

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS
COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
DECEMBER 12, 2022**

ATTENDANCE: Ernest Newton, Co-chair; Scott Burns, Co-chair; Tyler Mack, Jeanette Herron, Mary McBride-Lee, Matthew McCarthy

OTHERS: Council Member Jorge Cruz; Ken Flatto, Finance Director; Nestor Nkwo, OPM Director; Thomas Gill, OPED Director; Thomas Gaudett, Deputy Chief of Staff; Gabrielle Parisi, Barbara, Nikka Olofson; 203-880-5666, 203-414-0712

CALL TO ORDER

Co-chair Newton called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. A quorum was present.

APPROVAL OF COMMITTEE MINUTES

• November 14, 2022 (Regular Meeting)

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BURNS MOVED THE MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 14, 2022**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MCCARTHY SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 14, 2022 AS SUBMITTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Council Member Newton requested that the Committee add the monthly report to the agenda.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON MOVED TO SUSPEND THE RULES TO ADD AN ITEM TO THE AGENDA.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MCBRIDE-LEE SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON MOVED TO ADD THE MONTHLY REPORT TO THE AGENDA.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MCBRIDE-LEE SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

UPDATE REGARDING ARPA DISBURSEMENTS SINCE JUNE 2022 (FINANCE).

Mr. Flatto said that he had some exhibits for the Committee members. He added that he would be introducing some of the staff for administering the ARPA funding. The City has assembled an array of 29 programs, including business assistance programs, Capital Projects and social service programs. He said that the City had received all of the ARPA funding. They have assembled a

four year budget work sheet for the various programs. Mr. Flatto then gave an overview of how the RFPs were reviewed and selected. He displayed a spreadsheet on the screen titled ARPA Budgets Spreadsheet Summary as of Dec 2022.

Ms. Parisi greeted the Committee members and described how the portal was set up for the ARPA finance compliance. Each quarter, budget will be uploaded for the Federal monitoring and tracking. Ms. Olofson gave an overview of the various types of reports that the Federal government requires for disbursement of funds.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BURNS MOVED TO ENTER THE DOCUMENT TITLED “ARPA BUDGETS SPREADSHEET SUMMARY AS OF DEC 2022” AS EXHIBIT 12-12-22-A.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BURNS MOVED TO ENTER THE DOCUMENT TITLED “APRA PAYMENTS BY VENDOR” AS EXHIBIT 12-12-22-B.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mr. Flatto then reviewed the Spreadsheet information with the Committee. He noted that they took particular care not to duplicate programs that the State was offering. The contracts are contingent on the vendors being able to meet their goals and continue them over the three year period.

Council Member Newton asked if there were any plans for the Committee members to review the reports from the various vendors. Mr. Flatto suggested that the Committee receive a summary after the two year period was completed.

Council Member McCarthy said that this was not an easy task to allocate and distribute the funding. He said that he felt that the administration had done a very good job in getting the funding to the community.

Council Member McCarthy asked about one of the invoices listed on the spreadsheet involving rental assistance. Mr. Flatto reviewed the details of that program with the Committee. The Social Service/Health Department will be administering those funds. The tenant is the one who must apply for the assistance. Discussion followed about the details.

Council Member Mack asked if there was some future planning regarding the use of the funding for salaries for the Health Department. Mr. Flatto said that they have been able to hire an epidemiologist for the Health Department with the funding. He added that the staff had been able to identify some additional grant funding for the salaries also. There will be also some funding from the National Opioid Funding.

Council Member McBride-Lee said that she continually hears that the City is not doing enough for the youth. Mr. Flatto said that there were two types of youth programs: social/emotional programs and educational programs. Council Member McBride-Lee said that it would be important to have the youth programs monitored so that the youth actually received the services. Council Member Newton said that it would be important to get the word out to the community about these various programs for the youth.

Council Member Burns asked what happens to funding that was not disbursed during a certain time period. He also asked about dark broadband internet. Mr. Gaudett said that the Federal Government has said they would be funding broadband internet. There are also maintenance costs that the City would be responsible for and therefore the City cannot take point on this program.

Mr. Gaudett then spoke about how the organizations were given an extra 30 days for submitting their vouchers for Year One, which should have ended June 30th. However, the City was late in getting the program started, so the extension was given. Discussion followed.

Council Member Cruz said that he was pleased to hear that the administration was receiving regular data from the various organizations because it was important to insure that the programs were being effective.

Council Member Cruz said that he would like to have a copy of the spreadsheet. He had several questions about the fitness and health installment. He said that he had been asking for a handball court at Winfield Park for the last few years but had been told that there was no funding for it in the Parks budget. Discussion followed.

Council Member McCarthy asked about some small businesses that had filed for funding, but closed shortly afterwards. He wished to know if there would be a way to recover the funding. Mr. Flatto said that there was a way to recover improperly spent funding and the City Attorney is working on one of those cases. One of the staff explained that the business closed before it received the funding.

Council Member McCarthy asked about the high speed ferry. Mr. Flatto said that the negotiations between the State and Federal Agencies had required the City to identify matching funding. Discussion followed.

Mr. Flatto then reviewed the details regarding the vendor payment spreadsheet.

FINANCIAL REPORT ON SOUND ON SOUND (OPED).

Council Member Newton said that Mr. Gill was present to review the Sound on Sound report. He reminded everyone that the City was to receive 5% on gross ticket sales and the organization reimbursed the Police and Fire Overtime along with Parks and Public Facilities. Payment of the \$448,838.60 is expected to be made within the next week.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BURNS MOVED TO ENTER THE DOCUMENT TITLED “SOUND ON SOUND REVENUE” AS EXHIBIT 12-12-22-C.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Council Member Burns asked if they knew about how many tickets were sold. Mr. Gill said that the City received a report every 2 hours based on the number of admission bracelets sold and scanned. Mr. Gill said that the peak admissions indicated that there were approximately 14,000 tickets sold. On Sunday, there were 11,000 plus attendees.

Mr. Gill said that they were able to restore the park grounds and damage to the track was repaired and paid for by Sound on Sound. Sound on Sound is interested in returning to Bridgeport in the spring.

The discussion then moved to the Police Department overtime and the ability of the public to have access to the park during the festival.

Council Member Newton asked what the \$50,000 Parks Fund would be used for. Mr. Gill said that it was not used for the repair of the park grounds from the Festival. Mr. Flatto said that Parks and Rec was trying to set aside some funding for the playground area in the park.

Council Member McCarthy asked if the MERF payments were included in the bill for Police Overtime. Mr. Gill said that the various Departments created the amounts that Sound on Sound was charged for the overtime. Discussion followed.

Council Member Cruz gave a shout out to Mr. Gill and the Parks Department for their hard work on this event. He said he was impressed and satisfied.

Council Member Newton said that he had never seen that many people in Seaside Park. He noted that there were no problems and the event was well run. He thanked Live Nation for putting on the event and said that he was looking forward to the next event.

Council Member McCarthy asked if they were tracking scanned tickets, or just tickets sold. Mr. Gill said that the numbers were based on the actual scans rather than tickets sold.

DISCUSSION RE: CAPITAL PROJECTS REPORTING RESOLUTION (OPM).

Mr. Nkwo said that he would have to develop a graph for displaying the information.

Council Member Burns said that he was looking to see how the capital projects were moving along. Council Member Newton said that he would like the Committee to see how Stamford handles the information.

Council Member Burns said that Stamford produces a book on the Capital projects. He displayed a form from that book.

- ** COUNCIL MEMBER BURNS MOVED TO ENTER THE DOCUMENTS TITLED “STAMFORD CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN” AS EXHIBIT 12-12-22-D.**
- ** COUNCIL MEMBER MACK SECONDED.**
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Council Member Mack said that he supports this and felt that the Stamford model was excellent. Council Member Burns said that it would be important to consider this and know what works for Bridgeport. Council Member Newton said that it would give the budget committee a better way to keep track of the Capital projects.

MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT

Mr. Flatto said that the basic numbers had not changed much since last month. One thing will be the timing of the airport sale. There has been some progress, but it has moved forward slowly. He said that they would like to sign off on it by the spring.

On the expense side, the overtime seems to be running higher. At this point in time, he didn't expect any major surplus. The tax collection seems to be running at the expected levels. However, the State car tax reimbursement has been reduced.

Council Member Burns asked what the City was planning if the airport sale does not happen. Mr. Flatto said that hopefully they would have a better sense of this in the spring.

Council Member Burns asked about the Treasury Bills generating income. Mr. Flatto said that they were able to do some short term investments in the late fall. Webster Bank just offered a significant increase in their money market account.

Council Member McCarthy asked Mr. Nkwo if the MERF payments should be included in the overtime charges for the Sound on Sound. Mr. Nkwo said that he did think that increase should be included. He will check next year to insure that cost is covered.

Mr. Flatto said that he had not heard anything about the School Bus cameras and the issuance of citations for vehicles illegally passing school buses.

Council Member Herron said that the City should not rely on funding that had not yet come in. She said that the airport may or may not be sold, the bus camera citation funding has not happened yet and the ARPA funding was delayed.

ADJOURNMENT

- ** COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON MOVED TO ADJOURN.**
- ** COUNCIL MEMBER MCCARTHY SECONDED.**
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Telesco Secretarial Services