wanted to create an oversight task force to bring in department heads to analyze their budgets and to assure they are sticking to what was appropriated. He said they are looking at any issues that may arise. He said he spoke to the Co-chairs of the Budget Committee, but one person was not able to commit, however, Councilmember Curwen has agreed to part of the process. Councilmember Andres Ayala further mentioned the fact that the budget process needs to be a year long process and he noted that Councilmember Mulligan has agreed to be part of the oversight committee; as well as Councilmember's Freer, Dye and Piviroto. He said all would be invited to participate as a think tank, to look at how to improve the finances of the city.

Councilmember Andres Ayala also noted those that committed to sit on the task force should uphold the commitment and be prepared to answer all questions.

Councilmember Mojica asked if the department heads would be notified, so they know what's forthcoming. Councilmember Andres Ayala said yes.

Councilmember Mojica asked when they would be starting the task force reviews. Councilmember Andres Ayala said they would begin shortly after the holiday. Councilmember Andres Ayala stressed that it will be important that everyone involved attend.

Councilmember Curwen asked how they wanted to handle Mr. Handy's discussion, since he was present tonight. Councilmember Freer said he appreciated his attendance. He stated that when the task force was formed; he would be invited back. But he felt that they were not prepared tonight to allow the presentation from Parks and Recreation that was planned, so he said there would be no questioning tonight.

Councilmember Mojica said he wasn't ready to ask any questions tonight, but he stressed that the department heads should be given notice of what they should bring for presentation material as it pertains to budget items. They should be aware beforehand of any information that the committee has requested.

Councilmember Curwen said there would be notice given to the Administration and OPM that they are forming the task force. He said that in light of the matter of statements made in the public forum; he noted the Common Council has to act on them.

Councilmember Mulligan stated the task force would be an education for the committee and the council, in that; they will be able to learn how the city is administered. Secondly, he said there is some trepidation about the upcoming year's budget concerning many issues such as the mill rate. He thought that maintaining the mill would be key as it relates to this matter. He further stressed the purpose of the task force was not to find improprieties among different departments, but more to get input on how the city is run.

Mr. Handy of Parks and Recreation said he welcomed everyone to come out to learn about the department at any time. Councilmember Mojica said that would be very helpful, particularly when items come up to be budgeted.

Mr. Handy stated a lot is involved and he reiterated he would be happy to go through all the department's programs.

- ** COUNCIL MEMBER FREER MADE A MOTION TO WITHDRAW RESOLUTION #299-03 THAT THE BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE OF THE CITY OF BRIDGEPORT MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE CITY COUNCIL REGARDING FUTURE APPROPRIATIONS TO THE RECREATION AND PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENTS. IN FAVOR OF THE CREATION OF FORMING AN OVERSIGHT TASK FORCE
- ** COUNCIL MEMBER MOJICA SECONDED
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

ADJOURNMENT

- ** COUNCIL MEMBER CURWEN MADE A MOTION TO ADJOURN
- ** COUNCILMEMBER SILVA SECONDED
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

The meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Diane Graham
Telesco Secretarial Services

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET & APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 14, 2005**

ATTENDANCE: Raphael Mojica, Chair; Thomas McCarthy,
Robert Walsh

STAFF: Mike Lupkas, Finance Department; N. Nkwo-Project
Manager/Finance Department

OTHERS: Andres Ayala, Jr., Council President, Thomas Mulligan,
Ed Gomes

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Mojica called the meeting to order at 6:38 p.m.

**36-04 Re: Budget Transfer FY 2004/05 Finance Dept (\$2,525,000.00) From:
Interfund Transfer To: Fund Balance**

Mr. Lupkas passed a handout around and said this was really just a technical adjustment to this year's budget. He said it would not have any effect on the deficit or surplus. It is merely a modification and there is a timing issue. The revenue was implemented last year. Mr. Lupkas said he had met with the Mayor and the state concerning welfare penalty. The state comes in each year to audit results. There was a built in dollar amount included for the audit penalty. The state did two years, which left three years with a sum of money pending the audits. Mr. Lupkas said they had met with Governor Rowland and others last spring with regard to helping the city of Bridgeport, as well as other cities, with audit penalties. With reference to the surplus for the year, \$2.6m is high because of the inclusion of the \$2.5m audit release. There was \$4.95m budgeted last year. He read the fund balance transfer into record. Mr. McCarthy asked whether this was as of June 30, 2004. Mr. Lupkas replied yes. He said there is a fund balance use of \$750,000 in the 2005 budget and there needs to be a modification as to where the \$2.25m is coming from.

Mr. Mojica questioned the fund balance and the rainy day. Mr. Lupkas said the fund balance and the rainy day were the same items. Mr. McCarthy asked what the fund balance for 2004 was. Mr. Lupkas said \$4.95m had been budgeted. For clarification, Mr. Walsh asked whether the \$4.9m was really only \$2.3m. Mr. Lupkas said yes. The \$2.6m increased the fund balance number, which was originally \$2.5m. Mr. Mulligan asked whether the \$2.5m was included in the \$3.3m. Mr. Lupkas said that was correct. This was in the general fund. He said they could not receive that revenue in this year's budget because they have received it prior. The legislation was passed prior to the year-end. Mr. Nkwo said they had budgeted \$2.5m for the welfare audit. He said they have to take in before June 30th. Mr. Nkwo stated that they needed to go back to the fund balance and

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bring it back into the general fund. Mr. Mojica questioned whether this was just a matter of transferring. Mr. Lupkas said that a bigger fund would have been available if he had known this was happening last year. Mr. Ayala said the expense ends up being the revenue. Mr. Lupkas said that was correct.

Mr. Ayala asked whether they would be continuing the budget penalty process as part of the upcoming budget. Mr. Lupkas replied no and said this was it. He said he did not want to take a hit to the budget if they were to have a bad year. Mr. Mulligan asked what the current fund balance is. According to Mr. Lupkas, it was \$3.25 as of June 30, 2004. He said they would be right around \$30m. Mr. Walsh asked whether something would be done differently as they continue to go forward. Mr. Lupkas said they must make reasonable reserves for items such as this. There is minimal reserve for health benefits. The reserves are being reduced to almost zero.

Mr. Silva asked whether the money could be put towards any deficits. Mr. Lupkas said it rolls into the fund balance. When there was access to the \$2m last year, it rolled into the fund balance. Mr. Ayala said he was unaware of the \$2.5m set aside for last year's welfare expense. Mr. Lupkas said there was legal health insurance and small worker's compensations. He said he would see the reserves under the accounts payable or accrued liability. Mr. Walsh stated that there was a study that says the \$2.5m should be set aside. Mr. Lupkas said the \$2.5m is set under the fund balance because it is cash set aside in escrow. The small health insurance is based on claims not yet seen. Mr. Walsh asked what the \$2.5m was. Mr. Lupkas said it had to do with when they were self-insured with PHS. Mr. Walsh asked whether the other medical claims and penalty lawsuits were in accrued liability lines. Mr. Lupkas said yes. Mr. Ayala questioned whether this reserve was there for claims that cannot be covered. Mr. Lupkas said yes. Mr. Ayala questioned whether this was the number they normally budgeted for. Mr. Lupkas said this was not in the budget; it is cash. He said they would take interest into the city. Mr. Mojica asked how much the city currently has. Mr. Lupkas said the city has roughly \$33m including the collection of all receivables.

**** MR. McCARTHY MOVED APPROVAL OF ITEM 36-04.
** MR. SILVA SECONDED.
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mr. Lupkas asked if it was possible to hold this matter off until the first March city council meeting just in case there are any inquiries. Mr. Mojica said he did not think that was necessary. Mr. Ayala suggested having this matter put on the consent calendar.

**** MR. McCARTHY MOVED TO ADJOURN.
** MR. SILVA SECONDED.
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

As there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

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Respectfully Submitted,

Michelle Joseph
Telesco Secretarial Services

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET & APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
APRIL 11, 2005**

ATTENDANCE: Rafael Mojica, Co-Chair; Bob Curwin, Co-Chair;
Thomas Freer; Thomas McCarthy; Carlos Silva; Henry Webb,
(6:20 p.m.);
Robert Walsh (6:30 p.m.)

OTHERS: Andres Ayala, Jr. Council President; William Shaw, Planning &
Zoning; Thomas Sherwood, OPM

Mr. Curwin called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

AGENDA

APPROVAL OF COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES: FEBRUARY 14, 2005

There was no discussion or action on this item.

44-04 FUNDING FOR TAPING AT COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Ms. Vizzo-Paniccia said that she put in the request to have all of the meetings recorded. She was given a budget of \$1,500 to have the meetings recorded and then transcribed. She recommended having all of the City Council meetings recorded.

Mr. Curwin noted that on the average, there are 12 committee meetings per committee each year and asked what the cost would be to record all of those meetings. He said that someone from the City Clerk's office should be here to answer questions.

**** MR. MOJICA MOVED TO TABLE THE ITEM FOR MORE INFORMATION**

**** MR. SILVA SECONDED**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

77-04 AMENDMENTS TO THE 2004-2005 FIVE YEAR CAPITAL PLAN: BOE ADA AND ROOF PROJECTS

Mr. Sherwood explained that two years ago, they embarked on ADA compliance issues in the schools. He said that this is an amendment to the existing plan. Mr. Mojica said that this is for work that is needed in the schools.

These projects are dealing with issues that are under a federal court order and those issues need to be addressed.

- ** MR. McCARTHY MOVED TO APPROVE THE AMENDMENTS TO THE 2004-2005 FIVE YEAR CAPITAL PLAN: BOE ADA AND ROOF PROJECTS**
- ** MR. MOJICA SECONDED**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

78-05 BUDGET TRANSFER FY 04-05 TO ACCOMMODATE SNOW RELATED ACTIVITY

Mr. Webb arrived at 6:20 p.m.

Mr. Sherwood said that this is a multi-departmental budget transfer. The City was hit very hard with snow storms this winter. The funding is being transferred from various accounts.

Mr. Sherwood left the meeting at 6:28 p.m.

Mr. Walsh arrived at 6:29 p.m.

- ** MR. MOJICA MOVED TO APPROVE THE BUDGET TRANSFER FY 04-05 TO ACCOMMODATE SNOW RELATED ACTIVITY**
- ** MR. SILVA SECONDED**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

84-04 BUDGET TRANSFER FY 04-06 TO OPED (ZBA) - \$10,000 FROM ENGINEERING SERVICES TO ZBA ADVERTISING SERVICES

Mr. Shaw distributed a memo explaining the costs associated with advertising for the Zoning Board of Appeals. He said that they ran out of money in February. The amount of ZBA activity has increased tremendously this year, due to the amount of construction.

Mr. Sherwood said that during the budget hearings, he will ask to make this a permanent amount in the Planning and Zoning budget.

Mr. Curwin asked if this has been an unusually high year. Mr. Shaw said that this is higher than last year.

- ** MR. MOJICA MOVED TO APPROVE THE BUDGET TRANSFER FY 04-06 TO OPED (ZBA) - \$10,000 FROM ENGINEERING SERVICES TO ZBA ADVERTISING SERVICES**

**** MR. SILVA SECONDED**
**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**
DISCUSSION ITEM: BUDGET PROCESS SCHEDULE

There was no discussion or action on this item.

**** MR. SILVA MOVED TO ADJOURN**
**** MR. WEBB SECONDED**
**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemarie Lombardi
Telesco Secretarial Services

ases of fraud, etc.

According to Mr. Silva, if more than two officers are seen congregating, the third is most likely a sergeant. This is common on the second shift. Chief Armeno said there should be red flags if two cars are seen cooping for a protracted period of time. If this occurs, the patrol division should be contacted. Mr. Curwen asserted that police officers who direct traffic have been seen on their cell phones. Chief Armeno said the officers are not doing their jobs if they are on their cell phones. He added that there is currently no policy for cell phones. Mr. Ayala said it was an officer's duty to represent the city once they still have their uniforms on. Chief Armeno said disciplinary action could be taken on this.

Mr. Ayala questioned where exactly they were with the city fleet. He asked whether any purchases are foreseen. Chief Armeno stated that they have an extremely good working garage personnel group. There is a concern that the city is not responsible for fiduciary funds.

Ms. Vizzo-Paniccia questioned cell phone usage in cars. Officer Cuento said officers must be attentive to all police duties. Mr. Curwen stated that the cell phones and pagers are a public safety issue. Chief Armeno said this was a terrible issue. The cell phone is usually the first thing officers stow away. Officers can be written up.

Mr. McCarthy questioned the status with the Bridgeport Housing Authority. Mr. Feeney said he had contacted the housing director and scheduled a meeting to move forward. There are currently 20 officers patrolling the BHA. Chief Armeno said the housing projects are patrolled under guidelines that must be in place. He said they could not give up the foothold they have in the areas of those communities.

Mr. Curwen told Mr. Feeney he had hoped there was good communication with the BHA. Council members tend to hear complaints from others.

With regard to vehicle maintenance, Mr. Walsh questioned whether Bridgeport based companies were the main targets. Mr. Sherwood said that Park City Ford missed a bid. Officer Cuento said a bid waiver had been done for Fair Auto. Mr. Curwen asked if they have a lot of outside consultants. Officer Cuento said they have ballistics specialists used to solve ballistic and forensic cases. Mr. Curwen stated that he was referring to past administration. Chief Armeno said they do not exist right now. New bikes are on the radar screen. Mr. Ayala said there were talks about copying and fingerprinting fees last year and he asked what happened with this. Mr. Sherwood said this could not be done. Officer Cuento said they could only charge \$50 for information and \$1 for background checks. Mr. Curwen asked whether anyone had asked other departments how they justify their fees. Mr. Feeney said he could get this information. Mr. Ayala asked about gun permits. Chief Armeno stated that there was stack of gun permits when he had come on board. He said they were working to make sure weapon abusers are put in jail. Chief Armeno said they needed to look closely on how permits are given out. Background checks must be done. He stated that they must be careful about on permits are constructed

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and the pattern at which they are given. Mr. Ayala asked whether or not an increase of fees has been looked at. Mr. Sherwood said that could be looked into. Mr. Webb asked about the bullet proof vests. Officer Cuento said there was a 50/50 match. Chief Armeno said specialty vests had been discussed. Every department has new vests.

The committee took a break from 9:25 p.m. to 9:35 p.m.

Chief Armeno gave the percentage of officers on the force by race and gender. Mr. Curwen asked whether there were any foreseen legal issues. Chief Armeno said no. Mr. Silva asked for copies of the statistics. Chief Armeno said he would provide copies. Mr. Curwen asked about compensated requests. Chief Armeno said there was a holiday payout. The intent was to make the partnership strong. Mr. Curwen also inquired about the animal shelter. Chief Armeno said there are concerns about reducing the overtime that is there. There will be structured overtime. He said he believed that everything was going forward and that the location would be at Seaside Park.

LIBRARY

Mr. Sherwood stated that the library works like the Board of Education. He said the Mayor has proposed one cut and the line has been applied against the budgetary account. Mr. Golrick stated that he was looking to get back nine of the 18 positions that were lost over the years. Mr. Curwen asked if there would be expansion. Mr. Golrick said there would be a 30% expansion. He also said they were looking to get a special officer. There is really a need for two officers to cover the building. The library is part of the infrastructure needed for children. The public library is a source for summer reading. The library is on the radar screen for planning development. Based on budget requests, the return on the investment is to be \$26m. The library may lose interest in the trust.

Mr. Golrick referenced a memo and read excerpts from it. Mr. Sherwood said costs are contained in other aspects and monies can be moved. Mr. Sherwood asked Mr. Golrick if he felt that services were not being maintained. Mr. Curwen said the chairman determines who is allowed to speak. He said the committee would ask questions if they see fit. Mr. Golrick stated that members of the Library Board are present tonight. He said the current staff is stretched to the limits. The library is crucial to the quality of life. Mr. Golrick read what he referred to as the "sermon" to the committee.

Mr. O'Donnell introduced himself as the President of the Library Board of Directors. He said the issue Mr. Golrick goes to the context of the trust that is there. Because of Bridgeport's unique development, the Civil Service Commission made certain rules. The problem is that it goes to the ability to provide services to Bridgeport. Judge Jaden felt strongly about the values of the library. Mr. O'Donnell referenced page 13 of the packet and stated that the library is of vital importance to the city. The judge dedicated the use of the funds to the book budget. Legally, there is a constraint if the budget is increased in any way. Mr. O'Donnell said it was their right and obligation to align the budget. He said they had the right to move the budget around. The council has the burden of allocating

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the limited funds that are available. Mr. O'Donnell said the committee needed to be aware that the library would lose over \$300,000 over the next few years if the budget granted is less than last year's. Mr. Sherwood said he wanted to see the actual right up of the grant.

Mr. Sherwood asked how the decreases would be explained. Mr. Golrick said they had not received the check until last year. Mr. Sherwood said utilities would have to be moved back to the budget. Mr. Golrick said the board must vote the resolution and send it to the trustees in Yale. Mr. Sherwood said the council could move this to another line. He stated that he would pull the contribution increase, utility growth, and building maintenance for next year. Operational accounts are all in this book. Mr. McCarthy said they must determine that the city is providing adequate funds. He stated that he was unsure that it was accurate to say the city is not providing adequate fund. Mr. Golrick said they needed more than \$50,000. He stated that the entire line was moved to the capital budget. Only operational expenses were included. Mr. Sherwood told Mr. Golrick that his line had not changed. Mr. Golrick said they had to pay operating expenses out the capital budget. The net budget was only \$60,000 higher. Mr. Sherwood said his request had been taken and funded a different way. Mr. Golrick said monies were taken and moved into capital. There is not enough money in the building to pay our current leases. He stated that he was asking for less money than he had asked for two years ago. Mr. Curwen said it was their responsibility to get the computers and use less of the taxpayers' monies to do it.

Mr. Sherwood said the money was debited last year. The computer system was redone through capital. He said the library's bottom line was more than the previous year. Mr. Golrick said there had been a redirection to publications. He asked the committee to turn to page 12 of the packet. Everything other than the library materials is the same. Rent is a big concern. Mr. McCarthy asked why there is a kiosk in the Trumbull mall. Mr. Golrick said it provides an opportunity to promote the city of Bridgeport and is very heavily used.

Mr. Sherwood questioned whether there had been a 20% increase in the property rental line from 2004 to 2005. Mr. Golrick said this had been paid for out of the grant fund. The rest of the increase is the contractual increase on the leases. Mr. Sherwood asked if there was \$16,000 in the increase and stated that the library was given what they budgeted for last year. Mr. Golrick said the library had been given what they had budgeted for the year before last.

Mr. Curwen asked how many library buildings there were. Mr. Golrick said there is five and that the Blackrock branch is closed. He said he did not know when it would be operational again. Mr. Golrick stated that they were approximately \$1.2m short in funds needed to do the project. He said Representative Keiley was working to get funds. A soil test has been done. There are currently four operational libraries.

Mr. Ayala asked how much usage the Blackrock library got. Mr. Golrick said the Blackrock branch serves three neighborhoods. He stated that they had attempted to get a

temporary location, but they were unable to fill positions. Mr. McCarthy asked if there were any discussions. Mr. Golrick said a 10-23 form had been sent out to the federal government. Section 170 allows charitable deduction to be done. The Library Board has started discussions with the friends to do events to support additional library funding. Mr. McCarthy said they could not squeeze a lot of the budget. He said there was just no money and taxes keep moving up. Mr. Golrick said they do try to utilize grants. There may be a requirement to have every grant approved and signed. He passed around more handouts. According to Mr. Curwen, time sensitive grants have always been considered a means for immediate consideration. Mr. O'Donnell said they there have been talks about selling bricks and pavers for Blackrock. Mr. McCarthy said the belt would continue to tighten.

Mr. Golrick questioned what would happen if a development officer was needed. Mr. McCarthy said he would agree with this. With regard to the \$194,000 worth of grants, Mr. Curwen stated that a portion could be paid off for administrative grants. Mr. Sherwood asked if the trusted agency accounts would still be maintained. Mr. Golrick said there would be an endowment fund. Mr. Curwen asked who does the grant writing. Mr. Golrick said the grant administrators do the grant writing. Mr. Mojica also asked whether the development officer would do grant writing. Mr. Golrick said he hoped so. Mr. Sherwood asked whether some of the money from the I.T. program could be used. Mr. Golrick said no. Some grants are selective and some of them are closed. Mr. O'Donnell said they could only purchase U.S. treasury bonds. Mr. Mulligan asked whether they could do a reduction by \$45,000 instead of \$52,000. Mr. O'Donnell said the intent was that funding for the library be maintained so services could continue. Mr. Golrick said the library would recruit additional funding from outside. The message is that the library needs to do more in the development arena.

Mr. Mulligan inquired about the popularity of the Old Mill Green Library. Mr. Golrick said that particular library was quite popular and in an extremely popular location as well. He said he had met with Nancy Hadley, George Estrada, and others.

Mr. Golrick stated that the public computers in the libraries take quite a beating. Mr. Sherwood said they could help with the computers. Mr. Golrick said the library would need \$80,000 for the computers, but is asking for \$50,000 every year.

Mr. Golrick stated that the last packet is the technology plan. He said they were asking for a replacement for replacement in the capital budget. Mr. DePara said they needed to have Sylvia with the head of I.T.S. Mr. Golrick said there were telephones that needed to be replaced. He added that the public computers are on a computer network. Mr. DePara said it was imperative to hook up with the head of the I.T. department.

Mr. Sherwood said a real payroll salary is requested and the actual payroll is reflected. Mr. Golrick said he was the only full-time staff member who is unaffiliated. Mr. Mojica said they could get operating costs if push came to shove. The city would have to say that they temporarily close the library. Mr. Golrick said the rent at Old Mill Green makes it a

target. In terms of circulation, the Newfield Library might be the best choice if one of the libraries needed to be closed. Mr. Golrick said they needed to meet the needs of the neighborhood if a new building is built. The old DMV building would have been ideal. Blackrock will serve the 21st century.

As there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michelle Joseph
Telesco Secretarial Services

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET & APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
APRIL 29, 2005**

ATTENDANCE: Robert Curwen, Chairman; Andres Ayala; Tom McCarthy; Edwin Gomes.

OTHERS: Councilmembers Pivirotto, Mulligan, Silva, Walsh, DePara; Tom Sherwood; Ed Winterbottom, Labor Relations Director; Janet Finch, Grants Personnel Mgr.; Loretta BA Williams, ADA Coordinator; Richard Weiner, Benefits Mgr.; Mike Lupkas; Fleeta Hudson, City Clerk; Ann Murray, Assistant City Clerk.

The meeting was called to order at 6:10 p.m. by the Chairman.

CITY CLERK

Mrs. Murray briefly reviewed the budget request. Ms. Hudson requested \$41,000 for the City Hall Committee, including funding for a special security officer. Mr. Sherwood said this had not been recommended by the Mayor. Ms. Hudson asked why this line couldn't stay in the budget, even if not funded. Mr. Sherwood responded that he had set up the City Hall Committee with zeros in it.

Mr. Ayala said not having money for appraisal ties the hands of the City Hall Committee. Mr. Sherwood said there was money in Capital but he cannot take this money from Capital to General Funds.

Mr. McCarthy asked if half of the salary of the special officer could be charged to MRR. Mr. Sherwood said it could not be done.

LABOR RELATIONS

Ms. Finch made a presentation on the responsibilities of her office. She said that the cost to train 200 EMPs would be \$9,900 for the Board of Education. A professional development committee is being formed to train City employees. The Chairman asked what the \$15,000 would be used for; it will be used for a more comprehensive training program.

Discussion took place on the subject of employees being in the business of customer service.

The Chairman asked what happened to the money put aside this year. Ms. Finch said most of it had been spent. The Chairman asked if new employees were being requested; Ms. Finch responded affirmatively.

Mr. Sherwood said that Ms. Finch has done a yeoman's job. The partnership with the Board of Education has been terrific. The Chairman asked if they had contemplated tapping into the Fire and Police training budgets. Ms. Finch said she is not working with Fire and Police, only with general government. The Chairman asked if they can join with Police and Fire. Mr. Sherwood said they don't have the same requirements.

Mr. Sherwood said this year's request is status quo. Ms. Williams said she was hired under Title II and has a serious problem. These are mandates but not funded, but they can tap into funds. She is housed in a Title I entity but cannot be locked into it. She is funded for employment but not for anything else. She has asked that a letter be sent to the Board of Education for extra compensation of \$10,000. She has asked for additional funds for registration and membership and for training. ADA allows people with disabilities who are not accommodated to sue the City.

The Chairman said that Ms. Williams has every right to ask the Board of Education to pay her for the work she does for them.

Ms. Finch said she did not have authorization under her own budget; Mr. Sherwood disagreed. She further noted that she does not have a staff.

Nestor said that the problems would be clarified.

Ms. Finch said if the Office for People with Disabilities is necessary, they have extra outside funding for that office. The City never applied for funds for curb cuts. Mr. Sherwood will ask James Wong to detail this information. Ms. Finch said that the City does not really understand ADA.

Mr. Mulligan asked where the additional \$1,000 for travel came from. Ms. Finch said it came from the training line. She is using it to go to training and to provide training.

Mr. Sherwood said three positions were eliminated in the Labor Relations and Benefits departments.

Extensive discussion took place on the reporting of health care co-pays (EDO1). Mr. Sherwood noted that the co-pays are in the budget, even though it may be disputed by the Board of Education.

Mr. Sherwood said there is no impact from the Board of Education budget on the City side.

Mr. Sherwood will provide the letter from Brian Mahoney of the State next week.

Mr. Weiner made a presentation on the forces driving health care inflation. He then reviewed cost control initiatives for this year and programs on the drawing board for next year. He reviewed the benefit budget by major expense.

The Chairman asked where the difference of \$11,000,000 comes from. Mr. Weiner reviewed the benefits budget by major expense category. The Chairman said that, in all actuality, there are no actuals, only predictions.

Mr. Sherwood said they forecast based on actuals. Anyone who wants more detailed information can obtain an ASO report from Mr. Weiner's office.

The Chairman noted that \$77,000,000 of their budget is health benefits. He said he would be in Mr. Weiner's office and he wanted to see material from the companies, not material put together by Mr. Weiner.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl Telesco
Telesco Secretarial Services

**BUDGET COMMITTEE
MAY4, 2005 CITY of BRIDGEPORT**

ATTENDANCE: Councilmember's: Mojica, Curwen, Walsh, McCarthy, Webb, Silva, Freer

OTHERS PRESENT: Councilmember's: Andres Ayala, Gomes, Mulligan, Pivrotto, Vizzo-Paniccia

CALL TO ORDER

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

BOARD OF EDUCATION BUDGET REVIEW

Mr. Sherwood reviewed the contents of the budget items that would be covered as they were outlined in the binders and other information distributed.

Councilmember Curwen referred to a flyer that was distributed with the heading "Bridgeport Child Advocacy Coalition". The heading read that **"Last year, the Board of Education had to cut its budget by \$5million and eliminated 14 administrative positions.** Councilmember Curwen asked Dr. Tolbert, Associate Superintendent of Teaching & Learning if there was any truth to this. Dr. Tolbert said it wasn't a document that the Board of Education put out. And it remained a question if it was factual or not, but the allegation wasn't validated by the Board of Education.

Dr. Tolbert further answered to the question of eliminating positions. He presented a document outlining more than (14) positions that were cut, showing the administrative positions that were either eliminated or reduced.

Councilmember Curwen asked if the eliminations were directly related to the budget cuts. Dr. Tolbert said they took the cuts that were further from the classroom, but the cuts came as a result of budget constraints.

Councilmember McCarthy asked if the actual dollar amount budgeted vs. the Mayor's budget was more this year. Mr. Sherwood said yes. He explained that the benefits were moved over from the city to the BOE.

Councilmember McCarthy asked if they took away benefits, was there still a dollar increase. Mr. Sherwood said yes.

Councilmember Silva noted the number of administrator positions that were either retired or vacant as they were outlined in the document.

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Councilmember Mulligan asked about the full-time earned pay amount and if they applied to salary increases. Mr. Sherwood said that amount was put in the classroom teacher amount; because they knew it would shift.

Councilmember Pivrotto asked about the \$158 million amount and if that amount was provided by the state. Mr. Sherwood said that amount was the current BOE direct appropriation amount budgeted for this year.

Councilmember Curwen returned to the matter regarding the (14) administrative positions cut. Dr. Tolbert said there was only one retiree and all the other positions were currently vacant, abolished or removed from the budget. But they are positions that have been decreased since July 2003. He stressed that if they had the monies to fund those positions, they would.

Councilmember Curwen asked what was meant by "abolishing" a position. Dr. Tolbert said it meant that they couldn't afford to keep the position open.

Councilmember Curwen asked if the positions were filled before the year 2003. Dr. Tolbert said yes.

Councilmember Curwen referred to the \$5 million in cuts for last year and if this amount was from the actual or recommended budget. Dr. Tolbert said it came from the board's recommended budget, i.e., a sort of wish list.

Dr. Tolbert elaborated to explain there was no increase in the budget for the year 2003-2004, but in comparison to the 2004-2005 budgets, there may have been a slight increase.

Councilmember Mojica questioned an amount outlined for \$1.2 million and it what it was for. Mr. Sherwood said it was for the purchase of text books. Dr. Tolbert concurred that the entire \$1.2 million was spent on books.

Councilmember Curwen asked about the \$1.2 million and if it was recognized as an increase in spending. Mr. Hewitt stated that it was recognized as an increase for textbooks and it was dedicated strictly towards textbooks.

Councilmember Silva asked about the amount that was set aside for books and if any of that amount contributed to textbooks on the budget side. Dr. Tolbert said that item went into the 2004 budget.

Mr. Hewitt referred to page 146 of the Budget Request Book 2005-2006. He stated that the BOE spent \$308k.

Councilmember Vizzo-Paniccia expressed that for the amount of money spent on textbooks, there were many complaints of there not being enough books. She questioned why there weren't enough books. Dr. Tolbert said that each year in the district since the year 2001, the BOE budget had been \$2.4 million for textbooks, that amount was consistently spent and it was a substantial amount spent. And although he has heard the same complaints, there were instances where teachers use other books as part of the curriculum. But there is an adequate supply of textbooks. For example: grades kindergarten through 8th received a literacy series of books and this shorts the other textbooks supply.

Councilmember Curwen said then money spent on books was sufficient to cover the school year. Dr. Tolbert said that was correct.

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Mr. Sherwood added that last year they also pre-purchased textbooks for the previous fiscal year.

Councilmember Mojica asked with this year's budget, were they looking at \$1 million for textbooks. Mr. Hewitt said the amount requested was \$1.7 million.

Councilmember Gomes stated that it was disheartening to hear about textbooks paid for but not received by the students. As mentioned, he said he has also heard complaints of insufficient books. Dr. Tolbert said there was a mixture of explanations for the lack of books.

Councilmember Gomes said when students testify before the committee as they have done in the past; this signals a problem of them not receiving books or teachers not teaching the curriculum.

Councilmember Curwen emphasized that this was his eighth year sitting on the Budget Committee and for all of these years he has heard complaints of there not being enough books. So in his opinion, it was still a problem if the matter hasn't been fixed. Dr. Tolbert relayed that they needed a tracking system. He explained that when they backtracked, they found that they had plenty of books. He further explained there is always a common theme in the school districts wherein books are lost. So again, they really need a tracking system in place.

Councilmember Freer asked Mr. Sherwood about the In-kind services amount of \$19 million and what that encompassed. Mr. Sherwood said the majority of the cost was for healthcare for retirees, workers compensation accounting, the lighthouse program and school nurses. But they were items established in 19823 and done year-by-year.

Councilmember Andres Ayala commented on the textbooks issues. He said at Bassick High School they track the allotment of books to determine the priorities of what was needed. But there were some of the issues that occurred consisted of issuing up to four textbooks to one student. The responsibility of maintaining the books is left to the student, but what often happens is that books get lost in the tracking system. So he suggested that the board take a look at implementing a procedure to track lost text books. He also stated that at Bassick High School they have three to four different sets of textbooks for the same course and that is a problem.

Dr. Tolbert concurred with Councilmember Ayala. He stated they were trying to implement a procedure for standardized books and they were looking to standardize across the district, so there is no lapse in learning when a student moves.

Councilmember McCarthy said he recalled a discussion last year about the books tracking system. Mr. Hewitt said they bought the software and they were in the process of scanning the books. And by the end of the year, all the books should be inventoried.

Councilmember McCarthy asked what happens if the books are lost. Dr. Tolbert said they would adopt a policy to authorize holding the students and parents responsible.

Councilmember Gomes said the standardized system would be a big improvement and it should assist with the issue of students receiving books.

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Councilmember Freer asked about the budget request for \$10 million more than the Mayor recommended. Mr. Sherwood said the current budget request was for \$158,557. He said he was hoping they could get more money for an additional \$4 million and if they receive that, they will be close to the request of an additional \$9.6 million in funds.

Councilmember Freer said that at the public hearing, they would hear that education is under funded. He questioned how to answer that, stressing that the taxpayers could no longer fund the shortfall. He further questioned when the state comes in to help out. He stated there was a consensus that the BOE under funding would only get worse. He asked if there was a point to look to the state to take over the City of Bridgeport school system. Dr. Tolbert said legislation was proposed to continue a state takeover. And for the urban school district, there will be someone appointed to intervene. However, he was told that Bridgeport was on the priority list to be taken over by the state and if they come in, this would add resources. He said he questioned why they couldn't just give Bridgeport the funds needed.

Dr. Tolbert further stated that in terms of funding, Bridgeport currently receives the least. He stressed that in addition to that, adequate staff was also needed.

Councilmember Mulligan asked about the \$1.127 million and if this amount was equivalent to the amount that was being discussed as referenced on the 2005-2006 Budget Analysis sheet. Mr. Hewitt said they took this year's expenses through February and added a 4% increase that resulted in the \$21,717,300 amount.

Councilmember Mulligan asked what the process was for prioritizing. Mr. Hewitt explained that they went through the budget and took the items by priority, such as the textbooks item. He said as outlined on page 33, they went through the budget and cut back expenses where they could.

Councilmember Curwen asked about the list of projected \$8.5 million in cuts in comparison to the current budget of \$158,557 and the Mayor's budget. He questioned if they were providing all the services that were outlined on the sheet. Mr. Hewitt replied they were providing most of them.

Councilmember Curwen questioned the \$4.6 million in raises. He asked who negotiated the increase. Dr. Tolbert said the Board of Education did.

Councilmember Curwen further questioned the priorities of the schools needs in relation to raises issued. Mr. Hewitt said any stipulated agreements were based on settlements in the area. Councilmember Curwen asked if foregoing salary increases would be to the benefit of the schools. Dr. Tolbert said they needed to anticipate what could be reasonably given. He pointed out that a lot depended on the arbitration process. Councilmember Gomes explained that during arbitration, there is an offer by the city and an offer by the union and generally, the outcome favors what the city has recommended.

Councilmember Curwen noted the current administration took pay raises last year. Dr. Tolbert disagreed. He clarified that the administrator's union people received raises.

Councilmember Vizzo-Paniccia asked about the foreign languages deletion Dr. Tolbert said that component was gone.

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Councilmember McCarthy stated that the City Council was always painted as villains. He questioned why the BOE waited until the Friday before the budget was due to submit their requests and why they didn't submit a capital budget. He thought this bordered on being irresponsible. Dr. Tolbert said he took responsibility for the late submittal. He explained there was a transitional period with the new Superintendent coming on board, as well as Mr. Hewitt being new to the board and other issues. That's why they didn't meet the deadline.

Councilmember Webb asked if the textbooks tracking system was in place for this year. Dr. Tolbert said the system began at Bassick High School.

Councilmember Curwen referred to the priority list. He spoke to the subject of debt service the taxpayers pay toward the building of new schools. He said he understood the value of providing new schools, but he asked if the debt service was considered as going toward education. Dr. Tolbert said that he did.

Councilmember Curwen asked if he had a figure for building new schools. Mr. Lutkus said the amount would be over \$5 million for this year.

Councilmember Pivrotto pointed out that the building of new schools also provided \$2 million in revenue to the city.

Councilmember Walsh commented that he didn't think the BOE would get any more city money. He further noted all the time they spent discussing how to track textbooks, but there was no solution. He emphasized that 17% in pay raises was an outrage!

Councilmember Mojica said that textbooks do add up after a while. He further stated they would hear many negative comments during the public hearing, but the fact was that the city didn't have a magic wand. He said he understood how much burden there was on the BOE, in view of the new standards such as the "No Child Left Behind Act". All these standards get passed on to the city, resulting in other cuts that affect the quality of life for children and other people. Overall, he said he hoped they could find the funds the BOE needed.

Councilmember Vizzo-Paniccia asked about the BCAC meeting. She questioned if the numbers presented to them tonight were given to them. Dr. Tolbert said no, but they would be given the information tomorrow, so they could see what the proposed numbers were.

Dr. Tolbert clarified the purpose was not political or to inflame the situation, but to come to some conclusion. Again, the BOE was not a part of the statements made on that BCAC flyer.

Councilmember Gomes said when they talk about ways people would vote on the budget, it could be said that telling the truth to people was political grandstanding, but to him, it's only telling the truth. He further expressed that the problem was them against the City Council, but votes could be done by conscious based on they feel.

Councilmember Silva asked about the consultant's fee paid of \$600.00 per day and how this was justified. This was outlined on a memo titled "Requested Documentation and Consultants July 1, 2004". Mr. Hewitt explained that the fees on the cover sheet were paid through payroll.

Dr. Tolbert explained that each individual rendered a service, but that position was currently vacant.

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Mr. Sherwood asked if the consultants received the same pay when they return. Dr. Tolbert said in the past, the pay has been per diem.

Councilmember Mulligan asked about estimating how much money was received by the state, federal and local during 2004-2005. Mr. Hewitt said those numbers were \$158 million by the city and \$47 million in federal grants. Mr. Sherwood noted those numbers included other items.

Councilmember Gomes asked about the sports officials items. Dr. Tolbert said this item consisted of varied sports. Mr. Sherwood said they needed to treat each sport separately. Councilmember Gomes asked about the flat rates paid. Mr. Sherwood said different sports had different rates applied.

Councilmember McCarthy asked about pages 18 and 20 regarding a Sacred Heart University student intern amount for \$144k. Mr. Sherwood said was paid from the substitute's account for teachers in training. Whenever there is an absent teacher, an intern covers the class. Councilmember Gomes asked if they had the proper credentials to teach. Mr. Hewitt said yes, they must have a Bachelor's Degree.

Councilmember Mojica asked about pages 46-50 that outlined student transportation. Mr. Hewitt said they had to transport all of Bridgeport's children who attend schools if they are not within walking distance. This includes transportation to the public and parochial schools. Councilmember Gomes stated that policy must have been reinstated. He recalled that during the 1980's, the cost for student transportation came close to \$800k and he spoke against it then. He further noted that when he did, a priest from Notre Dame Catholic School came forward to speak in favor of the funding, but it was eventually cut. Mr. Hewitt clarified this type of transportation involved all schools within Bridgeport's borders. Again, they are mandated to provide transportation.

Councilmember Silva spoke to the legal services used by the BOE. He questioned why they don't use city attorneys. Dr. Tolbert said they do some things through the city attorney under In-kind services. But they have other needs that the city attorney can't provide.

Councilmember Andres Ayala asked about the health benefits. He wondered if they felt comfortable with the numbers. Dr. Tolbert said it was the opinion of the board that item should move back to the city side.

*The Board of Education Budget review ended at 8:10 p.m.

BRIDGEPORT FIRE DEPARTMENT BUDGET REVIEW

Mr. Sherwood referred to page 271 of the budget binder.

Councilmember Curwen explained the procedure for conducting this review. He asked that all cell phones be turned off. He stated there would be a three question limit from the councilmember's. He introduced the committee members and the other council persons present.

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Mr. Sherwood reviewed page 270. He said the revenues were based off what was seen with permits the Fire Department collects on.

The fire chief was asked to discuss the fire insurance as it related to the RFP. Fire Chief Rooney said they were proposing to get the company to assist with fire direct billing that collects off the insurance policies, i.e., if they go to say a car fire, the company will collect a fee. He noted that other municipalities engage in this policy and it generates revenue. They will use the monies towards fire apparatus. Mr. Sherwood said it was a possible addition to the city budget.

Councilmember Walsh asked if they could see the figures for cars hazardous materials. Fire Chief Rooney said they could provide that information.

Councilmember Mulligan spoke to the personal auto policy and if there would be a provision on that for fire as well. Fire Chief Rooney said yes.

Councilmember Andres Ayala asked if the RFP had gone out. And if there was any mention to covering structures also. Fire Chief Rooney said in the RFP, there would be an option for structures. Mr. Sherwood agreed this was correct, if it was done on a rate basis.

Councilmember Walsh asked if the rates charged would be increased. Mr. Sherwood said in some cases.

Councilmember Walsh asked if the Bridgeport Fire Department trained other people from other fire houses. And if so, do they get reimbursed for doing this. Fire Chief Rooney replied that they didn't get reimbursed. Councilmember Walsh asked if the revenue budgeted for fire. Mr. Sherwood said the expense was incurred for the last fiscal year. It wasn't in the current year's budget.

Mr. Sherwood referred to page 271. He reviewed the Mayor's recommended budget. He explained that a personnel change would be for (44) fire fighter and the elimination of a new class. He further referred to page 272 where they examined each line of the fire department's items and made a 10% adjustment where they could. This covered varied items, but they looked at every way to determine if there was any justification to keep an item.

Councilmember Curwen asked Fire Chief Rooney to comment on the Mayor's recommended budget. Fire Chief Rooney said they received \$1.1 million less than last year. And because of this, they looked for cuts and checked with the union. But there was nothing there, so the only other option was to close a fire house, although they were reluctant to do that. He further expressed that because six (6) fire companies have been closed progressively throughout the years, this is a matter of budget restraints. He felt the mill rate may increase, but it's important to protect the city. He was emphatic that closing of any more fire houses should stop! He further emphasized the fact that the city was in dire straits, but they couldn't afford to keep cutting fire houses. He strongly urged the committee to reconsider the budget to allow them to keep the firehouse open. He noted deaths that occurred to a big fire on the west end of Bridgeport, noting one less fire house results in lack of safety for the city.

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Councilmember Mojica asked then if the Mayor's recommended budget would force the closing of the firehouse. Fire Chief Rooney said yes. Mr. Sherwood said the original budget was not to eliminate a fire company.

Councilmember Mojica asked about the modified budget. He questioned if the Mayor's recommended budget of \$21.4 million was increased to the requested budget of \$24.9 million, could this save the fire house. Fire Chief Rooney replied yes.

Councilmember Walsh stated that the taxpayers got hit with excessive legal fees in defense of the sexual harassment case. And although the case was won, he asked if there was sufficient money in the budget to assure that personnel were being trained in sexual harassment sensitivity. Fire Chief Rooney said the entire department was going through sexual harassment training and this would continue. Councilmember Mulligan asked how much the training cost. Fire Chief said there was no cost; the law firm that handled the case provides the training gratis.

Councilmember McCarthy said one of his pet peeves was CAD Dispatch. He asked what the status was on that. Fire Chief Rooney said they were waiting for the okay for grant money. They had two locations on the north end and Madison Avenue.

Councilmember Andres Ayala said he took exception to doing the budget where they had to take .2 & .3 % to find tax savings for constituents. He said although they appreciated the history lesson regarding how the past administration erred; he said the City Council had a task to find savings for the residents of Bridgeport.

Councilmember Mulligan asked about regular overtime pay and what could be done about it. Mr. Sherwood said overtime was up because there was an inability to hire a new class. So although they would see higher numbers if the classes were filled, the hours would be lower. Fire Chief Rooney agreed.

Councilmember Mulligan asked about the personal day payout. It was stated that payment was for holidays. Councilmember Mulligan said so in terms of personnel and because the union won't agree, the only alternative was to close a fire house. Fire Chief Rooney said that was correct. He added they had talks with the union on this.

Councilmember Walsh asked about the two battalions with high costs attached. He questioned if they really needed that item, noting they still had supervision in the firehouses. Fire Chief Rooney said they only had an Acting Assistant Chief and two Acting Captains. The rest were put back in the firehouses to plug overtime.

Councilmember Andres Ayala asked where they were at in regard to the number of fires reported this year. Fire Chief Rooney said there were basically at the same number they were at last year, due to accidents, hazardous materials etc.

Councilmember Andres Ayala asked how much resources they use from other fire houses to assist in fighting fires. Fire Chief Rooney said a typical fire utilizes half of the department.

Councilmember Andres Ayala mentioned Homeland Security. He asked if the department looked at tapping into the Homeland Security dollars to bolster equipment and to gain necessary apparatus for the department.

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Fire Chief Rooney said yes. They received a \$365k grant from Homeland Security. This will cover training and used to upgrade radios. He noted they are always seeking grants from the government. He also noted they have a decontamination trailer should it ever be needed in the even of a disaster.

Councilmember McCarthy mentioned towns nearby that have volunteer fire departments. He asked if they get reimbursement for helping out another municipality. Fire Chief said in return, Fairfield reciprocates when they need help.

Councilmember Curwen said the question is can they be charged for our help. Fire Chief Rooney said the federal government forces states to make sure all cities have mutual aid contracts in place.

Councilmember McCarthy repeated that there should be some compensation for helping out another town. Fire Chief Rooney said there are times they have to apply for grants and they need to show they are regionalizing; so they need to indicate they are able to share with different towns. Councilmember Andres Ayala expressed that was all fine and well, but he pointed out that Bridgeport was the city that always helped out everyone else. So he felt that in return, if they could benefit, it would be good.

Councilmember Mojica asked if they're seen a cost savings that could be implemented on the revenue side to save money in the department and perhaps transfer it on for a better use. Fire Chief Rooney said that most of the savings would be had as a result of negotiations, but he was looking into areas to save money. He also noted they were trying to get people out on medical leave back, because this will cut down on overtime.

Councilmember Gomes commented that it was said that when Bridgeport needs help, they call on Fairfield. He questioned why they don't call on Trumbull. Fire Chief said because Fairfield was closer.

Councilmember Walsh referenced page 302 regarding a \$120k cost under SW Regional Community Center and an ambulance coordinator. Mr. Sherwood said this amount was a state assessment for that service. Councilmember Walsh asked what it pays for. The response was the cost is to make sure there is coordination for transporting a patient to a hospital.

Councilmember Mulligan asked if there was some attempt to institute a program for disability insurance instead of paying out for sick time. Fire Chief Rooney said he didn't have a comment on that because it was a negotiation issue.

Councilmember Mulligan asked what the figure would be to keep all the firehouses open. Fire Chief Rooney said the cost would be \$1.1 million.

Fire Chief Rooney returned to the matter of indefinite sick leave. He clarified there were procedures to follow and it was just not a matter of paying out.

Councilmember Gomes asked about the sick time policy. He noted that it seemed sick time is compiled and the result is paying out indefinitely through retirement. Fire Chief Rooney explained that people only get what they are entitled for that particular year, no time can be accrued.

*Councilmember Curwen thanked the Fire Chief Rooney for participating in the review.

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ADJOURNMENT

- ** COUNCILMEMBER CURWEN MADE A MOTION TO ADJOURN
- ** COUNCILMEMBER SILVA SECONDED
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Diane Graham
Telesco Secretarial Services

City of Bridgeport
Budget Committee
May 4, 2005

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET & APPROPRIATIONS
PUBLIC HEARING
MAY 5, 2005**

ATTENDANCE: Robert Curwen, Chairman; Councilmembers Freer, Mojica, McCarthy, Walsh, Silva, Webb.

OTHERS: Councilmembers Holloway, Gomes, Mulligan, Piviroto, Santacroce, DePara.

The Public Hearing was called to order at 6:10 p.m. by the Chairman.

Antonio Muniz, 1024 Lindley Street, a senior at Central said he is a volleyball player, a bowler and in the band, all of which will be affected by budget cuts. They should not take away arts and sports, which are needed in order to get into college. The greatest thing a child can do is express themselves; don't take that away.

Margie Powell, 196 Pott Street, said that she is a teacher and the Mayor and the Council receive an "F". They have failed to make children a priority. Education is not in line with other departments in the City. They have failed to provide the money needed so that their children can be educated in the 21st century so they can be prepared for the jobs of tomorrow. The Council can be successful by making children a priority and putting the money back where it belongs. They will not get her district's vote in the next election if they vote for this budget.

James Mezares, 354 Gregory Street, a security guard and head coach at Bassick (and a graduate) said that the City should not leave children behind.

Michael Robles, 4005 Main Street, said he is part of a Latin fraternity. They adhere to educational excellence. \$8,500,000 is being cut from children who need it. Some children have to stand in the classroom because there are no places to sit. Mayor Fabrizio is a disgrace for coming up in education. This is appalling. A lack of education makes people live in a certain environment. Mr. Robles read an excerpt from Tupac Shakur's mother saying that the only thing blacks are wanted for is when they want to put them in prison.

Matthew Mosa, 616 Wayne Street, said there are fights in school and they need money for security guards.

Frances Morales, 616 Wayne Street, said she was told that money is being cut for counselors. If kids have no one to talk to in 6th grade, when they go into high school, they end up in the streets. We need to educate the children.

Suzanne Chenery said 51,000,000 school days are lost nationwide due to absenteeism. Dental care is the number one illness of children. Dental hygiene services are not available to people and often times the only way they can get it is in the schools. These programs must be maintained in the schools. The Department of Public Health and Social Services is essential.

Rev. Timothy Howard, East Gregory Street, spoke for himself and those who might not be able to speak. Everyone knows the value of education. If this budget is cut, they will not be helping the City. They must find a way to fund the needs of this City. This is a moral issue. Senior citizens pay some of the highest taxes in the U.S. and should not have to beg for education. People make lost of money on the bail system. A mind is a terrible thing to waste. He asked the committee to go back and find a way to fund education.

Herman Illingworth, 133 Bronx Avenue, said tonight is for the children. The children must pay for the deficit of the City's budget, according to the Mayor's budget. The \$8,000,000 cut to the budget is a great disservice to all of the children of Bridgeport. After so many years of neglect, they should have expected that this time would come. The Board of Education request was a reasonable, status quo request. He asked that the education budget not be cut.

Margaret Hiller, 50 Beacon Street, said they cannot rebuild the economic base of this City without funding the budget. The Mayor should not call himself the "Education Mayor".

Marilyn Oudrasikt said that the City has shortchanged its children as much as they accuse the State of doing. The education budget has decreased the most under this council and this mayor. She believed there will be additional funding under the State. Most members of the Bridgeport Delegation are working very hard to bring more dollars to Bridgeport. The State will be watching the City very cautiously. What the City contributes to education matters in Hartford. They need to show that education is not the lowest priority in Bridgeport. She urged the Council to do the right thing.

Audrey Grogins, President of BOE, said she knows what the Council is going through, but they are in dire need. They are far from bridging the gap. They might have to cut out all high school athletics and guidance counselors. They have a goal and ethical obligations to provide equal educational opportunities to the students of Bridgeport as if they lived in other communities in Connecticut, and they cannot do it by themselves. They have to put the children first. They will do everything they can, but the Council has to do everything they can do.

Kim McLaughlin, 110 Hale Terrace, said tremendous damage has been done by floating this budget in public. She watched teachers, students and staff at Central last night start to think about their futures. If you take this back, the damage is still done. She asked that the

Council and the Mayor not play games with their children's futures. This is not a game and we are not going away. Everyone has heard a very sorry excuse – it is not my fault, it is the Board of Education. They are not stupid; they know how government works. The Council and the Mayor are the only ones they will hold accountable and that should not be underestimated.

Luis Valencia, 399 Fairview Avenue, said they struggle to have an education but they have to deal with fights, violence and drugs. They want to go to school to learn, not to be beat up. They have their counselors to go to. Kids have to sit on the floor in school and deal with family conditions. The Council does not know how to do what they have to do.

Baxter Walsh, 280 Testing Avenue, said there is frustration about the academic assessment, high dropout rate, etc., with the children of Bridgeport. They should provide good working conditions, experienced guidance, work materials, clean restrooms and cafeterias, a safe and friendly environment for the children. Who would choose to deprive the children? Taking money from the Education budget is depriving the children. Given the lack of funding, someone is going to be hurt, and it should not be the children. He asked that the education budget not be cut.

Donna Thompson-Bennett, 45 East Eaton Street, said she is a parent coordinator. Her position is a grant position and has nothing to do with this budget. The Council has the opportunity to work with the parents. This is unethical and the Council and the Mayor need to repent. The Mayor should never call himself the education mayor. There are committed students who need counselors. The Council President has the opportunity to be the Education Council of Bridgeport. Their word is as good as their bond. A City is only as good as its school system; support the budget.

Bernard Williams, 617 Summerfield Street & Iris Polino, Director of Social Services for the City, said he will be employed with his training and come back as a taxpayer. The Social Services Department should have \$72,000 put back into this budget. They provide six different programs. They provide education, medical services and are an extension to the Board of Education.

Durosda Crump, 741 Williams Street, said education is all they have. Cutting that will hurt a lot of kids. This committee should bring this money back to Bridgeport.

Canddi Young, 1785 Central Avenue, representing Social Services, said there are 1700 grandparents who are raising their grandchildren. Without Social Services' help, they would be lost. They give support and it is not fair to cut \$71,383.

Rochelle Kovachi, 33 Ameridge Drive, said she is a homeowner. If the City does not provide matching funds, social services will lose the ability to provide help to the most vulnerable.

Mary Beth Lang, 226 Ludlowe Road, Fairfield, President of the Bridgeport Education Association, said that a general statute (10-262I) says increases in state funding cannot be used to decrease city appropriations. The state increased the grant by more than \$1,800,000 but the Board of Education appropriation was actually less than last year. This year, the Mayor recommends an increase of \$1,100,000 but the Governor is proposing an increase of \$2,200,000. Ms. Lang asked where the money has gone. The city manipulates the in-kind contributions. She asked that they do the right thing and review the Mayor's recommendation.

Juanita Duncan, 65 Federal Road, spoke in favor of social services. She has a very bad tax problem and turned to social services. She has one of her three grandchildren in private school and hopes to put the second in as well. Social services is providing help to her with her house. She said that the Council shouldn't be in office if they cannot provide for the school children.

Samurie Robinson, 19 Horace Street, said she is the mother of two children in the school system and works for social services. They are a small department and are not asking for much. They are proactive in obtaining grants. They are asking for the \$72,000 that the City agreed to pay when they signed the contracts. Without the matching funds, grants will be pulled. The underserved will then be out with no services. The other issue is the schools. The Mayor should be told how everyone here tonight feels.

Adam Waterbury, Harding Football & Track coach and many team members, said he is 23. These kids need athletics the most. There are teaching positions that are being cut and it is ridiculous. They are taking guidance away, as well as art, music and athletics. Without these, where are these kids going to go? They need supplies and furniture. One of the students said they really need what they are trying to cut back on. He spoke of all of the Councilmembers who were not present at this hearing.

Andrew Martinez, 1725 Old Town Road, said this budget cut is social injustice. Education is promise to children in an urban environment. There is a link between education spending and urban development. Property values correlate to education funding. When you make budget cuts, you take ten steps back.

Herminio M. Planas, 750 Pratt Street, spoke about the detrimental affect that the Mayor's budget would have on their children if it passes. How can their mayor complain to the state about its funding? Rep. Caruso asked how they could convince other legislators to provide more funding for education if the city fails to pay its share. Mr. Planas said that the education budget was decreased last year and this year the mayor is recommending a decrease of \$8,500,000. Education is falling behind. They have less funding per student than Hartford and New Haven. Teachers are leaving in search of better working conditions. He asked officials to look hard at this budget.

Evelyn Hayes, 66 Douglas Street, said for the city to cut another \$8,500,000 – the schools can't take it and the children don't deserve it. Classes are overflowing. \$1,000,000 is being cut for books that the kids need. She came from the Trumbull school system and did not have the problems they have here. It is disgusting that the mayor made a doctor's appointment tonight at 7 p.m. rather than attending this meeting. The Mayor's Cabinet should give back 20% of their salaries.

Arturo Rodriguez, 118 Westfield Avenue, said he is a concerned parent of two children in the educational system. It is the Councilor's job to fight for the education of the children; to bring the necessary business into Bridgeport. If they don't do their jobs, they won't be re-elected.

Jackie Romanoff, Harborview Towers, said she was here to speak for Healthnet. She uses this service and they help her. It needs to stay open. They saved her life.

James Brown, Harborview Towers, spoke in favor of the medical clinic.

Janet Walker, Harborview Towers, said that their medical clinic is being taken away. Their residents are senior citizens and terminally ill individuals.

Peter George, 532 Maplewood Avenue, a homeowner, taxpayer and retired teacher from the Bridgeport school system, said it grieves him that they have to beg and grovel for money that is rightfully theirs for education. The Mayor's budget will cut education by \$8,000,000. Last year, they cut it by \$5,000,000. This is unconscionable and cannot be allowed to continue. It is an ethical and a moral issue. He begged the Council to do what they know is right. The Council is saying that they don't give a damn about the City.

Max Medina, Jr., 140 Hickory Street, said he is the proud parent of four children. Each year, Councilmembers Gomes and Walsh fight for more education money. The mayor's budget is disgusting and will take the heart and soul out of the budget. The mayor has shown he does not care about the schools or its citizens. If this budget is approved, it will be an injury upon the school district from which it will never recover. He addressed every Council member present individually and said if they found the money for the Bluefish, they can find the money for the school system. They need to pass an appropriate tax increase and take care of the children.

Crosby Kelly, 704 Iranistan Avenue, said his children have graduated from the Bridgeport school system and asked that they vote their hearts and minds next week as they consider the fate of their children. There are people in this city who still care. If this budget is cut, children will be sent down the road to hopelessness and despair. He asked the Council to do the right thing.

Marilyn Middlemass, 119 Hickory Street, said that a person needs food, water, shelter to survive, but children also need education. She is a taxpayer and her taxes have increased

every year. She wouldn't mind it if she knew that money would fund her children and other children. She can't continue to pay her taxes while getting nothing from the educational system in return. They need to give their children a chance.

Rev. Mary Lee, 125 Hillcrest Road, asked what or who is more important than their children. She asked that they visit her first grade class and think about what is really important. Their children are the future of today. If children cannot read or write or have their emotional problems tended to, what will Bridgeport be? Their city is robbing their children of what they deserve. They need the money in the school system. Bridgeport would rather build a jail or a courthouse than invest in their children. It is important that their children get the best education possible.

Melanie Rodriguez, 62 Pearl Harbor Circle, a sophomore at Central, said she is a well educated Hispanic female who is determined to graduate. She needs guidance in how to apply to college. Her guidance counselor is doing everything he can to help her obtain scholarships. The idea of providing bus passes will not work. She will not get home until 6:00 at night. She also spoke about cutting after school activities. The budget cut will not benefit anyone. It is not going to happen!

Bryan Dell, 81 Lorraine Street, said he was the future of tomorrow. He is a student at Central. He asked to be given a school where he can learn and get an education.

Ann D. Bernard, 294 Ellsworth Street, Principal of Walters Middle School, said she is speaking tonight for the parents who are not here for their children. All of these children are important. It is time society took responsibility and did the right thing for their children.

Diana Black, 286 Brooks Street, parent of a Central High student, said only a fool would continue to do the same things wrong. Only a fool would cut the budget. She advised the Council to get creative with the resources they have. We pay the Mayor a salary; where is he?

Rev. Dr. Brian Schofield-Boelt said he is a school volunteer at Black Rock School and makes tough decisions at his church every day. Nothing is more important than our children. This is a great opportunity to say no to this proposed budget. It is a short-term solution to a long-term problem. He was at the Breakfast this morning and the mayor should have chosen to be here tonight.

Margie McAllister, 116 Yacht Street, said in order to be powerful, one must be knowledgeable.

Carmen Nieves, 573 Stillman Street, said they have to identify the problem, analyze it and solve it. She asked that the budget be reconsidered. An 8.5 million dollar budget cut should not be made. Teachers will be leaving and we will be doubly worse off. She said

truancy is already a problem and will be made worse by giving kids bus passes to get to school. The kids will end up in the streets.

Margon Webb, 467 Maplewood Avenue, spoke of assistance he has received over the years from teachers and guidance counselors. If they weren't there, where would he be? His sister will be affected by these cuts.

Erie Ocasio, 181 Thompson Street, spoke on behalf of the Class of 2006. He said education is everything. Students will not wait for their bus downtown and will lead to sides being taken between students from different schools. They give money to the Bluefish and Harbor Yard, and they need to fund art and music. Cutting teachers would be disastrous. He spoke of how important it is to have counselors to speak to and closed by saying that the budget was total BS.

Angie Senete, 170 Kelsey Street, said every child is a precious gift and asked them to look inside their hearts. Children see cracked walls, not enough books, not enough teachers, etc. She wants them to know that all things are possible. She asked why they don't receive the same quality of education that children in Fairfield County receive.

Sean Nichols, 100 Clarkson Street, said there is violence in all students in Bridgeport. In the past few months, he has been in more fights than there are textbooks in his classroom.

Pastor Willie Amarton, 212 Goddard Avenue, said he had another appointment tonight and rescheduled it, for an excellent educational system should be the #1 concern of all of the members of Bridgeport, included elected and appointed officials. He said even in years where there was a surplus, the City came back with a cut budget. This needs to be reversed. He would be happy to pay an extra mill or two. Today is Cinco De Mayo. If this budget does not get fixed, Cinco De Mayor.

Debbie Halloway, 300 Pleasantview Avenue, said she has five children, two of whom are still in the school system. Kids wants to know what they did. Parents want to know why they are taking from their children. She said she did not give the right to discipline her child to anyone else.

Joy Soares, 86 Hawthorne Street, a sophomore at Central High School, said she was shocked that the Mayor was not present tonight. She asked how all of the kids of all of the schools will get out on the buses. She said sports are very important for the community.

An unidentified man, representing the Bridgeport Library, said that the library is an incredibly important part of the fabric of the city. Their budget is less than 1% of the city's budget. They are partners with the education system. He pleaded that the library budget not be cut and to reinstitute cuts made in previous years.

Michael Golnik, 55 Carnegie Avenue, said both federal and state governments require matching funds and operational funds in place before they will issue grants. The library is critical to quality of life and part of the educational infrastructure. They serve people in many various ways.

Ed _____, a member of the Library Board of Directors, said that the library is an asset. The educational asset of the library is well known. They hope that the City budget is looked at in terms of immediate viability. He asked that \$2,000,000 in cuts be restored and supplemented with \$70,000. The other issue is long-term planning, and he asked for help.

Bernadette D. Clark-Daenu, 139 Trumbull Avenue, introduced her daughter. And spoke of the education she has received and the help she has received from her guidance counselor. With the recommended cuts, it would be devastating for her daughter and all other students. Regarding busing, it is a nightmare now with only a few students taking the bus.

Lyle Hasno Jones, 87 Weber Avenue, said there is nothing more important than the education of their children. They are paying high taxes but it is not going for their children. A mayor who proposes a budget like this and then does not have the respect to be present – there is no excuse. Taking guidance counselors out of the schools is serious. The mayor needs to find another way to deal with this money. If he is not equipped to run this city, he should turn it over to someone else.

Shrinike Mighty, 80 Clinton Avenue, a Harding High School student, said sports and extracurricular activities are important and keep kids from going down the wrong path. Why should schools be punished for something they didn't create. When you cut things, what do you leave us with?

Cameron Rivera spoke of classes where she does not have a set unless other students are absent and the importance of sports.

Barbara Bahi, 68 Highland Avenue, said they want education for their children.

Nicardo Delerhaye, 174 Gieve Street, a senior at Bassick and the student representative to the Board of Education, spoke of everything his guidance counselors have done for him. Students keep a certain GPA so they can play sports. There are many classrooms with only one set of books. Many of their teachers are leaving for the suburbs because their resources keep getting cut. How can they expect that thousands of students will get to the bus terminal? How long are they going to tell students that they are not important?

Edna Chukuvra, 61 Palmer Street, a Central student, said she is a straight A student and plays sports and is involved in club. The 40 teaching positions that would be cut would significantly impact the students. Athletics are what keep the majority of students in

school and they depend on them for scholarships to college. She also said that city buses would be chaos. If money for supplies and furniture is further reduced, how do they expect children to learn? Education is all she has.

Erika Castillo, 328 William Street, a sophomore at Central Magnet, said they need community service and athletics for college. She spoke of the help given to her by her guidance counselor in 8th grade. She spoke of the bus pass issue and said it will be a problem. It is unreliable for getting kids to school on time.

Kevin Muhammed said he was proud of the school system. He graduated from Bassick. He was in danger of failing in his senior year. His counselor helped him in terms of a scholarship and he now has a Masters Degree. They need to stop kidding themselves. Education has to be cultivated and nurtured. The only way out is to get an education.

Joyonia Mack, 142 Dover Street, a student, said she has a dream of knowledge and sports. If athletics is taken away, they will deny her dream. She has to share her books with three other students in her class.

Vickie Peterson, 312 Goddard Avenue, said she is a taxpayer and mother and asked if anyone had thought about using the interest from the state lottery system; it was supposed to be for education. What about the money that Governor Rowland took from the City (\$8,000,000)? The opposite of creativity is violence. The Mayor was a coward tonight. The Bridgeport school does not work. She asked the Council to reconsider the budget.

Crystal Wilkins, 14 Reservoir Avenue, said it bugged her that the Mayor's chair is empty. She has no children but she cares; the Mayor has to care. People should not have to move to the suburbs to have a good education. Mayor Ganim and Governor Rowland did wrong, but the children have been given the sentence. You don't take a devastated system and cut it even more.

Jose Morales, 106 Steuben Street, a senior at Central, said it is ridiculous to take away 40 teachers, all sports at the high school and all buses for the high schools. Mayor Fabrizi is too scared to come here. People put their hearts into playing sports.

Chase Bolling spoke against taking away sports, guidance counselors and the impact of "No Child Left Behind".

Peter Cox, a coach at Central, said almost everyone in prison was not in sports. He promises every one of his football players that if they get a 3.5 GPA and 1000 on the SATs, they will get into college. Taking away sports will turn their high schools into prisons. 99% of his senior team this year is going on to college.

Omar Chukwanah, 61 Palmer Street, said all her children went to Central. She asked the Council to realize that they have an obligation to fulfill with the students to give them what they are supposed to give them.

The Chairman closed the Public Hearing at 10:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl Telesco
Telesco Secretarial Services

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
FRIDAY, MAY 6, 2005**

ATTENDANCE: Bob Curwen, Co-Chairman; Rafael Mojica, Co-Chairman; Andres Ayala; Carlos Silva; Thomas Mulligan; Tom Sherwood; Amy Vizzo-Paniccia; Angel DePara; Tom McCarthy; Henry Webb; Robert Walsh

STAFF: Mark Anastasi, City Attorney

OTHER: Marilyn Santacroce; Mike Lupkas

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting started at 6:15 p.m.

Mr. Sherwood gave an overview of the effects. The majority of the cuts are in the personnel area. The Mayor's recommended budget calls for 3 reductions – a deputy, a paralegal, and an assistant city attorney. The deputy would not be paid by the general fund. The attorney is under the capital administrative budget. The other attorneys that do work on this record the hours which will pay for the deputy. Budgetarily, there are savings because the actual body won't be eliminated. It will be offset by the transfer that comes in from the hours booked to capital projects. It will be offset by any attorney who works on purchasing, contracts, etc., relative to capital projects. Mr. McCarthy asked what union code "b" meant. Mr. Sherwood explained that it should be a "q". It's the coding for part-time assistants. Chairman Mojica asked Attorney Anastasi if the City Attorney's office has a rainy day fund for when they settle out of court or when they hire outside attorneys. If they do have such a fund, and the money is not used, is it rolled over to the next fiscal year. Mr. Sherwood responded that on page 152, there are two accounts listed for Attorney Anastasi's claims, #3005 (personal property claims award) and #3010 (personal property claims attorney). Account #6130 is for Attorney Anastasi's legal services, or the ability to use outside counsel. Attorney Anastasi explained that two line items, litigation services and legal services, had been combined over the past few years. The litigation services paid court filing fees, deposition fees, stenographer fees, jury claim fees. Legal services paid for hiring outside attorneys. If there is money left over, it doesn't roll over, but it counts toward surplus.

Mr. Sherwood said if there is a case with a reasonable expectation of a settlement, the auditors can say to book a reserve. Attorney Anastasi has a meeting with the auditors every October and makes a reserve fund out of what could be potential liabilities for the City. Cases are categorized as likely, liability possible, and remote. Any case that could come up within the next year, and is over \$200,000 or \$250,000, a reserve amount would be put into the budget. In order to avoid large legal payouts, they take the year-end audit and carve out a piece, even if there is a surplus. It's set up as an accounts payable liability, and it's held as a potential payable. It comes off the books and goes on to a balance sheet account. The options are a straight line item transfer

or take out a note. There are no continuing structured settlements that are outstanding. Attorney Anastasi has requested a significant increase in suits and claims.

Mr. DePara asked Attorney Anastasi about the Cloohan litigation. Attorney Anastasi responded that the Supreme Court took it from the Appellate Court. The City has filed their brief. The City has asked for and received the commitment of the CCM and the Attorney General's Office to file supportive briefs. Attorney Anastasi said he feels the City will be successful in getting the case remanded back to a different arbitrator. The amount is close to \$1M in fees. The loss is about \$7M.

Mr. McCarthy asked where the \$1M came out of for the Schiller and Georgia case? Attorney Anastasi replied that it's being charged back to the labor relations account. It came out of the Legal Services account over a six year period.

Mr. Walsh asked about the \$1M firefighters lawsuit, and if something can be done to better evaluate it beforehand. Attorney Anastasi said a significant settlement amount was offered but was denied. Mr. DePara asked if the money should be put in a separate account. Mr. Sherwood replied that the money sits in a general fund until it's needed.

**** MR. MCCARTHY MOVED TO GO TO EXECUTIVE SESSION.**
**** MR. SILVA SECONDED.**
**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The committee went into Executive Session at 6:55 p.m.

The committee reconvened at 7:10 p.m.

There was some discussion surrounding large settlements and going out to bond. Mr. Lepkas said cases take a long time. Attorney Anastasi suggested that if you don't increase the line items, the legal account #3010 (personal property claims attorney) could have a problem. An amount of \$900 was requested, but \$400 was received.

Mr. McCarthy wanted to confirm that city money is not being spent on Poland Springs water. The previous administration did not allow it. Mr. Sherwood said that city policy allows it if the testing comes back not clear. The policy is across the board for all departments.

Chairman Curwin thanked Attorney Anastasi for his time.

The public speaking portion of the meeting ended at 7:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn Marr
Telesco Secretarial Services

**CITY of BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET and APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
SPECIAL MEETING
MAY 25, 2005**

ATTENDANCE: Councilmember's: Curwen, McCarthy, Mojica, Silva,

OTHERS PRESENT: Council member's: Andres Ayala, Mulligan, Walsh, Webb

BOARD of EDUCATION

MEMBERS PRESENT: Dr. Tolbert, Mr. Simmons, Ms. Nielson, Ms. Geter, Ms. Nubriegs, Mr. Hewitt

CALL TO ORDER

Councilmember Curwen called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

PUBLIC HEARING

139—04 Budget Modification (FY 04/05) for BOE to comply with Minimum Education Requirements (MER) from: General Fund, To: Education Cost Sharing (ECS) and Text Books Accounts

Mr. Carroll stated that after they approved the current budget, the state approve more funds. He said it was expected they would move more funds to the BOE for the current year in the amount of \$1,280,124.00 (*see back up information attached*).

Councilmember Mulligan asked if the funs came from the state as ECS and if it was designated for education. Mr. Carroll said yes.

Mr. Carroll further noted that the amount of \$142,435,547 and \$93,624.00 were amounts that were modified as outlined in the document attached.

Mr. Simmons asked about the amount of \$599k+. Mr. Carroll said there hasn't been any action on that amount yet.

Councilmember McCarthy asked if there would be more funds appropriated. Mr. Carroll said no. The fiscal year would be closed before then.

**City of Bridgeport
Budget and Appropriations Committee
Special Meeting
May 25, 2005**

Councilmember McCarthy asked about providing dedicated books for the schools. He stated that he would like to see monies go toward books, since there is still a big concern regarding this. Mr. Simmons said they would continue to have spending problems. But he stated that the BOE has implemented some controls for textbooks.

Mr. Carroll updated that the state audit has begun and by July 1, they will know what the full payroll is, so they can act on it for next year.

Mr. Simmons spoke about the ECS transfer. He said this had to be included in the budget for the amount that has been appropriated. He asked if they should be going with what has been appropriated initially. Mr. Carroll said yes. He pointed out that their budget was \$157,500.

Mr. Simmons asked when they go into the new year, how will they know what they have for ECS. Councilmember Curwen said they would know when the state settles the budget. He noted this is done after the City Council has completed their budget recommendations.

Mr. Simmons asked why the amount of \$93k was different from the \$599k+ amount. Mr. Carroll said because he had confirmation from the state on that amount, but he didn't for the \$599k. Mr. Simmons asked when the \$599k comes in, could they be assured they will receive those funds. Mr. Carroll said depended on what the Mayor decided. But again, there was no confirmation yet on the \$599k amount.

Councilmember Curwen said the City Council made a commitment at the public hearing that as monies come in, they will move as much as they could to the Board of Education.

Councilmember Curwen further expressed that there should be more of a collective effort between all parties with the end result for the benefit of the schools.

**** COUNCILMEMBER McCARTHY MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE A BUDGET MODIFICATION TO INCREASE REVENUE LINE ITEM 001-310-1800-R020 EDUCATION COST SHARING \$1,186,500 and \$93,624 and ADJUST THE BOARD OF EDUCATION BUDGET TO PRE-BUY TEXTBOOKS ACCOUNT #001-310-1800-2140-4760 FOR THE NEXT SCHOOL YEAR TOTALING AN EQUAL APPROPRIATION INCREASE OF \$1,1280,124**
**** COUNCILMEMBER SILVA SECONDED**
**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

***Consent Calendar**

Councilmember Mulligan asked what the amount of \$93,624 was for. Mr. Carroll clarified it was ECS monies.

City of Bridgeport
Budget and Appropriations Committee
Special Meeting
May 25, 2005

ADJOURNMENT

- ** COUNCILMEMBER McCARTHY MOVED TO ADJOURN
- ** COUNCILMEMBER SILVA SECONDED
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

The meeting was adjourned at 6:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Diane Graham
Telesco Secretarial Services

City of Bridgeport
Budget and Appropriations Committee
Special Meeting
May 25, 2005

CITY of BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET and APPROPRIATIONS
COMMITTEE of the CITY COUNCIL
JUNE 13, 2005

ATTENDANCE: Councilmember's: Mojica, Gomes, Freer, Silva, Walsh, Webb (arrived at 6:40 p.m.)

OTHERS PRESENT: Councilmember's: Andres Ayala, Mulligan, Rodgerson

CALL TO ORDER

Councilmember Mojica called the meeting to order at 6:40 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Approval of committee meeting minutes: April 20, 2005

Approval of committee meeting minutes: April 29, 2005

Approval of committee meeting minutes: May 4, 2005

Approval of committee meeting minutes: May 5, 2005

Approval of committee meeting minutes: May 6, 2005

Approval of committee meeting minutes: May 25, 2005

** COUNCILMEMBER SILVER MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES
** COUNCILMEMBER WALSH SECONDED
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

178-04 Approval of the Issuance of Variable Rate General Obligation Bonds Pursuant to an Interest Rate Swap Agreement

Councilmember Mojica said he was asked by Mike Lutkus to withdraw this item. So they were ready for a motion to withdraw, because the matter was still not ready and it has already been over a year. He noted the people that were supposed to give a presentation on this weren't ready yet.

** COUNCILMEMBER SILVER MADE A MOTION TO ACCEPT THE WITHDRAWAL
** COUNCILMEMBER WALSH SECONDED
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

City of Bridgeport
Budget & Appropriations Committee
June 13, 2005

44-04 Funding for taping at Committee Meeting

Councilmember Mojica stated this was a request submitted by Councilmember Vizzo-Paniccia, but there was no money allocated for it in this years budget.

Councilmember Vizzo-Paniccia said she requested that all committee meetings be audio taped; so everything then is recorded on tape and the minutes would be transposed as usual. She said the cost would be \$1,500.00 for the year.

Councilmember Andres Ayala asked for clarification if she was looking to have the meetings videotaped. Councilmember Vizzo-Paniccia said no, just audio taped.

Councilmember Vizzo-Paniccia clarified the meetings would be taped and kept on file should a question ever arise as to what was stated during a meeting.

Councilmember Rodgeron asked if there were funds appropriated for the new Public Announcement (PA) system. Councilmember Andres Ayala said he went with Mr. Estrada to test out new PA equipment. He thought that by September, a new sound system would be implemented.

Councilmember Rodgeron asked if audio taping would be done for City Council meetings also. He expressed that with a better PA system in place, it shouldn't be a problem to have the City Clerk manually tape meetings for council meetings, provided everyone speaks clearly and into the microphone.

Councilmember Mojica asked if they wanted to table the matter to obtain all the costs involved for taping.

Councilmember Andres Ayala stated he wasn't sure there was a need for audio taping committee meetings at this time. He relayed that he has not heard any requests from anyone to check the archives of what was said during a meeting.

Councilmember Mulligan stated that he thought it would be a good idea to have the committee meetings taped, in the event that some pertinent information was inadvertently left out of the minutes.

Councilmember Mojica stated that although some of the councilmember's was more of a stickler than others regarding minutes; there may be incidences where information was mistakenly left out of the minutes. So he agreed it might be a good idea to have the meetings taped also.

** COUNCILMEMBER SILVA MADE A MOTION TO TABLE THIS MATTER TO OBTAIN MORE INFORMATION FROM TELESKO SECRETARIAL SERVICES ON PRICING AND THE AUDIOTAPING PROCEDURE

** COUNCILMEMBER WEBB SECONDED

** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

165-04 Capital Plan Modifications for School Construction Work

City of Bridgeport

Budget & Appropriations Committee

June 13, 2005

Mr. Jack Butkus, Director of Operations Board of Education approached. He stated that after he submitted a budget for a series of needs, it was slightly different than what the board said. He reviewed the needs for heating and vent upgrades at Central High School and high school #4.

Councilmember Mojica asked what the amount was. Mr. Butkus said it was \$26 million, with no money approved or borrowed, and asked not to delete from the capital plan.

Mr. Butkus said there was also a need for windows replacements at Central High School, improvements at Skane School and three roof replacements at Sheriden School. And two real jobs at the new Science and Technology Magnet High School. This involves an issue before the Board of Education. He spoke about the curriculum choices and the plan for a 1,500 student school and 1,000 seats for Bridgeport students to relieve overcrowding at Central High School. He further reviewed the equal funding to balance accounts out for the new magnet schools. He said the superintendent asked not to give up high school #4 just yet. He further explained they wouldn't know about the grants for a year, so they needed a capital plan listing now. He asked for authorization to borrow for the new roofs.

Councilmember Mojica asked the amount he was requesting for the roofs. Mr. Butkus said the amount was between \$15 and \$15.5 million.

Councilmember Mojica asked if he was talking about just listing only. Mr. Butkus said yes, for the new magnet schools, not for authorization. But for the four others, he asked that those amounts be funded.

Councilmember Walsh asked if he was talking about a revised budget. Mr. Butkus explained the \$114k was only a listing, not actual cash, so it was listed as a decrease in the budget. Councilmember Walsh asked if this resulted in a decrease of \$114k. Mr. Butkus said that was correct.

Councilmember Walsh asked about the discussion of selling Ninety-Acres. Mr. Butkus said he didn't have any information on that. Councilmember Mojica said there was an article in the newspaper stating that there was money to buy Veterans Park.

Mr. Butkus offered further explanation about how grants are allocated and distributed per Councilmember Walsh's comments.

Councilmember Freer stated the national education trend has been to build smaller schools, but that trend has been disregarded to build larger schools. Even though it has been proven that smaller schools are more effective. So he questioned why they don't go with smaller schools. Mr. Butkus clarified they were building three (3) – (500) student schools that would function as cluster schools.

Councilmember Freer said it was a catch-22 in that the city needs new schools, but will cost millions in bonding to do. He stressed that people can't afford this. Mr. Butkus said they receive a higher reimbursement percentage for magnet schools that equal 15% reimbursement.

Councilmember Andres Ayala asked if they were modeling what the City of New Haven has done. Mr. Butkus said they have twelve (12) magnet schools.

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Councilmember Andres Ayala also questioned how they continue to go out and bond when it can't be afforded. He felt there was a formula out there that could allow a return of up to 99% reimbursement. Mr. Butkus said the face value of grants was 78% reimbursement.

Mr. Butkus expressed that by doing as proposed, they were not taking any opportunities away from the kids.

Councilmember Gomes asked if Barnum/Waltersville School would operate as a magnet school. Mr. Butkus said yes.

Councilmember Vizzo-Paniccia asked if there was room to enlarge Skane School. Mr. Butkus said there was 10,000 sq. ft. to work with.

Councilmember Vizzo-Paniccia asked about the existing elementary magnet schools, where the standards have gotten low. She questioned the fact that now they would be creating more magnet schools and she asked if they would be taking kids from the existing magnet schools and incorporating them into the new programs. Mr. Butkus said the term "*magnet*" was used differently than the state meaning. He explained that traditionally, they should be called "*themed schools*". But the intent is not to do away with business or health magnet programs.

Councilmember Vizzo-Paniccia asked if the standards would be raised at the new schools. Mr. Butkus said he wasn't sure.

Councilmember Mulligan asked who had the ultimate authorization over the schools. Mr. Butkus said the Bridgeport Board of Education had authority, the state doesn't run it.

Councilmember Mulligan asked about the differential of \$5k for students and \$2k for the city and why the city gets less money. Mr. Butkus said because the city has the benefit of the greater number of seats.

Councilmember Mulligan asked how large a parcel was being designated to the school at Veterans Park. Mr. Butkus said they have to stay within the property line.

Councilmember Mulligan asked for clarification on what he was asking for tonight. Mr. Butkus said of the four (4) first projects, they have case to fund, except for the \$114k that is needed for the new cycle. The commitment without cash is for the Science & Technology Magnet School at the high school totaling \$15 million +.

Councilmember Mulligan asked if he was looking for approval of the concept also. Mr. Butkus said the concept was for Board of Education approval. He was just looking for funding from the Budget Committee.

Councilmember Walsh asked if the Superintendent Ramos was on board with the request. Mr. Butkus said yes.

Councilmember Walsh asked what would happen if they don't obtain the 20% minimum by law. Mr. Butkus said the state would say they don't need a school and they will say let Bridgeport keep the school. Then they

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will be asked to pay the difference of grant percentage of 78%. He further clarified they need the funding commitment and permission to file for a grant from the Education Committee.

Councilmember Walsh stated he would vote against the request tonight in order to see what course the matter took. He had a concern about the purpose of the funding failing.

- ** COUNCILMEMBER SILVA MADE A MOTION TO APROVE
- ** COUNCILMEMBER WEBB SECONDED
- ** MOTION PASSED WITH THREE VOTES IN FAVOR AND TWO VOTES IN OPPOSITION
(COUNCILMEMBER'S FREER and WALSH)

*It should be noted that Councilmember Mojica broke the tie vote.

ADJOURNMENT

- ** COUNCILMEMBER SILVA MOVED TO ADJOURN
- ** COUNCILMEMBER WEBB SECONDED
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

The meeting was adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Diane Graham
Telesco Secretarial Services

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**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
AUGUST 8, 2005**

ATTENDANCE: Rafael Mojica, Co-chair; Carlos Silva, Robert Walsh, Tom Freer, Henry Webb (6:55 pm)

OTHERS: Andres Ayala, Council President; Edwin Gomes, Councilman, John Stafstrom, Pullman & Comley-Rand Counsel; Andy Abate, General Manager, WPCA; Peter Harris.

CoChairman Mojica called the meeting to order at 6:45 pm.

44-04 FUNDING FOR TAPING AT COMMITTEE MEETING

Mr. Mojica requested that the first item on the agenda, 44-04, be skipped for the time being. This was agreeable to everyone.

**209-04 RESOLUTION RE: CLEAN WATER FUND FINANCING BORROWING
AUTHORIZATION - CSO FACILITIES.**

Mr. Stafstrom introduced himself to the committee and gave a brief overview of the three resolutions, 209-04, 210-04, 211-04, which are resolutions for financing certain projects at the Water Pollution Control Authority (WPCA). These projects are supposed to be funded by grants and loans from the Clean Water Fund, which is when the State finances bonds to fund grants and loans to municipalities. The loans offered by the State through this Fund are long term loans with a 2% interest rate. If the City went out to finance these loans on their own, they would get the City's financing rate on municipal bonds, which would be around 5 or 6 %. These resolutions come before the City Council because the City pledges its full faith and credit behind any loan. The WPCA is set up as a separate entity and funds its operations with user fees. The actual principle and interest on any loans are paid with WPCA user fees. However, the Clean Water Fund is set up so that in the case of municipalities that have a separate WPCA, the City is required to pledge its full faith and credit as a contingent guarantee behind any loans.

The three resolutions, one relating to the East and West Side Water Treatment Plants, the second related to the combined sewer overflows and the third relates to the pump stations.

When the WPCA was first formed back in 1987 or 1988, the Council put together the ordinance creating this, which it was required to create by the State Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). The City was found to be in violation of Clean Water Fund regulations and rules which resulted in the DEP going to court and getting a consent order, which is a court order. One of the requirements under this consent order is that the City of Bridgeport had to create a WPCA with designated user fees to go back into the project. The DEP had found that twenty years previous to that, the sewer operations were

included in the City's general fund and that the City had spent no money on any improvements to the plants, sewers or anything else.

The consent order required the City to create the WPCA and at the same time, the consent order required the City to embark on two types of projects, defined in broad categories. First required that the East and West Side treatment plants had to be brought up totally to code and to meet all current regulations. Secondly, the City had a combined sewer and sanitation system. That refers to places where the storm water flows into the sanitary sewer which normally works. However, with extreme rainfalls, the storm water can run into the sewer, mixes together, overflows and results in beaches being closed. The CSO project was to have the City go in and split its storm water sewers and sanitary sewers to prevent this from happening. In most cases, this project is completed, although there is still work to be done.

When asked how much the financing authorization was requesting, Mr. Stafstrom explained that the City Council passed a resolution in 1988, some 17 years ago, based on then current study, that stated that the projects would cost a certain amount and that the following items were to be included in the project. The City Council at that time, authorized up to 90 million plus in grants and loans. Since then, the resolution amends the types of projects that were listed before. Since 1988, some of the proposed projects are no longer current technology, or are projects that the WPCA decided not to move forward with for various reasons. Other things that are required now are new DEP regulations. Everything within this resolution was either required by the consent order or is a requirement by new, current regulations from the DEP. The previous resolution was drafted narrowly. What the WPCA is requesting to borrow more money for is in a number of these cases, the situation did not meet the original resolution, so the amended resolution was created to meet the new mandates and requirements. The amended resolution does not mandate the City to meet anything more than the original amount, but does say the different types of project needed now to complete the system some 17 years later can be included in those loans.

Mr. Strafstrom stated that the City of Bridgeport would be acting as a co-signer, but only on a contingent basis. The City would be obligated to pay the principle and the 2% interest on the loans is if the WPCA defaulted on them.

Mr. Freer stated that everyone on the Committee should be familiar with his feelings on debt service and that it was spiraling out of control. He did not feel that Mr. Strafstrom had accurately answered the question about how much of the 90 million dollars approved in 1988 had been used so far and what exactly is the City looking to bond right now. He also wondered if this would affect rates in the future.

Mr. Strafstrom replied that of the 90 million dollars, 77 million had been borrowed. The additional borrowing capacity under the original agreement works out to roughly 13 million dollars in loans for the wastewater treatment program.

In additional projects, Mr. Harris explained, which were addressed in the amended resolution, are permit related projects. Treatment plants have a permit that is required for operation. Periodically, the requirements are updated. They are now more stringent, particularly after the Long Island Sound Study. Discharges of nitrogen and chlorine now must be greatly limited. Nitrogen feeds algae which consume oxygen, and results in algae bloom and a dead Long Island Sound. Chlorine also kills marine life. These projects need to be done in order to meet the permit requirements. The City does not have a choice in this. The State says you will reduce the amount of nitrogen and chlorine discharged into the Sound to a certain level of parts per million effective as a certain date. When the permits come up for renewal - and the East Side permit expires this September - they will not be renewed unless the discharges meet regulations.

One solution is to approve the 2% interest loan over a twenty year period, which is economically less expensive than financing the amount through the City's bonding, which would be a 5 or 6% interest rate. The third alternative is to not borrow at all and put the money into the Capital Fund.

The original resolution confined itself to specific projects that were linked to the court order. The WPCA was created to operate and rehabilitate the treatment plants and to conform to DEP regulations. It also guaranteed to be staffed to certain levels to insure the facilities would be maintained properly. Seventeen years later,, the permit requirements have changed. Water returning to the Sound now must have reduced levels of particular chemicals. One of the last steps in the treatment of waste water has been chlorination to kill off any remaining bacteria. That still left a small amount of chlorine going into Long Island Sound. The DEP now requires cities to de-chlorinate the discharge water before releasing it into the Sound. The same is true of nitrogen.

Mr. Abate pointed out that in the resolution, everything following the phrase "Clarifying Modification" are new things that are not covered by the original resolution. The projects are all new requirements for a new permit.

Mr. Walsh wanted to know if only 77 million of the original 90 million had been borrowed, was the WPCA adding things to the list. Mr. Strafstrom explained that one project involving pumping sludge under Long Island Sound had been discovered to be technologically unfeasible and never implemented. In addition to the 77 million dollars in loans, the WPCA has been aggressive in applying for grants. So the grant money has also been applied towards the total cost of this. The final number will probably be about 105 million, between the loan amount and the "others" - grants, etc. These grants reduce the borrowing cost.

Mr. Walsh asked for clarification as to whether the original 90 million figure was too high.

Mr. Abate reiterated the points regarding the removal of a few projects, and explained that the resolution was to add a few projects on because the permit requirements have changed, but without increasing the need to borrow any more. Mr. Walsh expressed his

view that it sounded like the City had an extra 13 million dollars and this was how the WPCA was going to spend it. Mr. Abate reiterated his statement that the new projects were required by the permit regulations. Mr. Strafstrom informed the Committee that he had spent time with the DEP reviewing what actually needed to be done in order to meet permit requirements. All of the items on the resolution are required by the original consent decree or required by current permit regulations. In the 18 years since the original study was done, the requirements have become much more stringent.

Mr. Webb arrived at 6:55 pm.

Mr. Walsh pointed to the proposed use rate on March 17, 2005 which indicated it to be \$3.24 vs. \$2.84, which works out to a 14% increase rate. He questioned as to whether this rate was the highest in the state. Mr. Strafstrom replied that he did not know, but also pointed out that the City of Bridgeport takes care of both collections and sewer, where as most municipalities have the DPW doing collections.

Mr. Walsh said that some people might consider this to be a unfunded mandate by the State. Mr. Strafstrom replied that the State has levied these additional mandates on all the municipalities along Long Island Sound. The WPCA is proposing to borrow additional money but some of this money was borrowed up to 15 years ago and some of the principle amount has been paid off as new loans are coming on. This makes it a revolving fund. It is not as if the City was just going to add this on to the original amount.

Mr. Walsh wanted to know what could be done to make this rate neutral. He suggested putting off the borrowing until the City was retiring debt and make it rate neutral. Mr. Abate said that unfortunately, the City can not put off applying for permits. Mr. Walsh felt that the City should go to the State and ask for permission to delay the borrowing. He reminded the Committee that Bridgeport had requested permission to avoid particular situations because of financial concerns in the past.

Prior to the establishment of the WPCA, very little work was done on the system. Because of the total neglect of the system, and now the City must repair the damage. Mr. Strafstrom reiterated the point that these projects are permit requirements. If the requirements are not met a possible conclusion could be a return to court and another consent order.

Council President Ayala then asked what the penalties for the City if these requirements were not met. Mr. Abate replied that if the bonding was not set aside, then the City would be issued a consent order and the City would have to go out and get the money at a higher rate of interest. If the City decides not to do the work there are penalties up to \$25,000.

Mr. Strafstrom added that there is another way to do it, which is all at one time, but the money would have to be paid back immediately..

Mr. Freer stated that he viewed this as another tax and would not subject his constituents to a further financial burden. He said he was sorry, but he could not support these resolutions.

The Committee wanted to know if the loans would come back onto the customer in higher rates to pay for this loan. Mr. Harris responded that user fees would be responsible for part of the loan. Currently, the WPCA is paying down the loans, between 4.5 and 5 million dollars in payments a year. At least half of that amount is principle retirement. There will be very little increase in the Clean Water Fund loan project, even with these addition projects. Increases in the budget are usually utilities and contract services, which are driven by inflation.

Mr. Strafstrom pointed out that the program had started in 1990 with borrowing a lot of money and when examining the overall budget, a major portion of the work on the East Side and West Side has been completed, along with a significant portion of the CSO work. Paying back the loan over a 30 year period allows a significant portion of the principle to be paid off, while a short term loan would result in a very high interest rate. Even with the added loans, the principle debt will continue to decrease.

Mr. Strafstrom suggested that the Committee consider the additional resolutions at this time, also, This was agreeable to the Committee.

**210-04 - RESOLUTION RE CLEAN WATER FUND FINANCING BORROWING
AUTHORIZATION -WPCA TREATMENT PLANTS**

The CSO project is similar to the Waste Water Treatment Plant in that it was mandated by the DEP. The proposal does not amend the original authorization amount, but a number of the proposed projects have been expanded to include additional areas of the City which need to be addressed. The East Side of the City was left to be done last because the sewer system was so old that it needed total replacement.

There was some additional discussion regarding the various points and the financial numbers already covered.

**211-04 - RESOLUTION RE CLEAN WATER FUND FINANCING BORROWING
AUTHORIZATION -PUMP STATIONS**

Mr. Strafstrom explained that the pump stations are different in that they are not the subject of any original resolution from this Council. This is new proposed borrowing,, which the WPCA has approved.

Mr. Harris reported that there had been no major work done on them and they currently need to be rehabilitated. The ten pump stations have been evaluated by a consulting

engineer, which shows the deficiencies in the HVAC system and that the electrical cabinets are over 20 years old. Because of this, there is a long list of electrical and safety issues that must be addressed.

Mr. Silva said that after hearing all this information, that basically the City was going to be mandated to perform the work. He was concerned about the Steel Point area which is the focus of redevelopment and whether WPCA could handle the additional sewage without going into an additional project. Mr. Abate replied that he believed the WPCA could handle the additional discharge with the present setup in place.

Mr. Harris explained to the Committee that the WPCA could not handle a number of pump stations being out of service. To do the needed work, each station will have to be out of service for about a year, which is the estimated time it would take to do the work. Because of this, the project must be spread out over a number of years. The pump stations that are currently exist are dangerous areas for people to work in with problems with ventilation, old electrical wiring, and tight work spaces. Part of the project would be creating utility access stairs. This is critical because low lying areas need to have their sewage pumped from that section to a section where the pipes are gravity fed and eventually to the main treatment plant. If the stations are not working, then the sewage will back up to the source.

It was also stated the WPCA will be conducting public hearings on August 16, 2005.

After some further discussion on the various issues, the resolutions under discussion were brought to vote.

**** MR. SILVA MOVED TO APPROVE 209-04 - RESOLUTION RE CLEAN WATER FUND FINANCING BORROWING AUTHORIZATION - CSO FACILITIES**

**** MR. WEBB SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION CARRIED WITH 3 APPROVING (SILVA, WEBB & MOJICA) AND TWO OPPOSED (WALSH, FREER).**

**** MR. SILVA MOVED TO APPROVE 210-04 - RESOLUTION RE CLEAN WATER FUND FINANCING BORROWING AUTHORIZATION -WPCA TREATMENT PLANTS**

**** MR. WEBB SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION CARRIED WITH 3 APPROVING (SILVA, WEBB & MOJICA) AND TWO OPPOSED (WALSH, FREER).**

**** MR. WEBB MOVED TO APPROVE 211-04 - RESOLUTION RE CLEAN WATER FUND FINANCING BORROWING AUTHORIZATION -PUMP STATIONS**

**** MR. SILVA SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION CARRIED WITH 3 APPROVING (SILVA, WEBB &**

MOJICA) AND TWO OPPOSED (WALSH, FREER).

223-04 BUDGET MODIFICATION (FY 04/05) FOR BOE TO COMPLY WITH MINIMUM EDUCATION REQUIREMENT (MER) FROM: STATE FUND TO: EDUCATIONAL COST SHARING (ECS) AND TEXT BOOKS ACCOUNTS.

No one was present from the Board of Education and no information was available on the budget modification so after a brief discussion, the matter was tabled by general consent until the next meeting.

- ** MR. SILVA MOVED TO TABLE 223-04 BUDGET MODIFICATION (FY 04/05) FOR BOE TO COMPLY WITH MINIMUM EDUCATION REQUIREMENT (MER) FROM: STATE FUND TO: EDUCATIONAL COST SHARING (ECS) AND TEXT BOOKS ACCOUNTS.**
- ** MR. WEBB SECONDED.**
- ** THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

44-04 FUNDING FOR TAPING AT COMMITTEE MEETING.

Councilwoman Vizzo-Paniccia was not present to present information to the Committee, so after a brief discussion, the matter was tabled by general consent until the next meeting.

- ** MR. WALSH MOVED TO TABLE 44-04 FUNDING FOR TAPING AT COMMITTEE MEETING**
- ** MR. WEBB SECONDED.**
- ** THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

- ** MR. SILVA MOVED TO ADJOURN.**
- ** MR. WEBB SECONDED.**
- ** THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
SEPTEMBER 12, 2005**

ATTENDANCE: Robert Curwen, Co-Chair; Ralph Mojica, Co-Chair; Robert Walsh, Councilman; Carlos Silva, Councilman; Thomas McCarthy, Councilman.

STAFF:

OTHERS: Andraes Ayala, Council President; Michael Goldrick, City Librarian.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Curwen at 6:40 p.m.

Mr. Curwen introduced the members of the Committee and others attending for the benefit of the secretary.

Mr. Curwen announced that the Budget and Appropriations dinner, which was to be held on Wednesday, September 14, has been rescheduled for October 13, 2005 at Joseph's Steakhouse at 6:30 p.m.

44-04 FUNDING FOR TAPING AT COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Mr. Curwen stated that the maker for this resolution was Ms. AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia, who was not in attendance. He stated the item has been on the agenda four times. Mr. Mojica said the item has been appearing for the past four months and has been tabled numerous times. He said that was so they could find out more information as to how much it would cost the City, and that it was tabled in the past because Ms. Vizzo-Paniccia was not in attendance to give the Committee the information it was looking for, although it has been discussed. Mr. Mojica said the cost of the taping would be approximately \$1,500.00 based on other committees' findings for the same thing. For the sake of not having the item lingering any longer, and because the money isn't there to support it at this time, Mr. Mojica requested a motion to deny the item for lack of funds. Mr. Curwen called for discussion.

Mr. McCarthy asked if the taping was referring to video or audio taping. Mr. Mojica said it was for audio taping and explained that the meetings would be taped by microphones in front of each committee member and a boom microphone for any guests who wished to speak, then the tapes would be recorded and from the tapes reports would be sent back to the City, including a written transcription of what was said.

- ** MR. MOJICA MOVED TO DENY ITEM 44-04 DUE TO LACK OF FUNDING.
- ** MR. WALSH SECONDED.
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

223-04 BUDGET MODIFICATIONS (FY 04/05) FOR BOE TO COMPLY WITH MINIMUM EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS (MER) FROM: STATE FUND TO: EDUCATION COST SHARING (ECS) AND TEXT BOOK ACCOUNTS

Mr. Curwen said that Mr. Mojica had informed him at the beginning of the meeting that the City Clerk has given this particular item a new number even though it has been approved off the floor in front of the full Council at the last meeting. Mr. Curwen said he had never seen another number assigned to an item approved off the floor. It was his opinion that the Committee would need a clarification about this because by giving it a new number, the Committee would have to take action on it again. If the item has been approved off the floor from the full Council, it seemed as if it was being superseded.

Mr. Mojica said he had addressed that problem before having the item put on the agenda for tonight's meeting because the last time the Committee spoke about this particular item it was tabled to come back to Committee. In the time between that meeting and this one, it was taken directly off the floor in the Council meeting. He was unsure whether he had the clarification from Ms. Hudson or Ms. Murray, but he did speak with someone in the City Clerk's office who told him that when an item is taken directly off the floor it automatically was given a new number at that time. Mr. Mojica pointed out to the City Clerk's office that the numbers didn't match. He questioned that by having this particular number and having it tabled from B&A to come back to Committee, he figured that by putting it back on the agenda it would show a resolution that the item was approved by the Council off the floor and would show that some action was taken, and that was why it was back on the agenda.

Mr. McCarthy said that he would recommend that for this particular time, for this particular item, until the Committee clarifies it, that it be tabled. He said this was the safest way to handle it because if they go ahead and approve it again, the Committee may be approving an additional \$1.4 million from the City and he would hate to see that happen.

Mr. Ayala said that he would imagine since the item was contained in the given resolution it was probably the same coverage, and a withdrawal of the item would handle the situation, but to be on the safe side he agreed that tabling the item was probably the best way to handle it.

- ** MR. McCARTHY MOVED TO TABLE ITEM 223-04 UNTIL SUCH TIME AS FURTHER CLARIFICATION IS RECEIVED BY THE COMMITTEE.
- ** MR. WALSH SECONDED.
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

INFORMAL DISCUSSION CONCERNING UPCOMING BUDGE REVIEW
SCHEDULED TO START OCTOBER 2005

Mr. Curwen informed the Committee that he and Mr. Mojica had met and discussed having the Committee meet on a quarterly basis with the four or five strategic department heads for the City of Bridgeport to see where they are in respect to the City budgets, whether they are on, over or under; what cost-saving measures they may have taken; what they are doing as far as trimming the budget and so on. He said they would like to meet during the third week of October, on Thursday, October 27th. During that session they would be meeting with Public Facilities, Police and Fire, and the Health Department to see where they were with the budget.

Mr. Curwen said a lot of the discussion would have to do with the monthly financial report and some of the documentation they receive at the end of the year; where they are as far as some of the new ordinances being passed. He said what the Committee needs to do is act as a team to generate questions, be conscientious and scrutinize exactly what the issues are.

Mr. Ayala said this conversation was being spurred on by the resolution brought by Mr. Mulligan regarding creating a new committee similar to the Oversight Task Force that was started prior to the budget season. He thought that was a good idea and good initiative because, when coming into the budget season, it may be a little easier to for Council members to be able to vote to put money back into Recreation, for example, if Recreation comes to the Oversight Task Force about its initiatives and explains some of the things they were doing and provided documentation. Mr. Ayala said if they could implement the same type of investigative committee action where they were going in and asking people to give them their projections they would have a better idea when planning the next budget. He suggested that by doing this, departments may police themselves a little better so that they do have a surplus from each department's budget which will create a better situation all around.

Mr. Walsh said last week after he watched a program on Channel 8 News he sent a general question to Mr. Sherwood regarding the rising cost of fuel for municipalities. He said the program interviewed several small towns that were projecting \$33,000.00 budget problems, including Danbury which was considering a four-day work week. His concern was, do they have any estimate on the negative impact or are they considering any alternate ways to save money. Mr. Walsh said he had not yet received an answer from Mr. Sherwood.

Mr. Curwen said he had spoken with Mr. Sherwood and they discussed it briefly and Mr. Sherwood stated that there were a host of issues but as far as gas was concerned, the price of gas was taken into consideration during the budget planning although the pricing situation in July was not as extreme as it now is. Mr. Curwen said Mr. Sherwood indicated that he might be bringing forth through the Mayor the idea of putting on a fire class, which was a 180-degree turn from what was discussed during the budget cycle. At budget time, they didn't want to fund the class or anything, and now they want to put the fire class on. Mr. Curwen pointed out that when the City hires additional employees they are required to pay the 33 1/3% of health benefits and more. Mr. Curwen said he also thought the City was going to be over-budgeted by millions for health benefits again this year and it was an issue that needs to be addressed now. He said that he, Mr. Mojica, Mr. Ayala and the Mayor were going to have to sit down with the Health Dept. because recommendations have been made during the course of the year for the Health Dept. to go out and find a consultant and they do not have one, they are trying to handle it themselves. Mr. Curwen said for the last three years they have had an outrageously escalating insurance premiums cost.

Mr. Curwen said he had discussions with the Town of New Haven, which had gone out and re-bid their health benefits and discovered that they re-enrolled everyone in the City. At that time they found out that some of the employees had girlfriends on the insurance policies, some had family members who had divorced them and who were still being covered and weren't entitled to benefits. He suggested that if Bridgeport were to do a similar re-bid and re-enrollment, they may find the same scenario and that it would benefit the City to do so. If it cost \$40-50,000.00 to go out and find a consultant to assist them in doing this, then this is what he felt they should do.

Mr. Mojica said they have already spoken about the resolution submitted by Mr. Mulligan in which Mr. Walsh felt there was no need for a subcommittee as the responsibilities fell under the B&A Committee. He said they talked about coming back to the budget three months later, and here it is three months later. Now they have the Police Dept., Fire Dept., and the cost of gas to be discussed. He asked the rest of the Committee to help determine a third department to be involved in the discussion. He said it was not set in concrete but was something that he and Mr. Curwen had talked about, and also when doing the budgets there was a lot of discussion about the MER. Mr. Mojica said it was important to zero in on which departments should be focused on. They will hold discussions every three months, bring in various departments, review their budgets, see where they are so that when they do get to doing the budget they have some type of handle on things. He said there might be some type of report as they get the minutes, to keep and refer back to during their discussions. He asked that the Committee members come up with suggestions and submit them to either himself or Mr. Curwen.

Mr. Ayala said that the Police, Fire and Public Works departments were probably the most important ones to look at based on how the economy has changed from July to now with the rise of fuel costs and more. He said he would have thought that a rise in prices for heating oil and gas would have been configured into the budget, but who could

foresee that today they would be paying over three dollars a gallon for gas. He would recommend that the Committee ask some smaller departments that could possibly do so to squeeze into their regular meetings a small budget meeting similar to the two-item meeting the Committee was holding this evening. He said they will have to find some way of balancing out their budgets with the gas increases by possibly not going out and doing whatever they do on the operational side and the Committee must get creative because they can't ask for more dollars to meet the bottom line.

Mr. Curwen said that was exactly what they were doing by appealing to the Committee now. They were going to set down a list of key questions that they will ask, which is why he's asking for input from the rest of the Committee. As far as some of the smaller departments, they have discussed it, but the three biggest departments affected by the budget are the Police, Fire and Public Facilities. Mr. Mojica said it's important to zero in as to what departments they will actually call in so they can give them ample notice so there's no excuses on their part. Mr. Curwen said he believed Mr. Sherwood was drafting a letter on the co-chairs' behalf. Mr. Mojica said he believed the Health Dept. was included in the budget discussions.

Mr. Mojica said most of the schools and City Hall are heated with a combination of oil and natural gas, the majority being oil. Mr. McCarthy said you could get a better price on natural gas if you have the ability to switch over to oil. Mr. Mojica said to remember that they are trying to hold the discussions every three months, so whatever they don't get in October, they will come back in January to discuss.

Mr. Curwen said he wanted to briefly discuss the MER. He said he has received numerous phone calls from the Connecticut Post and he wanted to comment in front of the Committee as he had commented in the paper. He felt very confident, being the Budget Chair for the last five or six years and being on the Council for the last eight years, that the things they have been charging to the MER they have been charging for twenty years. He said there have been two women, who were not certified auditors, had done a financial report and did not want to include some things in their report that have been included in the MER for the last twenty years. He gave as an example the Lighthouse Program, which the women say is not eligible for the MER, but according to Fran Rabinowitz at the State level has made it specifically clear that the criteria for the Lighthouse Program are to aid schoolchildren and after school programs. He indicated that the women were on a witch hunt and they came up with a mystical number to give the Board of Education. He said another program that was put in their report was school-based health clinics. Mr. Curwen asked, whom do the clinics serve during the school year? They serve schoolchildren, so they are eligible for the MER. He said the report also talks about how Mr. Sherwood and the OPM were asked what the actuals were on the MER that were charged to the Board of Education. Mr. Curwen said Mr. Sherwood gave a modest figure of about fifty percent towards the services that the City of Bridgeport provides to the Board of Education. The women did not except the figures as acceptable to the MER program and demanded "actual numbers." That forced Mr. Sherwood to go back and do the actual numbers of exactly what was charged to the

Board of Education, plowing, grass cutting, security, financial review, attorneys' fees and a host of other things which the City provides to the Board of Education because it would cost far more to get these services from outside. When Mr. Sherwood had the actual numbers and brought them back to the two women it was to the tune of an additional \$3 million dollars' worth of MER-eligible requirements. When the two women saw the new figures they said it was a bogus report and the numbers were being fixed as they go and they didn't want to accept Mr. Sherwood's report. Mr. Curwen said he was very confident that the Budget & Appropriations Committee wouldn't have a problem meeting the MER. He said he felt this was a task set forth by someone with an agenda to get more money to the Board of Education through City coffers that just isn't there.

Mr. McCarthy asked if these women would come before the Committee and answer questions. Mr. Curwen said that opportunity has been offered to them but the response he received from the Mayor and Mr. Feeney was that they respect the Committee and were available to answer questions and provide this information but they didn't want to take the opportunity at present because the two women who did this particular report were not certified auditors, so therefore there isn't any use going through the motions right now. This is why the City wants to go through an auditor provided by the State who will provide the Committee with the information.

Mr. Mojica said these people are supposed to be experts, in terms of the MER, and they are talking about \$6.8 million dollars within a four-year period; \$3.4 million every two years, and he didn't think he would be at ease until he sees the report done. He said once the audit of the Board of Education is done and they can see how the money has been spent, then he can say maybe the City was shortchanged or maybe not, but they need to see the report before they can move ahead making that decision. He said he needs to see the whole picture, not just a part of it.

Mr. Ayala said that Dr. Ramos met with the Council last week. He said he would like to see all Council members to finish with the Board of Education budget, get the itemized priorities from the BOE and see a true picture of what is happening. Mr. Curwen said he just wanted to update the Committee on some of the things he's been dealing with, that the Mayor frequently calls him with questions about it. Mr. Walsh said he agrees with Mr. Ayala on the education issue but questioned who do they believe on the question of what is MER-eligible. Mr. Curwen said he didn't know who was the most qualified person to ask this question, he didn't know if it were the two ladies or if it were Mr. Sherwood, but he was adamant that if they find a happy medium and it becomes the law, then the Committee shouldn't be punished or held accountable for what has happened as the State of Connecticut has been signing off on these budgets for the last twenty years. He was met with general agreement from the Committee.

ADJOURNMENT

**** MR. McCARTHY MOVED TO ADJOURN.
** MR. MOJICA SECONDED.
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda J. Hayes
Telesco Secretarial Services

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
OCTOBER 11, 2005**

ATTENDANCE: Robert Curwen, Co-Chair; Ralph Mojica, Co-Chair;
Thomas McCarthy; Curtis Silva; Elaine Pivrotto Robert
Walsh.

STAFF:

OTHERS: Andres Ayala, Council President; Thomas Sherwood,
Director, OPM; Valerie Sorrentino, Human Services;
Michael Lupkas, Director of Finance; Michael Hewitt,
Board of Education.

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Robert Curwen, Co-Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:36 p.m.

**292-04 BUDGET TRANSFER FOR VETERANS' AFFAIRS FROM:
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES ACCOUNT, TO: SALARY ACCOUNT
(\$18,375) TO PROVIDE DAILY TRANSPORTATION TO THE VA HOSPITAL
IN WEST HAVEN**

Mr. Thomas Sherwood, Director, OPM stated that he had asked Ms. Valerie Sorrentino to attend the meeting in case there were any questions about this item. He stated they need to move money from the Transportation Services account because they are using outside services to transport the veterans. He explained that it was a limited-run basis. He said they had two minivans, one for seniors and one for veterans and the individual who will be taking this over has his proper licensing to drive, this was a move up to the salary line in order to maintain the driver. Mr. Sherwood said that because this transfer is going into a salary account from Operations, it needs to come before the Committee and have the need for the transfer recognized and passed along to the Council.

Mr. Curwen asked Council President Ayala if they were to assume that this, come the next budget cycle, would be something that would be absorbed in that same fashion. Mr. Ayala said yes. Mr. Sherwood said they left some dollars in that account for two reasons: one, for the transfers completed, and two, because they can still utilize the company for excess funds or if someone is out sick. He said they will go in-house for this in order to be able to serve the seniors and veterans better. He said this transfer is to move the money into the salary account to use their own driver for the new vans they have.

Mr. Mojica asked if this was being done for cost savings in the long run. Mr. Sherwood said it was being done both for cost savings and as an improvement in service. Ms. Sorrentino said they currently pay \$30,000 per year through grant money and is limited to

three runs, two back and forth, and one to pick up, per day, and that's it. This transfer will give them a driver and the bus to not only do veterans' runs, but to pick up seniors and to fill in during the day.

Mr. Curwen asked if this was a 35-hour employee. Mr. Sherwood said yes. Mr. Curwen asked if there were benefits. Ms. Sorrentino said the employee currently works 20 hours with benefits. Mr. Sherwood said they were covered with the benefits already as the driver was originally hired with them. He explained that the transfer will expand the job to 35 hours, it is not a pay raise but will give him his pay rate to 35 hours.

Mr. Ayala asked if the driver would be scheduled to work with all the different senior housing areas, and what exactly would be happening. Ms. Sorrentino said he was mainly going to be used to transport the veterans back and forth to the VA hospital in West Haven and will do some runs for the Department on Aging if they are doing a large party because this is an 18-passenger bus, if they can't accommodate, they can use this driver. She said they were going to try to make it flexible.

Mr. Mojica asked if there was any change in the benefits as the person was working 20 hours before, with benefits. Mr. Sherwood said the benefits would remain the same. Mr. Mojica asked if there were a minimum of hours a person had to work in order to qualify for benefits. Mr. Sherwood said they would have to work at least 15 to 19 hours to qualify. Mr. Silva said there was a full time position before. Mr. Sherwood said they whittled the position down as the grant money ran out, but now they were trying to bring it back.

- ** MR. MOJICA MOVED TO APPROVE THE TRANSFER.
- ** MR. McCARTHY SECONDED.
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

293-04 MODIFICATION TO THE FISCAL YEAR 2006 CAPITAL PLAN FOR TECHICAL LANGUAGE ISSUES AND LOCIP

Mr. Sherwood said that he had some modifications to the capital plan. He said that the Board of Ed uses their own Special Ed buses; they need to purchase buses. They have gone through some creative measures and thoughts on how to do that well before they start the annual cost and lease arrangement. He has included it in the capital plan and they will talk about it, but it was not included in the original plan.

Mr. Sherwood said they were de-activating the Animal Shelter for \$1.2 million. He also discussed Fire projects such as roofs and new trucks, specially mentioning the roof on No. 16 which was patched, but they also need to do No. 12. He said if they limit those titles, they need to have the flexibility to purchase ambulances. He said they de-authorized the request they called "Fire Roof Replacement" and the net change total to the whole plan was \$80,000.00 on Fire because they de-authorized and re-titled. He said

the biggest change was the animal shelter. When they went through the original capital plan, they had monies to do things such as their own fiber network and other things through LOCIP that didn't pass the legislature. He said if they have to use their own money for that, they're replacing that money with the animal shelter money. They can do the animal shelter and not have to use their bond dollars to do it. They can do it with the LOCIP funds. He said they have a pre-approval from the State already. He said the difference is, they put \$200,000 in and call it "Miscellaneous Building Improvements." This would be the two changes to LOCIP.

Mr. Mojica questioned using \$300,000 for buses and asked how many buses they were talking about. Mr. Michael Hewitt of the Board of Education said they wanted to purchase five buses, because they didn't get any capital budget from the Board of Education at the time and they returned the documents very late. Mr. Mojica asked if the buses they were using now were being leased from the Board of Education and asked if the BOE takes care of leasing them. Mr. Sherwood said that Mr. Hewitt could explain the bus leasing to the Committee.

Mr. Michael Lupkas, Director of Finance, explained that the first part of the transfer was put on the table now as a modification of the capital plan. He said this is the resolution for bond council and authorizes the borrowing or the leasing, in this case, to pay for this capital project. The BOE has approved through their board the request of the City to add this \$300,000 onto the capital plan. They have also authorized the repayment of these funds through their normal general fund operations. What the BOE has requested of the City is to enter into a lease on these five buses; their plan is to do five buses additional each year. They will be paid for out of the general fund appropriation at no cost to the City. He said the key here is, because they are entering into a lease obligation, the City has got to sign off on it. The BOE is putting their names behind it, and the appropriation is coming through the BOE. The BOE is committed that they will include this in their budget, corrected, for the next five years.

**** MR. McCARTHY MOVED TO APPROVE AMENDMENTS TO THE CAPITAL PLAN WITH A REDUCTION OF THE ANIMAL SHELTER FUNDS AND REDISTRIBUTION OF FIRE DEPT. FUNDS FOR FIRE VEHICLES, ENGINE 16; FIRE ROOF REPLACEMENT; REDUCING APPARATUS; REDUCING FIRE TRUCK; AND REDUCING APPARATUS, TO FACILITATE THE PURCHASE OF SPECIAL ED BUSES BY A TRANSFER OF \$300,000 TO THE BOARD OF ED BUDGET.**

**** MR. SECONDED.**
**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** MR. McCARTHY MOVED TO APPROVE THE TRANSFER OF \$300,000 TO THE CAPITAL PLAN..**

**** MR. MOJICA SECONDED.**
**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**297-04 APPROVAL FOR GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS – TO FUND
CERTAIN CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS**

This item was taken out of agenda order.

Mr. Sherwood is the resolution that pertains to the purchase of buses. He asked the Committee to approve a resolution to authorize the City to enter into an agreement with the understanding that the funds would come from the Board of Education budget after the transfer of funds from item #293-04.

Mr. Sherwood said that he wanted to point out that the second “whereas” in his document which read, “these buses have already gone out to bid by the Board of Education” in this circumstance means that the reason their name is stated in here is because right now they don’t know who will be doing the financing for it and is an additional bid the BOE will be putting out. He said they will be accepting the lowest bid that comes in.

Mr. Walsh asked if Dattco’s bid was the lowest and Mr. Sherwood said that Dattco was the only bid received. stated this was an EOC Grant. He said the window of completion was three years. There was some discussion about the “and further resolved” portion of the resolution. Mr. Walsh stated he would vote against this, feeling it was giving the Committee approval of too much and that the wording was too ambiguous. Mr. Curwen and Mr. Walsh debated the point and Mr. Walsh stated he was voting against the entire thing.

- ** MR. McCARTHY MOVED TO APPROVE.
- ** MR. MOJICA SECONDED.
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

**296-04 APPROVAL OF GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS – TO FUND
ADDITIONAL CAPITAL PROJECTS FOR THE 2006-2010 CAPITAL PLAN
AND THE AUTHORIZATION OF FINANCING FOR SUCH CAPITAL
PROJECTS**

This item was taken out of agenda order.

Mr. Sherwood said these items were title changes. He said that in the spring the Council already approved them into the Capital Plan. He said that there were items such as voice conferencing, voicemail and others that were somehow listed under the Board of Ed title, so he was asking the Committee for authorization and clarification on the titles. He said many of these were items discussed in Committee and listed as examples the amount taking for completion of GIS funding, what was taken out of the budget for HVAC, boilers, etc. for buildings, the street signage program, the equipment they talked about and the roofs they just switched; the fire trucks that they will be purchasing one of; the

Special Ed buses because they were special apparatus; the elevator inside the Burroughs Library, and other items mentioned in the Capital Plan.

Mr. Mojica asked about the retainer wall at Seaside Park and was told that this was something that had not yet been assessed, there were so many other things ahead of it that they weren't able to get to it yet. Mr. Curwen asked if they could find some Federal grant money to assist with the erosion problem and was told that the grants that were available were very specific, they may be able to qualify for some grant money but mostly for replacement of trees decimated by the 1938 hurricane. It was explained that if the City were to suffer a major hurricane again, many of the aging trees would be lost, and the planting of younger trees was now necessary. It was also pointed out that most of the available monies for things like this would be funneling down to the Golf Coast to assist in the Hurricane Katrina rebuilding and that the rest of the country would "go dry" for a period of time because of this.

Mr. Curwen asked about the downtown revitalization program and road paving, and was told that some of the streets haven't been paved since 1990 and are starting to break up. With the development projected for the downtown area, paving is going to be a commitment the City will have to make to move forward, and become part of the infrastructure of the project.

Mr. Curwen asked about the Public Facilities garage project. He was told there have been three meetings in the past week on the Public Facilities garage because the grant the City received for EOC communications, \$6 million dollars from the Federal government, has a three-year completion window, so they were going to look at having the administrative building be the last leg of the development but it will probably now be the public facilities garage, and that will have to be accelerated, the shell will have to go up and that portion of the EOC completed otherwise they will lose the funding. Mr. Mojica asked if there were any extensions and was told there were not. The demolition packages walked through in the last week on the structures they were removing on the rear side will be Phase I, when that demolition takes place it will be demolition and remediation of the site and site work done. Packages are out and they are waiting to receive bids back, then it will be a fast track for a design/build on a 65,000 sq. ft. truck facility which will house the City's fleet which they hope to have completed by this time next year.

Mr. Curwen asked if there were any further questions on the item. Mr. Walsh said that he brings this up every time it comes up, he objected to the second-to-last "further resolved," He said that where the resolution reads "any unused bond proceeds consistent with the applicable tax and otherwise are deemed to be necessary or advisable in the best interests of the City by the officials," it doesn't say unused bond proceeds less than 10 percent or anything like that, so a project could be voted down for any reason and the appropriated funds used for anything else in the approved Capital Plan. Mr. Curwen asked if Mr. Walsh was proposing an amendment to change it. Mr. Walsh said he was told by City Counsel in the past that this language had to be there, but he wanted his objection on the

record again. He said he would be voting against this because he feels that the City is voting in too much and it takes up too much of the budget.

Mr. Curwen asked if Mr. Walsh was offering an alternative to the language. Mr. Walsh said he felt the Committee should reject the item completely. He said he would vote against the entire item. Mr. Curwen said he supported Mr. Walsh's statement but wished there was other language that could be used. Mr. McCarthy said he wanted comment that he was aware they have discussed this before. He said the language has been checked by town counsel as to whether it could be changed, modified or deleted, and was required to be in there in order to tie their hands so that if they don't use the money they can't just go out and take it, the funds would either have to be returned to the in escrow account to pay off bonds or go to an existing project that is on the Capital Plan that is authorized for borrowing.

- ** MR. CURWEN MOVED TO APPROVE.
- ** MR. MOJICA SECONDED.
- ** MOTION PASSED WITH ONE NAY VOTE (MR. WALSH)

ADJOURNMENT

- ** MR. McCARTHY MOTIONED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING.
- ** MR. SILVA SECONDED.
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda J. Hayes
Telesco Secretarial Services