

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT  
BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS  
COMMITTEE  
SPECIAL MEETING  
MAY 3, 2022**

**ATTENDANCE:** Scott Burns, Co-chair; Ernest Newton, Co-chair; Jeanette Herron, Matthew McCarthy, AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia, Mary McBride-Lee (6:30 p.m.), Tyler Mack (6:56 p.m.)

**OTHERS:** Council Member(s): A. Boyd, M. Brown, M. Pereira, R Smith, M. Lyons (6:36 p.m.), R. Roman-Christy (6:36 p.m.) & M. Valle; Council President A. Nieves (6:52 p.m.); T. Gaudett, Mayoral Aide; Ken Flatto, Finance Director; Nestor Nkwo, OPM Director; Constance Vickers, Legislative Affairs

**CALL TO ORDER**

Co-chair Burns called the meeting to order at 6:26 p.m. He introduced those present and said that they would be working on the Operating Budget.

Co-chair Newton said that this was one of the toughest budgets. There are many people who were upset about what the State did to the City.

*Council Member McBride-Lee joined the meeting at 6:30 p.m.*

Council Member Burns said that the State Legislature had just confirmed the State's budget. Mr. Nkwo said that they had planned to reduce the mill rate from 45 to 32, based on anticipated State reimbursements. He said that the City will receive \$1.6 million in Pilot payments, but the shortfall of \$5.3 million remains. There had been a proposed \$1.8 million for a manufacturing Pilot, but that was not approved.

*Council Member Lyons, Council Member Valle, and Council Member Roman-Christy joined the meeting at 6:36 p.m.*

Mr. Flatto said that three years ago, they reduced the mill rate from 54 to 45 for the car tax. When the calculation was made by the State, it was based on the 45-mill rate, which created a deficit. Due to this, there is a \$5.2 million dollar shortfall as of earlier in the day.

Mr. Nkwo distributed a spreadsheet that showed the changes.

Council Member Pereira asked if all the cities will be impacted by this motor vehicles tax change. Ms. Vickers then announced the mill rates and the reimbursements for both Hartford and

New Haven. She added that Representative Rosario will be meeting with the legislature soon about this.

Council Member Newton said that there were only two options, cut the budget or tap into the Contingency Fund.

Council Member Lyons said that she found this unfortunate because year after year, they keep cutting the budget. Constituents come to their Council Members asking for services but the Council finds out that they don't have enough money because they have to cut to reduce a deficit.

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

Council Member Newton said that the City has to fight back against all these cuts.

Council Member McBride-Lee asked about the electronic document they had received from CCM. Council Member Burns explained that they had distributed that document for informational purposes.

*Council Member Mack joined the meeting at 6:56 p.m.*

Council Member McBride-Lee said that she felt the representatives in Hartford should be fighting harder for the Bridgeport School District.

Council Member McCarthy said that he agrees with what everyone just said, but they need to find \$5.2 million. He said that while they need to present a balanced budget, it is only on paper. The administration usually is able to work things out financially.

Council Member Herron said that she would like to plan for the worse and hope for the best.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON MOVED TO ENTER A DOCUMENT TITLED "CITY OF BRIDGEPORT OFFICE OF POLICY MANAGEMENT FY 2022-2023 PROPOSED MILL RATE INCLUDES \$400K FY23 NEW ELDERLY RATE" AS EXHIBIT 05-03-202-A.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON MOVED TO ENTER A DOCUMENT TITLED AS "REVENUE DECREASES - PROPOSED - BAC PROPOSED CHANGE – RATIONAL" AS EXHIBIT # 05-03-2022-B.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON MOVED TO ENTER A DOCUMENT " MAYOR PROPOSED CHANGES - RANGE - PROPOSED BAC RECOMMENDED" AS EXHIBIT #05-03-2022-C.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Council Member Burns explained that Mr. Roach had been working to put external cameras on school buses in order to track the vehicles that illegally pass the buses when students are being discharged. Then the drivers will be fined.

The discussion moved to the new Nip Bottle revenue. The State has enacted a .05¢ charge on purchased nip bottles that will increase to .10¢ soon.

Council Member Pereira pointed out that the school buses were privately owned. Council Member Burns said that he really didn't know the details about that agreement.

Council Member Pereira said that she sees the nip bottles all over the place and asked about redemption. Council Member Burns explained that the .05¢ was collected when the nip is purchased.

*Council Member Valle left the meeting at 7:21 p.m.*

The discussion moved to the CCM membership and registration on page 133 in the budget book. The Hartford legislation lobbyist service cost \$60,000.

Regarding the Tax Assessor, Mr. Flatto explained that they have a part-time assessor that they are paying as a consultant until the test can be administered.

Mr. Nkwo reviewed the line item for binding arbitration and the issues with the Police and Fire contracts.

Council Member Brown said that the State will be reimbursing the City at a higher rate for Bassick High School. He said that he wished to know how much they have already bonded. Mr. Flatto said that it won't save anything in this budget cycle because the bonding won't happen until the summer.

Council Member Pereira said that the State had announced that they would not allocate more than \$129 million for a school and Bassick was located in a flood zone.

The discussion moved to the requested Permit Supervisor. There were several questions about the utilities ripping up the roads and doing a poor job of patching the road afterwards. Council Member Newton said that they have to change the ordinance to require the utilities to pave curb to curb.

Council Member McCarthy asked about the building permits for Steel Point. Council Member Burns said that they had not reviewed every single line.

Council Member Pereira said that the City Engineer had said he would give up the Civil Engineer II for a Civil Engineer I. However, a candidate was notified that he had a job. Later, he filled both positions. It's not fair to other departments who gave up positions and did not fill them. Council Member Burns said the Budget Committee had agreed to cut a position that was already filled. He added that the CAO had given the Budget chairs an updated list of continued vacancies and vacancies that had been filled since the book had been printed.

Council Member Burns said that it appeared there was a consensus that they would be filling the Permit inspector.

The discussion then moved to the City Attorney's Office. Council Member Newton said that they were aware that there will be two attorney vacancies, along with the City Attorney retiring. Council Member Newton pointed out that when a senior attorney retires, the City loses the legacy knowledge. The attorneys retired and then they come back as consultants.

Council Member Herron said that the City Attorney's Office needs to recruit some newly graduated lawyers for training. Council Member Lyons said that both the City and the State does this.

Council Member Pereira said that the City Attorney's Office was doing a great disservice to the City because many residents hate them.

She stated for the record that the City Attorney's Office is paid more than any other city in the State other than Greenwich.

The discussion then moved to the Town Clerk's request for an additional Typist 1. Mr. Nkwo then provided the details.

Council Member Burns said that there had been a problem last year when they had talked about the Construction Manager. Council Member Newton said that there was an individual who was a construction manager and she was doing a very good job.

Council Member Pereira said that the Director of Public Facilities and the Construction Manager should have a degree in Engineering.

### **RECESS**

Council Member Burns declared a recess at 8:18 p.m. Due to illness, the secretary left the meeting at this time.

Respectfully submitted,

Telesco Secretarial Services

City of Bridgeport  
Budget & Appropriations  
Special Meeting  
May 3, 2022