

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS
COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
MARCH 29, 2022**

ATTENDANCE: Scott Burns, Co-chair; Ernest Newton, Co-chair; Jeanette Herron, Tyler Mack, Matthew McCarthy (5:23 p.m.)

OTHERS: Council Member(s): A. Boyd, J. Cruz, M. Pereira, R. Smith & M. Valle; T. Gaudett, Mayoral Aide; Constance Vickers, Director, Legislative Affairs; Atty. J. Mitola, Atty. Dina Scalo; Nestor Nkwo, OPM Director; Tammy Papa, Health Department; Jonna Rigon, City Attorney's Office

CALL TO ORDER

Co-chair Burns called the meeting to order at 5:03 p.m. A quorum was present.

Co-chair Newton said that they had invited people to address the Committee and reminded everyone to be polite.

APPROVAL OF COMMITTEE MINUTES:

• February 14, 2022 (Regular Meeting)

**** COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON MOVED THE MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 14, 2022 MEETING.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON SECONDED.**

The following changes were noted

Page 2, last paragraph on the page, please change the following from:

“today the Fund Balance is 6% of the budget. He also reviewed the current cash balance in the General Fund.”

To:

“today the Fund Balance is 6% of the budget. This is a significant reduction in the debt. He also reviewed the current cash balance in the General Fund.”

Page 3, paragraph 6 and forward: Please change all reference to GASBY A4 to GASBY 84. A large portion of the debt

**** COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON MOVED TO APPROVE THE FEBRUARY 14, 2022 MINUTES AS AMENDED.**

**** ~~ENCOUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON~~ SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

50-21 Proposed Budget Transfer to FY 2021-2022 From: Emergency Communications and Operations Center Account #01290000-56180 (\$209,252) To: Health & Social Services Department Accounts (\$209,252).

Mr. Nwko said that this was about the five positions that needed to be filled. He gave the details and mentioned the unfilled Police Liaison position.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON MOVED THE ITEM.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON SECONDED.**

Council Member Herron asked why the Police Community Liaison was never hired. Council Member Burns said that it was actually the Social Services Liaison. Mr. Nkwo apologized for mis-speaking. The position was for the Social Services.

Council Member Herron said that there were a number of times when people have mis-spoken and she needed to be clear about this.

Council Member Pereira said that she did not see the documentation in advance. She asked for confirmation that they were transferring funds from the Emergency Communications to the Health and Social Services.

Council Member Burns said that they had allocated funds for a social worker to help with 9-1-1 calls. He said that they had anticipated that they would be transferring the funds when they were ready to fill the position. Discussion followed about the details of the Police, EOC and Social Services responsibilities.

Council Member Pereira said that Colorado had just increased their allocations for this type of program due to its success.

Council Member Newton said many of the calls come to the agency because there are people with substance abuse problems. Often the callers don't need police officers. He asked if they were using other health care providers. Council Member Burns said that there was a proposal last summer about what the Council was looking for, but it stalled. Integrating other service organizations is a possibility. Discussion followed about the police and health care providers working together.

Council Member Herron said that she was disappointed that they had not moved past this point. This is needed desperately and there was a lot of work on this plan. She asked if they had hired anyone or needed to recruit for the position. Mr. Nkwo updated the Committee members on the details.

Council Member Cruz said that the Police were supposed to hire someone, but it stalled. It's been 11 months and now it is being passed back to the Health Department. He said that there was someone available to ride with the Police officers. Many of the officers were not trained to handle these situations. It is time to get this done.

Council Member Herron asked if the Health Department would be working with the Police Department. Council Member Burns said that they would be working together.

Council Member McCarthy joined the meeting at 5:23 p.m.

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 50-21 PROPOSED BUDGET TRANSFER TO FY 2021-2022 FROM: EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS AND OPERATIONS CENTER ACCOUNT #01290000-56180 (\$209,252) TO: HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT ACCOUNTS (\$209,252) PASSED WITH THREE (3) IN FAVOR (NEWTON, HERRON AND MACK) AND ONE (1) ABSTENTION (MCCARTHY).**

47-21 Proposed Request for an Additional Paralegal Position to the Office of the City Attorney.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON MOVED THE ITEM.**

Council Member Newton said that he hoped that the Attorney's would apologize and present their proposal.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON SECONDED.**

Council Member Newton said that there were Council Members who were very upset over the previous dialogue that had taken place concerning this item and they had requested the item be tabled.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON MOVED TO TABLE AGENDA ITEM 47-21 PROPOSED REQUEST FOR AN ADDITIONAL PARALEGAL POSITION TO THE OFFICE OF THE CITY ATTORNEY.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

44-21 Proposed Five-Year Capital Plan for Fiscal Years 2023-2027.

Council Member Burns said that the Council Members had received the proposed Five Year Capital Plan earlier in the month. He gave a brief overview of the proposed Plan.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON MOVED AGENDA ITEM 44-21 PROPOSED FIVE-YEAR CAPITAL PLAN FOR FISCAL YEARS 2023-2027.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON SECONDED.**

Council Member Burns displayed the Capital Plan for Fiscal Year 2023-2027 on screen. Mr. Nkwo said that as the plan stands right now, it is too large.

Council Member Newton said that some of the projects involved the schools. He said that there was funding allocated to the BOE to improve the air quality. Mr. Nkwo agreed.

Council Member Newton said there were other schools that were using their funding to address similar issues. Mr. Nkwo confirmed that they are able to do this.

Council Member Pereira asked about the funding allocated for the Central basketball court. Mr. Nkwo reminded everyone that the Council could reduce the funding.

Council Member Pereira said that there had been a massive renovation at Central and wished to know why it was included. Mr. Nkwo said that it was a question that the BOE would have to answer.

Council Member Pereira asked about the Remington Arms funding. She wished to confirm this had to do with the factory rather than Remington Woods. Council Member Burns said that it was the remediation of the factory.

Council Member Newton asked about the Wonderland of Ice doors. He said that the City owns the building and they should receive the same consideration that the amphitheater and other venues have. The doors that need to be replaced are on the inside, not the external doors. Mr. Nkwo said that when Acting Director Nadrziny comes before the Budget and Appropriations, they could ask him about it.

Council Member Burns suggested that the Committee members review the Capital Plan over the next week.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON MOVED TO TABLE AGENDA ITEM 44-21 PROPOSED FIVE-YEAR CAPITAL PLAN FOR FISCAL YEARS 2023-2027.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

General Discussion re: Review of the Monthly Financial Report.

Council Member Burns said that Mr. Flatto was not on the call.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON MOVED TO TABLE THE GENERAL DISCUSSION RE: REVIEW OF THE MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON SECONDED.**

Council Member Burns said that he had some questions about the report.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON WITHDREW HER MOTION.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON WITHDREW HIS SECOND.**

Council Member Burns asked Mr. Nkwo if he could speak to the fact that the Governor had not released the Cares Act funding. He said that he had the spreadsheet of what the Governor proposed and what the legislature had approved, which he would send to the Co-chairs.

Council Member Burns asked if they were looking at a deficit. Mr. Nkwo said that he felt that they would receive the conveyance tax money and the revenues were coming in much higher. With the interest rates going up, he did not see this trend continuing.

Council Member Newton asked how the amphitheater and the Steel Point payments were. Mr. Nkwo said that he did not know. Council Member Burns said that he was also interested in this.

Council Member Pereira asked for clarification on the Cares Act allocation and how it impacts this budget cycle. Mr. Nkwo said that the Governor proposed a one-time allocation, but the legislative body did not honor that proposal.

Council Member Pereira said that they were just hearing about this \$12 million dollar shortfall now when it should have been approved last year. Discussion followed about the details.

Council Member Newton pointed out that the City does their budget before the State does. The Council was depending on the legislature to approve certain allocations, but the legislature did not come up with the money. He added that the Governor is working on something to make up for the funding that Bridgeport did not receive. Council Member Burns said that the State Legislature was supposed to have a Special Session, but that never happened.

Ms. Vickers said that the Governor made a proposal with a line item that was about the Cares Act funding that was separate from the General Fund. That was not approved by the legislature.

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 5:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Telesco Secretarial Services