

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS
COMMITTEE
SPECIAL MEETING
MAY 4, 2022**

ATTENDANCE: Scott Burns, Co-chair; Ernest Newton, Co-chair; Jeanette Herron, Matthew McCarthy, AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia, Mary McBride-Lee (via conference call)

OTHERS: Council President A. Nieves, Council Member(s): A. Boyd, M. Brown, F. Hodges, M. Pereira & R. Smith; T. Gaudett, Mayoral Aide; Ken Flatto, Finance Director; Nestor Nkwo, OPM Director; Constance Vickers, Legislative Affairs

CALL TO ORDER

Co-chair Newton called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m. A quorum was present.

Council Member Newton asked Mr. Flatto to describe the latest information regarding the state budget legislative session.

Mr. Flatto described that today state legislators were able at the last minute to secure new state aid in a total amount of \$5.3 million to replace the loss of \$5.3 million of state aid expected. The loss of state aid was due to a shortfall in car tax revenue reimbursements from the state that the city was not aware of until May 3rd receipt of state municipal aid runs as described the evening before by Mr. Nkwo. Mr. Flatto said the replacement state aid of \$5.3 million comprised two components: ARPA aid of \$2.2 million and municipal revenue sharing aid of \$3.1 million.

Council Member Newton asked Ms. Vickers to confirm this aid would be coming and Ms. Vickers said that state legislators had secured this commitment from the Speaker and Senate and a bill for \$2.2 million was passed today and a new state municipal run for the \$3.1 million was prepared.

Council Member Newton turned the meeting over to Mr. Nkwo who distributed two documents, which were then exhibited by the Committee.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON MOVED TO ACCEPT AND APPROVE THE DOCUMENT ENTITLED ‘FY23 BUILDING PERMIT FEE VALUES AND PROJECTIONS’ AS EXHIBIT 5-4-2022-A**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BURNS SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON MADE A SECOND MOTION TO ACCEPT AND APPROVE THE DOCUMENT ENTITLED ‘EXHIBIT 542022B- FY2023 BAC**

GENERAL FUND BUDGET CHANGES TO THE MAYORS FY2023 PROPOSED BUDGET WITH LEGISLATIVE INTENTS' AS EXHIBIT 5-4-2022-B.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BURNS SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mr. Nkwo first described FY23 Building Permit Fee Values And Projections (Document 5-4-2022-A) which he said summarized the amount of fees expected from major FY23 building projects, such as Bond St, Steel Point, and Downtown North, as expected by the Building department and OPED.

The document listed a low total of \$476,000 and a high of \$2.7 million. Council Member Pereira and Council Member McCarthy and Council Member Brown asked about why other projects they knew of were not listed and whether this amount would be in addition to amounts listed in the proposed budget. Mr. Nkwo said he felt the budget already included some of these projects. Council Member Burns agreed other projects would evolve during the year. Mr. Flatto suggested the budget book total was about \$150,000 less than the mid-point of the listed projects. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said members should not second guess the department and Council Member Herron worried about a slowing housing market next year. Council Member Newton suggested adding \$200,000 to that item.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON MOVED TO ADD \$200,000 TO THE BUILDING FEE BUDGET LINE TOTAL PROPOSED IN 'FY2023 BAC GENERAL FUND BUDGET CHANGES TO THE MAYOR'S FY2023 PROPOSED BUDGET WITH LEGISLATIVE INTENTS' (EXHIBIT 5-4-2022-B).**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BURNS SECONDED.**

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

Mr. Nkwo then explained further that the 'FY2023 BAC General Fund Budget Changes to the Mayor's FY2023 Proposed Budget With Legislative Intents' document # 5-4-2022-B was a compilation of all the budget line by budget line amendment changes to the Mayor's proposed FY2023 Budget that had been suggested by members on the previous evening, along with some additional small modifications to budget lines proposed by OPM and Finance. He recommended that members go through these proposals, section by section entitled Revenue Increases, Revenue Decreases, Expenditure Increases, and Expenditure Decreases and make their decisions.

Co-chair Burns and Newton said there would be final votes on each section at the end of the meeting, as in prior years. Mr. Gaudett offered to keep a running tally of the changes as each budget line decision and amendment was made by the Committee.

Mr. Nkwo started with the Revenue section and further individually summarized the reasons for the items listed.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia recommended elimination of item for Police Department ticket violation revenue from passing a school bus ticket fee. Council Member Herron stated it was

disappointing to read this item given the Council had not seen any contract for the proposed cameras for school buses. Council Member Pereira stated the BOE must approve.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BURNS MOVED TO CUT THIS PROPOSED \$150,000 REVENUE LINE INCREASE FROM THE REVENUE SECTION.**
**** COUNCIL MEMBER MCCARTHY SECONDED.**
**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Council Member Newton stated he didn't realize the vote intent.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON MOVED TO RE-CONSIDER AND RESTORE THE \$150,000 BUDGET LINE.**
**** COUNCIL MEMBER MCBRIDE-LEE SECONDED.**
**** THE MOTION TO RECONSIDER PASSED WITH FIVE (5) IN FAVOR AND ONE (1) OPPOSED.**

The item was left as listed in Exhibit #5-4-2022B.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BURNS MOTIONED TO INCREASE LINE 41246 – INTEREST ON INVESTMENTS BY \$50,000.**
**** COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON SECONDED.**

Mr. Flatto indicated with rates rising that this is a reasonable projection.

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON MOTIONED TO ADD \$150,000 TO LINE 41544 – SALE OF CITY PROPERTIES.**
**** COUNCIL MEMBER MCCARTHY SECONDED.**

The Committee felt enough sites would be sold to generate this revenue. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said she was opposed out of concern for the sale of the airport.

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

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BURNS THEN PROPOSED TO ADD A NEW REVENUE BUDGET LINE FOR \$125,000 FOR THE 'NIP BOTTLE MUNICIPAL SALES TAX' LAW RECENTLY PASSED BY THE STATE.**
**** COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON SECONDED.**
**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The Committee discussed and agreed that all votes recorded during the meeting will be compiled by Mr. Gaudett and OPM and furnished with full recalculations on the spreadsheet Exhibit # 5-4-

2022-B before the Committee for the Committee to take final votes later tonight and that final further amendments could be made at that time. Mr. Gaudett said motions so far total \$525,000 in additional revenue and Council Member McCarthy concurred.

Mr. Nkwo then went through the Expenditure sections of the Exhibit and further explained the items listed with the legislative intent proposed for each indicated on the Exhibit. Discussion ensued on each expenditure budget line by line.

Council Member Pereira asked about why the Council legislative supply line was needed when she had been told at earlier meeting that existing supplies would be used. Mr. Nkwo said some basic items were necessary in addition to City Clerk office supplies.

Council Member Newton and Council Member McBride-Lee stated that they fully support the amounts of increased expenditures proposed for MIRA. Council Member Pereira stated that other ARPA grants were funding re-entry programs. Mr. Hodges stated that there were differing types of programs and he has seen firsthand what MIRA is accomplishing for the City. No changes were made to those budget lines.

Small increase changes were made to the proposed fuel and gas account increases per OPM. The Committee decided to transfer the License and Permits division to Engineering with one additional inspector to be added, with dollar amount determined by OPM.

The Committee approved of the transfer of Deputy Director of Health from Social Services to Health Administration.

Council Member Newton asked for discussion on the proposal in the Exhibit for the Council to add \$500,000 to City's total annual contribution to the Board of Education budget, bringing the total proposed annual increase for the BOE to \$2.5 million. Council Member Burns stated this increase will go a long way toward meeting the needs and goals indicated by the Superintendent and that the Committee was cognizant of BOE needs and grant resources available this coming year.

Ms. Vickers indicated the State had figured out that a very large adjustment was due to the BOE due to the state determining that the district was undercounting free lunch students in annual submissions and that the state approved funding for an audit of this program to ensure the BOE gets proper funding in the future, which could amount to millions of dollars more per year. In addition, Mr. Nkwo stated the BOE will be receiving up to \$2 million in additional federal school lunch funds this coming year.

Council Member Pereira stated that ESSER funding would be used more for capital projects and supplemental programs and that nutrition funding couldn't be used for regular budget and she urged more funding be approved.

Council Member Hodges suggested the BOE do more recycling to generate fee income.

Council Member Newton thanked the Superintendent for working so well with the City and the Council and indicated that his efforts were very helpful. Council Member McBride-Lee indicated she felt more substitutes were needed.

The Committee unanimously agreed to approve the \$500,000 increase as listed in the Exhibit to total \$2.5 million for the BOE budget.

RECESS

The Committee took a five-minute recess.

Mr. Nkwo and Council Member Burns moved onto other expenditure decreases and stated that a number of the changes were simply transfers from one department to another.

The Committee left intact the listed defunding of one vacant City Attorney.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON MOTIONED TO REDUCE THE CITY ATTORNEY CLAIMS AND JUDGMENTS ACCOUNT BY ANOTHER \$175,000 TO REDUCE THE BUDGET LINE TOTAL DOWN TO \$1,050,000.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON SECONDED.**

Mr. Flatto mentioned that the reserve is ample but future unknown claims could impact this account and require a replenishment in future budget years.

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

The Committee reviewed the budget line decreases required to fund the expense increases for the Council's new staffing needs.

Council Member Pereira said that the proposed \$40,000 increase in Council travel expenditure funds should be eliminated and that not all members go to conferences. Council Member Herron stated that conference learning and knowledge was essential to Council Member duties and Council Member Newton stated the funds should remain as proposed. No motion was made to reduce this \$40,000 budget line proposal.

Council Member Newton questioned the rationale behind the proposed OPM decrease of \$50,000 in the Small and Minority Business office budget line for a disparity study. Mr. Nkwo explained the funds were budgeted and meant to be expended in FY2022 but he left \$100,000 for FY2023 since the study was not completed. Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that she felt this would be adequate.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA MOVED TO REDUCE THIS BUDGET LINE FROM \$150,000 TO \$100,000**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MCCARTHY SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION CARRIED WITH FOUR (4) IN FAVOR AND TWO (2) OPPOSED.**

Mr. Gaudett and Mr. Nkwo indicated that based on the adjustments as discussed and approved so far, the total proposed BAC amended Budget for FY2023 was \$723,210 short from being balanced. This total includes the elimination of the Mayor's \$2.1 million proposed line for more state aid or administrative reduction actions since there was no expectation for further state aid beyond the \$5.3 million discussed at the beginning of the meeting.

Council Member Burns proposed to add one Public Health Nurse and the Committee agreed this should be added with OPM to calculate the exact amount. The position would be added under Communicable Disease Clinic department.

Council Member Burns proposed elimination of the proposed new position for a Labor Relations Deputy (which was proposed in addition to the new Labor Relations Director to be hired) and the Committee approved this change and requested OPM calculate the expenditure reduction amounts.

Mr. Nkwo was asked and explained that OPED HOME Programs Specialist position would be now fully funded by CDBG grants. Council Member Burns asked to reduce that salary line from the budget. Council Member Burns also asked to increase the OPED Executive Assistant salary from by \$7,000 in light of increased duties.

The Communications Marketing budget was reviewed. Council Member McCarthy proposed to reduce the \$50,000 overall increase given that \$50,000 was left in OPED budget. The Committee unanimously agreed to reduce Communications marketing by \$50,000.

Council Member Brown suggested that the personnel handling meter collection should be moved from the Police Department. Council Member Herron and Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia explained why they felt the Police Department had to supervise this office. Mr. Hodges said that Police Department outside overtime should be civilianized. Council President Nieves said more officers should be patrolling our streets and fewer handling administrative functions. No motions were made regarding this division.

Council Member Newton then proposed to add one Maintainer III for Sanitation and one Maintainer I for Parks Maintenance. The Committee adopted this proposal and asked Mr. Nkwo to calculate the amounts for the final votes.

Council Member McCarthy proposed five further motions regarding the Public Facilities Budgets and CAO.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MCCARTHY MOVED TO REDUCE AND UNFUND ONE (1) DATA ANALYST.**

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT NIEVES SECOND.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED WITH FOUR (4) IN FAVOR (BURNS, MCCARTHY HERRON AND VIZZO-PANICCIA) AND TWO (2) OPPOSED (NEWTON AND MCBRIDE-LEE).**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MCCARTHY MOVED TO REDUCE AND UNFUND ONE (1) SPECIAL PROJECT COORDINATOR AND ONE (1) SPECIAL PROJECT MANAGER - BOTH IN THE FACILITIES ADMIN DIVISION.**

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT NIEVES SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MCCARTHY MOVED TO REDUCE AND UNFUND ONE (1) HOUSING CODE SPECIAL PROJECT COORDINATOR.**

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT NIEVES SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MCCARTHY MOVED TO REDUCE AND UNFUND ONE (1) HOUSING CODE SPECIAL PROJECT COORDINATOR.**

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT NIEVES SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MCCARTHY MOVED TO REDUCE AND UNFUND ONE (1) ASSISTANT CAO POSITION.**

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT NIEVES SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED WITH FOUR (4) IN FAVOR (BURNS, MCCARTHY HERRON AND VIZZO-PANICCIA) AND TWO (2) OPPOSED (NEWTON AND MCBRIDE-LEE).**

Mr. Gaudett explained that in net all changes as proposed so far would relatively balance the budget.

Council President Nieves made one further motion to add an expenditure budget line for the purchase of a City-wide Parks department event stage trailer vehicle for \$150,000. After discussion, the Committee agreed to make this amendment.

Mr. Nkwo was asked to calculate all changes and make any final small adjustment, if needed to the expenditure vacancy reserve budget.

RECESS

The Committee took a 10-minute recess to allow OPM to produce a final amended Exhibit #5-4-2022-B document for final review by the Committee.

Mr. Nkwo returned with the final As Amended Exhibit #5-4-2022-B – “FY2023 BAC General Fund Budget Changes to the Mayor’s FY2023 Proposed Budget with Legislative Intentions.”

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BURNS MOVED TO APPROVE EXHIBIT 542022B THE FIRST SECTION ENTITLED ‘BAC REVENUE INCREASES (A)’ AS AMENDED BY THE BAC IN THE TOTAL AMOUNT OF \$13,537,928 IN REVENUE INCREASE CHANGES TO THE MAYOR’S PROPOSED FY2023 BUDGET.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON SECONDED.**

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

Council Member McBride-Lee indicated her vote was due to disappointment about certain positions including the reduction to an Assistant CAO.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BURNS MOTIONED TO APPROVE EXHIBIT # 5-4-2022-B SECOND SECTION ENTITLED ‘BAC REVENUE DECREASES (B)’ AS AMENDED BY THE BAC IN THE TOTAL AMOUNT OF \$12,142,949 IN REVENUE DECREASE CHANGES TO THE MAYOR’S PROPOSED FY2023 BUDGET.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON SECONDED.**

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

**** COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON MOTIONED TO APPROVE EXHIBIT # 5-4-2022-B THIRD SECTION ENTITLED “BAC APPROPRIATIONS/EXPENDITURE INCREASES (C)’ AS AMENDED BY THE BAC IN THE TOTAL AMOUNT OF \$4,136,496 IN APPROPRIATIONS/EXPENDITURE INCREASE CHANGES FROM MAYORS PROPOSED FY2023 BUDGET OF \$4,136,496.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BURNS SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED WITH FOUR (4) IN FAVOR (BURNS, HERRON, NEWTON AND VIZZO-PANICCIA) AND TWO (2) OPPOSED (MCCARTHYAND MCBRIDE-LEE).**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BURNS MOTIONED TO APPROVE EXHIBIT # 5-4-2022-B APPROPRIATIONS/EXPENDITURE DECREASES (D) AS AMENDED BY THE BAC IN THE TOTAL AMOUNT OF \$2,741,517 IN APPROPRIATIONS/EXPENDITURE DECREASE CHANGES FROM THE MAYOR’S PROPOSED FY2023 BUDGET.**

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

**** THE MOTION PASSED WITH FOUR (4) IN FAVOR (BURNS, HERRON, NEWTON AND VIZZO-PANICCIA) AND TWO (2) OPPOSED (MCCARTHYAND MCBRIDE-LEE).**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MCCARTHY MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE ENTIRE EXHIBIT # 5-4-2022-B AS AMENDED BY THE BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE IN A TOTAL AMOUNT OF CHANGES TO NET REVENUES OF \$1,394,979 AND A TOTAL AMOUNT OF CHANGES TO NET APPROPRIATIONS/EXPENDITURES OF \$1,394,979.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE BUDGET AS AMENDED PASSED WITH FIVE (5) IN FAVOR (BURNS, MCCARTHY HERRON, NEWTON AND VIZZO-PANICCIA) AND ONE (1) OPPOSED (MCBRIDE-LEE).**

ADJOURNMENT

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

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MCCARTHY SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 11:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Telesco Secretarial Services