

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS
COMMITTEE
SPECIAL MEETING
MAY 1, 2021**

ATTENDANCE: Scott Burns, Co-chair; Ernest Newton Co-chair; Jorge Cruz, Jeanette Herron, Matthew McCarthy, Mary McBride-Lee, AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia (10:18 a.m.)

OTHERS: Council President A. Nieves, Council Member(s): M. E. Brantley, A. Castillo, M. Lyons, E. Martinez (10:15 a.m.), M. Pereira, R. Roman-Christy, S. Suliman & M. Valle; T. Gaudett, Mayor's Office; K. Flatto, Finance Director; C. Vickers, Legislative Affairs; N. Nkwo, OPM Director (10:15 a.m.); Barbara, iPhone, Cayla Bamberger, CT Post; Laurence, Tyler Mack, Android, Call-in User 2, Galaxy Tab (a) 2016; iPhone, 203-880-5666; 203-690-9227; 203-275-6420; 203-209-1058

This meeting was conducted by Zoom/Teleconference.

CALL TO ORDER

Co-chair Burns called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. A quorum was present.

He announced that Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia would be joining the meeting shortly.

Council President Nieves thanked everyone for their presence and their participation. There will be non-Committee participation but the conversation should remain germane to the conversation. The Department heads did a great job transitioning over to a new process and having a presentation ready for the Council. The process has been working smoother. This budget will impact next year's budget and what the Council Members may not agree with, it will be important to remember that it may be needed. The budget is a work in progress. There has been uncivil discourse in the past and the Council members need to remember there should be civil discourse today. The focus needs to be on the entire City, not just individual districts.

Council President Nieves said that the downtown area belongs to everyone and there has been a lot of infrastructure work. There are issues with contaminated soil that have to be dealt with.

Mr. Nkwo joined the meeting at 10:15 a.m.

Council Member Martinez joined the meeting at 10:15 a.m.

BUDGET DISCUSSION

Co-chair Newton said that the Capital Budget needs to be considered first. He thanked the BOE for their willingness to work with the City on several projects. The City will also be working on several other projects with the BOE.

Mr. Nkwo reviewed the details on a spreadsheet displayed on the screen. He said that the City would be spending almost \$500,000 to purchase equipment and an additional amount for the roof for the Nutrition building. The roof cost will be bonded funds.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia joined the meeting at 10:18 a.m.

He reviewed the remaining allocations for the BOE Capital requests with the Council Members.

Mr. Nkwo then reviewed the details of the Economic Development project requests including the Klein Memorial, Lafayette Circle, the Rooster River Flood Control and the North End Library design.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MCCARTHY MOVED TO APPROVE THE 2021-2022 CAPITAL PLAN AS PRESENTED.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON SECONDED.**

Council Member Lyons asked about the status of some of the State funding that had arrived for the Rooster River. Mr. Nkwo pointed out that the allocations were listed in the outer years and the City has time to consider every grant opportunity.

Council Member Burns said that the State had moved forward with the funding, but that there were matching funds required.

Council Member Pereira [inaudible] asked when the changes were made.

Council Member McCarthy said that he had made a motion to add the document and changes at another meeting.

Council Member Pereira asked where the Senior Center project was. Council Member Burns said that they needed to find out where the project was allocated. [Inaudible] She said that people were putting money into their District without regard for other residents. She said that the BOE had not voted on the approval of the funding. She said that the roofs were not being done as a favor to the BOE, they are City owned buildings.

Council Member Newton responded that the Superintendent had been agreeable to having the roofs repaired. There was a meeting with the appropriate authorities about this.

Council Member McBride-Lee asked what area the Allen Brook project would be listed. Mr. Nkwo said that Mr. Urquidi would be the one to ask. Council Member Newton said that Rev. Stallworth was working on Island Brook flooding. Council Member Herron said that the project was for all the North End and would affect all three districts that were affected by flooding.

Council Member Herron said that they need to stick to the numbers and remember that they don't work for anyone other than the City of Bridgeport. Collaboration is wonderful but adding personal opinions is not helpful.

Council Member Valle asked about the status of the Jetland Parking Garage. Council Member Burns said that Jetland was the name of the street that is located off of Fairfield Avenue. Mr. Nkwo suggested amending the line item title to Jetland Street Parking garage to clarify it was not the Jetland Bus Company.

Council Member Roman-Christy asked about the Land Acquisition allocation and if there was a list of the potential properties. Council Member Burns said that the amount she was referring to was allocated in FY 2020-21.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MCCARTHY MOVED THE QUESTION
** COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON SECONDED.**

It was pointed out that the Committee had amended the Capital Budget.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MCCARTHY WITHDREW HIS PREVIOUS MOTION.
** COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON WITHDREW HER SECOND.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MCCARTHY MOVED TO APPROVE THE 2021-2022
CAPITAL PLAN AS AMENDED.
** COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON SECONDED.
** THE MOTION PASSED WITH FIVE (5) IN FAVOR (NEWTON, CRUZ, HERRON,
MCCARTHY AND MCBRIDE-LEE) AND ONE (1) OPPOSED (VIZZO-PANICCIA).**

Mr. Nkwo stated for the record that the “as amended” included the adjustment to the line item title from “Jetland Parking Garage” to “Jetland Street Parking Garage” to clarify it was not the Jetland Bus Company.

GENERAL FUND

Council Member Newton thanked the Committee for working on this. They tried to address the Department heads on their needs, considered the vehicle tax rate and the property tax rate. He said that the budget does what it needs to do for the needed tasks for the next year.

Council Member Burns said that they had sent out a draft of the suggested changes.

Mr. Nkwo then reviewed proposed changes with the Council Members. He reminded everyone that they were deferring the lien sale to next year. Discussion followed about the details.

Council Member McCarthy requested to increase to Commercial Tipping Fees to \$200,000. He said that there was a lot more revenue at the Transfer Station.

Council Member McCarthy asked about the Steel Point taxes. Council Member Burns said that it was a three party agreement. Mr. Flatto gave the details and indicated when those taxes would increase. Discussion followed about the one time revenues for Steel Point.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that she was pleased that the Weights and Measures had been included. She asked if they had checked the arrears. Mr. Flatto said that they had.

Council Member Herron said that she agreed with Council Member McCarthy about the transfer station, but felt that they have to put that in the form of a resolution or ordinance. She said that they are turning away residents who are licensed contractors. The previous supervisor did not enforce the tipping fee. Discussion followed regarding enforcement.

Council Member Newton said that the City Attorney had requested that the reduction of \$100,000 of their allocation from Legal Services be taken from Claims and Settlement instead. Mr. Flatto said that the Claims and Settlements was generally used for reserves. Discussion followed.

Council Member Pereira said that the outside attorneys were violating the IRS rules regarding the use of City offices, phones, email and supervising City employees.

Council Member Pereira said that the mill rate was a tax increase on most of the residents in the City.

Council Member Pereira said that none of the documents were on the City website and were violations of the FOI regulations.

Council Member Roman-Christy asked about the allocation of the Golf Course Apartment Rental. She said that the amount should be raised to \$20,000.

Mr. Nkwo said that the employee is on call and does not charge for overtime. If the tenant paid market rate, the tenant would then charge the City for overtime, and holiday pay. The rental is low but it outweighs the cost of time and a half or double time.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia and Council Member Lyons both agreed with Mr. Nkwo regarding the cost of time and a half or double time.

Council Member McCarthy asked about the Amphitheater Billboard and wished to know why they were not accounting for the amount of the ad revenue.

Council Member Burns said that the billboard had not been approved yet and it had not been constructed yet.

Council Member McCarthy said that he would like to add another \$100,000 to it.

Council Member Taylor-Moye said that she felt they need more information before they add that amount to the budget. Discussion followed. [Inaudible due to background noise.]

Council Member Newton said that the revenue from Steel Point had been a long time coming and that he would prefer the Committee to leave it where it was.

Council Member Cruz said that it was a benefit for the City to have someone on site. Regarding the Amphitheater billboard, he pointed out that the developer has started working on the Amphitheater but the project has been delayed through no fault of the developers. He suggested that they leave the allocation as it is and reconsider it once things move forward.

Council Member McBride-Lee agreed with Council Member Taylor-Moye and Council Member Newton.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia pointed out that the Steel Point development was vastly different than the Amphitheater. She said that she did not vote in favor of the Amphitheater originally and still has many questions about the project.

Council Member Pereira asked that the documents be sent to the Council Members as soon as possible. She said that the budget was immoral and the residents want their schools to be funded. She said that there was \$109 million for the police and they were getting \$6 million more while the schools were only getting \$1.5 million.

Council Member Newton said that Council Member Pereira had asked her question and it was time to move on.

Council Member Pereira replied that everything that she was hearing was an opinion. She said that they were showing a \$2 million increase and mentioned the Lighthouse allocation. She reiterated her earlier comments about \$109 million for the police and they were getting \$6 million more while the schools were only getting \$1.5 million. She said that she would like to have the BOE receive their \$6 million dollars.

Council Member Burns said that there had been a conversation with the BOE leadership, along with the State increased allocation brings them close to where they wish to be. Discussion followed about the details of the MBR and the Lighthouse Program.

Council Member Newton said that the BOE had a flat fund recommendation and the City was picking up the cost of their vehicles and other expenses.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON MOVED THE QUESTION ON GENERAL FUND DECREASES.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER CRUZ SECONDED.**

Council Member Burns said that changes were being tracked by Mr. Nkwo and Mr. Gaudett.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON WITHDREW HIS MOTION.**

Council Member Newton requested a 15 minute recess in order to update the information that Mr. Nkwo and Mr. Gaudett had.

Council Member McCarthy asked for clarification on when they would be voting. Council Member Burns said that they would adjust the documents with all the changes before voting on it.

Council Member McBride-Lee asked if they had decided about the Police Department budget. Council Member Burns said that part would be included in the vote. Council Member Newton said that they would be discussing those changes.

Council Member Burns said that the spreadsheet would be updated and sent to everyone.

Council Member Roman-Christy asked if the solar panel income had been included. Mr. Flatto said that he thought he had sent it earlier. Council Member Burns said that it had been included in the revenue.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON MOVED FOR A 15 MINUTE RECESS.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MCCARTHY SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

RECESS

Council Member Burns announced a recess at 11:43 a.m. He reconvened the meeting at 12:03 p.m.

GENERAL FUND CONT'D

Council Member McCarthy clarified that at the end of the day, the revenues and expenses needed to balance out at zero.

The discussion moved back to the Amphitheater billboard. Council Member Burns reminded everyone that the City would receive 25% of the click revenue. Mr. Nkwo reminded everyone that the clicks were not guaranteed. If the developer doesn't get the clicks, then they don't pay the City. Discussion followed.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that comp tickets would not generate revenue. Council Member Burns said that issue was included in a separate contract. The billboard is a separate contract. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that the Amphitheater was renting out for graduations.

Council Member McBride-Lee asked for clarification on the 25% of the click revenues. Council Member Burns explained that it was part of the contract. She said that they want to make money but they don't want to use people.

Council Member Herron said that when they have set number up, but they have to allow the business to open and actually start generating the revenue. If they make things too difficult for businesses, they are not going to want to come to Bridgeport. She added that the BOE was being given comp to have their graduations there for free. This developer is willing to work with City.

Council Member Newton said that he was familiar with the contract and they have the right to go up to \$75,000, \$100,000.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON MOVED TO REDUCE THE AMPHITHEATER BILLBOARD BACK TO \$50,000.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER CRUZ SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED WITH FIVE (5) IN FAVOR (NEWTON, CRUZ, HERRON, MCCARTHY AND MCBRIDE-LEE) AND ONE (1) OPPOSED (VIZZO-PANICCIA).**

** Council Member Newton moved to accept the revenue increase as presented.

Council Member Burns reminded everyone that there would be four votes at the end of the day.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON WITHDREW HIS MOTION.**

Council Member Newton said that the Fire Department had been good about maintaining their overtime and budget.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia stated that she was against any cuts to the Fire Department. She pointed out that per contract there were required to have minimum staffing requirements.

[Loss of call at 12:28 p.m. Readmitted at 12:35 p.m.]

Council Member Herron said that there were 20 Council Members and they need the position to increase their efficiency.

Council Member Newton said that he had been all over the U.S. and other Councils have staff. This is the only Council that does not have staff. It is time to move back to the 21st Center. This means a Charter Change to give the Council their own legal counsel.

Council Member Cruz agreed.

Council Member McBride-Lee said that many of the Council Members work and they need someone in that office.

Council Member Cruz said that when he is working at his job, he can't do any Council work. The Council is behind the times and they need to change the stipend to a paycheck.

Council Member Brantley asked if the position would be clearly defined and limited to only Council Members.

Council Member Burns said that he was speaking on behalf of Council President Nieves who had a clear vision of this item, which would be contracted out to someone. Discussion followed about the details.

[Loss of audio]

Council Member Newton said that this would not be a patronage job. He repeated that in Connecticut, the others have legal staff. Most Council Members have jobs and have to work to feed their families. They take care of everyone but themselves. If there was a Council Member who did not want their stipend, they could return the money to the City. It is time to move the Council into the 21st Century.

[Loss of call at 12:50 p.m.]

**** COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON MOVE TO ACCEPT THE RECOMMENDATION FOR CONTRACTED SALARIES**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED WITH FIVE (5) IN FAVOR (NEWTON, CRUZ, HERRON, MCCARTHY AND MCBRIDE-LEE) AND ONE (1) OPPOSED (VIZZO-PANICCIA).**

Council Member Burns said that they were moving ahead with the Police Department staffing study and said that there had not been any year when the PD had been fully staffed. He said that continuing to fund positions that the Department had never filled was not right. He was recommending that they unfund one position across the ranks.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that she would be opposing any cuts to the Police, Fire and EOC due to public safety concerns. She said that they can only have so many candidates in each class and there were retirements, so they cannot fill all the positions.

Council Member Newton asked for clarification on the COPS Grant. Mr. Nkwo gave the overview of the COPS Grant requirements. The City is required to maintain the officers for one year past the expiration of the grant. He said that as long as they don't touch the body count, they will not have a problem with the grant requirements.

Council Member Newton suggested that they adjust the funding until they can make further changes without endangering the grant funding. The funds will be moved to the Social Service line items.

Council Member McBride-Lee asked if there would be an officer that would lose their job. Council Member Burns said that these were vacant positions.

Council Member McBride-Lee said that she would not like to see the Fire Department cut because they are often the first to arrive at an event.

Council Member Newton explained that they were not trying to hurt the Police or Fire Departments, but due to George Floyd, they were looking at the funding to transfer it to Human Services and their needs. They would be helping de-escalate situations and the Council is not against the Fire or Police Departments.

Council Member McBride-Lee said that she just wanted to make sure the Fire Department has the resources to put out the fires and protect the residents. She was not implying the Council was against the Police or Fire.

Council Member McCarthy asked for clarification on the positions and grant funding requirements. Mr. Nkwo reviewed the figures with him. Discussion followed about the upcoming Police examination on June 6th.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked if they could get any figures from CCM regarding the various police staffing requirements.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia cautioned everyone to keep the lawsuits account whole.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that the City could not hold two classes simultaneously and the building was not big enough. Mr. Nkwo said that they have to check with Acting Chief Garcia for the details.

Council Member Burns said that regarding the staffing, they should remember that every department is different and Chief Ramsey spoke about this.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON MOVED TO MOVE ONE VACANT POSITION FROM THOSE DEPARTMENTS AND THAT THE FUNDING BE TRANSFERRED TO THE HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT.**

Council Member Burns said that they would have the funding from the attrition. Discussion followed about the details.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON WITHDREW HIS MOTION.**

[Loss of call at 1:20 p.m.]

Council Member Pereira said that the public does not want more police staffing. They want more money for education and in schools. The budget doesn't reflect that. This does not reflect the public demonstrations. She is opposed to any staff increase in the Police Department.

Council Member Roman-Christy asked about the reduction in Voters Registration. Council Member Burns said that this year, there would only be local elections. Council Member Roman-Christy said that she would like to see the \$20,000 restored.

Council Member McBride-Lee said that she agreed with Council Member Roman-Christy.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON MOVED TO ACCEPT THE REDUCTIONS FOR THE POLICE DEPARTMENT AS PRESENTED.**

Council Member Herron said that there were promises made by Council Members but reminded everyone that they had already lost 15 officers through retirements. There have to be reductions and they can't be unrealistic with the numbers. They have to change the way they do business.

Council Member Newton said that what the Council was voting on would not have any impact on the Police Department. People have been talking about the George Floyd situation and this would allow the City to address issues that people are talking about.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER CRUZ SECONDED.**

Council Member McCarthy sent an email on March 20th about the Police contracts and still has not received a response.

**** THE MOTION PASSED WITH FIVE (5) IN FAVOR (NEWTON, CRUZ, HERRON, MCCARTHY AND MCBRIDE-LEE) AND ONE (1) OPPOSED (VIZZO-PANICCIA).**

Council Member McCarthy said that there were two line items in Public Facilities, one is an Accounting positions on page 211 and cutting a Special Project Coordinator.

Mr. Flatto said that the Accounting positions was vacate due to the retirement of the former employee who handles the contracts for Capital projects.

Mr. Flatto said that while the Accounting title appears not to make any sense, the employee also purchases all the supplies.

Council Member McCarthy said that it was time to cut the fat and the Public Facilities Special Project Coordinator on page 367 was a position where the employee did nothing.

Council Member McCarthy said that the two assistants in the CAO's Office should be reduced from two Assistants to one.

Council Member Cruz asked if one of the Special Project Coordinators could be transferred to a Tree Warden. Council Member McCarthy agreed.

Council Member McBride-Lee asked for clarification on the Special Project Coordinators. Council Member McCarthy said that he was talking about the jobs that were given away as nepotism.

Council Member McBride-Lee disagreed. She also pointed out that the two Assistants in the CAO's Office were doing their jobs.

Mr. Nkwo said that while he sees the positions when he creates the budget, he doesn't know who does what.

Council Member McCarthy said that this goes on forever and the Council should not be turning a blind eye to this. He said that he would withdraw his motion, but there are positions where these people are not doing their job.

Council Member Newton pointed out that the Mayor has the right to use line item veto and the Council would need 2/3rds vote to override that.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia spoke about the Government Accountability Oversight position which is questionable. She said that she has objected to this since 2016. The City can do better.

Council Member Herron asked whether the Project Manager on page 138 was moved to Public Facilities. Council Member Burns said that this was so. She said that they should move it to the Mayor's Office.

Council Member Cruz said that he agreed with Council Member McCarthy's position for the jobs that were not affective. He reiterated that the City needs a tree warden. He said that there was a lot of nepotism and that has to be dealt with.

Council Member Burns asked for suggestions about installing a Tree Warden. Mr. Nkwo said that they could create a position because the Tree Warden was overwhelmed.

Council Member Newton said that there had been discussions about having the trees trimmed and the Public Facilities staff had told them that the trimming of the trees had to be done by a third party. Council Member Burns said that the Tree Warden assesses the trees that need to be trimmed. Council Member Newton said that an additional Tree Warden would not help with trimming the trees.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that the Tree Warden are certified to assess the condition of the trees. They work with the utilities companies because the branches are often near wires. Council Member Taylor-Moye said that Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia was accurate in her description.

Council Member Newton said that Public Facilities had not requested another staff member.

Council Member Cruz said that while Council Member Newton was correct, they had not asked for another Tree Warden. He said that he has spoken with the head of Public Facilities about this and the director had told him that they could use another staff member. He said that another Tree Warden was desperately needed in the City.

Council Member Herron said that she contacts the Tree Warden all the time. He has been trained and know the diseases. She said they need to assess this and speak to him about this issue.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked if they would be actively looking for a Parks Director. She said that the City needs it.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia recommended that the Community Liaison be cut because the information should be given to the Council directly.

[Loss of call at 2:07 p.m.]

Council Member Newton said that the Mayor has the right to hire their staff. The Council may not like it, but he has the right to that.

[Loss of call at 2:13p.m.]

Council Member Burns said that the \$500,000 that was being spent this year was being allocated for 2021. He explained that the Council was adding \$2 million to the BOE line.

Council Member Pereira asked where the \$500,000 was listed. Council Member Burns said that it was on the Capital Projects budget.

Council Member Newton reminded everyone that the BOE and the City were working together. The BOE requested help with their vehicles. This was in exchange for the BOE making some repairs on the buildings so the City did not have to bond for it.

Council Member Burns reviewed the details of the requested budget changes. Council Member Newton reminded everyone that the Registrars of Voters were requesting Seasonal Workers. Council Member Burns

**** COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON MOVED TO RESTORE THE \$20,000 TO THE REGISTRARS OF VOTERS SPECIAL SERVICES.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION MOVED TO RESTORE THE \$20,000 TO THE REGISTRARS OF VOTERS SPECIAL SERVICES PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Council Member Burns said that he had suggested cutting the Fire Department by \$100,000.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MCCARTHY MOVED TO CUT OVERTIME TO THE FD BY \$100,000.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER CRUZ SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO CUT OVERTIME TO THE FD BY \$100,000 PASSED WITH FIVE (5) IN FAVOR (CRUZ, MCCARTHY, MCBRIDE-LEE, AND NEWTON) AND TWO (2) OPPOSED (VIZZO-PANICCIA AND HERRON).**

Council Member Cruz said that he had called the Tree Warden and said that they are in need of another Tree Warden. Council Member Newton said that if Public Facilities needs another tree warden, it would be okay if the employee is not a political appointment.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON MOVED TO ADD ANOTHER CERTIFIED TREE WARDEN.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER CRUZ SECONDED.**

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that the employee needs to be certified. She suggested that they contact the Department head to verify the need for this position.

Council Member Herron said that they were present to work on a budget that was presented, not add new positions. The Public Facilities Director did not bring this position.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON WITHDREW HIS MOTION BECAUSE THE DIRECTOR DID NOT ASKED FOR IT.**

Council Member Cruz said that they had the discussion and there were other discussions about positions and he felt disrespected. He would not rescind his second.

Mr. Nkwo said that he did not know how much a tree warden was paid. Council Member Burns suggested that they consider adding a Tree Warden in 2022.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER CRUZ WITHDREW HIS SECOND CONTINGENT UPON CREATING A RESOLUTION FOR ANOTHER TREE WARDEN.**

Council Member McCarthy asked what the process would be to create the position. Mr. Flatto gave a brief outline of how it would be done.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that all they needed to do was to create a letter of request to explore adding the positions. Then it can come back to the Budget Committee or Contracts as needed.

Council President Nieves said that the Mayor Assistant went out during COVID to make sure that people were being fed and were all right. She said that the position was very fruitful and work was done behind the scenes.

[Loss of audio]

Council Member Burns said that he wished to move to the issue of the Community Liaison.

Council Member Pereira said that the position was getting an 8% raise. She said that this was well over the mandated contractual amount.

Council Member Brantley said that she did not believe this position deserved such a large raise. She asked if they could combine that with the Council's need for staff.

Council Member Cruz said that he did not know how the City could pay someone \$74,000 as a liaison. He told the Mayor to use that position to Community organizers. During the COVID lockdown, he worked with his co-Council Member worked to get the masks out. The message needs to be sent to the Mayor that the positions that are appointed have to benefit the community.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER CRUZ MOVED TO ELIMINATE THE POSITION OF COMMUNITY LIAISON.**

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

Council Member Herron said that during COVID, many were out there working with the community. She said that she can't support this decision because they would need a 2/3rd vote to override the Mayor's line veto.

Council Member Newton requested a roll call vote.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that the liaison should be known to the Council and she did not know who this person was.

**** THE MOTION FAILED TO PASS WITH TWO (2) IN FAVOR (CRUZ AND VIZZO-PANICCIA) AND THREE (3) OPPOSED (NEWTON, MCCARTHY, AND HERRON).**

RECESS

Council Member Burns announced a recess at 2:46 p.m. Council Member Burns called the meeting back to order at 3:04 p.m.

Council Member Burns said that he would email the updated list. There were several questions about the projected taxes for the vehicle taxes or the property taxes.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked if they were pursuing those who had out of state licenses. Mr. Flatto said that there was a firm that does follow up on this.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MCCARTHY MOVED TO APPROVE THE GENERAL FUND REVENUE INCREASES (A) AS PRESENTED.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON SECONDED.**

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that the Council has taken five votes, A-E.

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE GENERAL FUND REVENUE INCREASES (A) AS PRESENTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON MOVED TO APPROVE THE GENERAL FUND DECREASES (B) AS PRESENTED.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE GENERAL FUND DECREASES (B) AS PRESENTED PASSED WITH FOUR (4) IN FAVOR (CRUZ, NEWTON, MCCARTHY, AND HERRON) AND ONE (1) OPPOSED (VIZZO-PANICCIA).**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON MOVED TO APPROVE THE GENERAL FUND EXPENDITURE INCREASES (C) AS PRESENTED.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER CRUZ SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE GENERAL FUND EXPENDITURE INCREASES (C) AS PRESENTED PASSED WITH THREE (3) IN FAVOR (CRUZ, HERRON AND NEWTON) AND TWO (2) OPPOSED (MCCARTHY AND VIZZO-PANICCIA).**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON MOVED TO APPROVE THE GENERAL FUND EXPENDITURE DECREASES (D) AS PRESENTED.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER CRUZ SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE GENERAL FUND EXPENDITURE DECREASES (D) PASSED WITH FOUR (4) IN FAVOR (CRUZ, NEWTON, MCCARTHY, AND HERRON) AND ONE (1) OPPOSED (VIZZO-PANICCIA).**

Council Member Burns said that the mill rate would be 43.45.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON MOVED TO APPROVE THE 2021-2022 BUDGET AS FOLLOWS:**

**GENERAL FUND REVENUE INCREASES (A)
GENERAL FUND DECREASES (B)
GENERAL FUND EXPENDITURE INCREASES (C)
GENERAL FUND EXPENDITURE DECREASES (D)**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER CRUZ SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE GENERAL FUND EXPENDITURE DECREASES (D) PASSED WITH FOUR (4) IN FAVOR (CRUZ, NEWTON, MCCARTHY, AND HERRON) AND ONE (1) OPPOSED (VIZZO-PANICCIA).**

Council Member Cruz thanked Council Member Newton and Council Member Burns for their outstanding work and professionalism. He also thanked Mr. Gaudett, Mr. Nkwo and Mr. Flatto. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia agreed.

Council Member Burns thanked the Committee members for all their input.

Mr. Nkwo thanked everyone regarding the issue of purchasing the equipment through the General Budget.

Council Member Brantley gave a shout out to Council Member Burns and Council Member Newton on keeping the meetings in order.

Council Member Newton thanked the Committee. He said that they addressed major issues and directed money towards health and dropped the mill rate. He apologized for occasionally being less than polite.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that she appreciated all the work that was done but there were too many areas that she could not agree to. This is only the second time she's opposed the budget. This was nothing personal.

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 3:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Telesco Secretarial Services