

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
JUNE 12, 2023**

ATTENDANCE: Scott Burns, Co-chair; Ernest Newton, Co-chair; Mary McBride-Lee, Matthew McCarthy, Council President Aidee Nieves

OTHERS: Council Member(s): A. Boyd & S. Suliman; Ken Flatto, Finance Director; Nestor Nkwo, OPM Director; Kathleen Brickett, OPM, John Stafstrom, Bond counsel Pullman & Comley

Due to internet connectivity issues, the minutes were taken by Mr. Flatto.

CALL TO ORDER

Co-chair Burns called the meeting to order at 6:08 p.m. A quorum was present.

Approval of Committee Minutes: April 10, 2023 (Regular Meeting); April 18, 2023, April 27, 2023 & May 4, 2023 (Public Hearings); April 5, 2023; April 6, 2023; April 10, 2023; April 11, 2023; April 12, 2023; April 13, 2023; April 15, 2023; April 18, 2023; April 20, 2023; April 22, 2023; April 25, 2023; April 26, 2023; April 29, 2023; May 3, 2023; May 4, 2023 & May 6, 2023 (Special Budget Hearing Meetings).

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MCBRIDE-LEE MOVED TO TABLE THE FOLLOWING MINUTES UNTIL THE NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING:**

APRIL 10, 2023 (REGULAR MEETING); APRIL 18, 2023, APRIL 27, 2023 & MAY 4, 2023 (PUBLIC HEARINGS); APRIL 5, 2023; APRIL 6, 2023; APRIL 10, 2023; APRIL 11, 2023; APRIL 12, 2023; APRIL 13, 2023; APRIL 15, 2023; APRIL 18, 2023; APRIL 20, 2023; APRIL 22, 2023; APRIL 25, 2023; APRIL 26, 2023; APRIL 29, 2023; MAY 3, 2023; MAY 4, 2023 & MAY 6, 2023 (SPECIAL BUDGET HEARING MEETINGS).

**** COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

72-22 Municipal Suspense Tax Book.

Mr. Flatto presented the Tax Suspense item, in lieu of Tax Collector Jones who was unable to attend. Mr. Flatto indicated these delinquent tax write offs are solely relating to personal property taxes and car taxes when the Assessor or Collector determined the persons had deceased and no longer owned such property or the companies went bankrupt and had no successor companies.

Council Member Newton asked if the total was approximately \$35,000 in total and Mr. Flatto confirmed this total.

- ** COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 72-22 MUNICIPAL SUSPENSE TAX BOOK.**
- ** COUNCIL MEMBER MCBRIDE-LEE SECONDED.**
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

73-22 Proposed Approval of General Obligation Bonds and the Reallocation of the City Bond Proceeds for certain Board of Education Capital Projects – To Fund Certain Capital Improvement Projects.

Council Member Burns asked Mr. Flatto to present the next Item regarding annual bonding of capital projects. Mr. Flatto summarized that approximately \$13 million of the CIP approved projects were listed in Exhibit A to receive bonding authorization and that of that total, approximately \$2.5 million are listing in Exhibit B to be funded from unused unneeded funds from old bonded projects, thus reducing the new money bonding to about \$12.5 million.

Mr. Nkwo described the process and explained why the old project funds were no longer needed and can be re-allocated to the Exhibit B listed new projects. Mr. Stafstrom spoke as to the process and the legitimacy of this approach.

Council Member Newton asked about the boat ramp project and whether reports in press were accurate and Mr. Nkwo indicated that the project could get done once permits were approved.

Council Member Newton asked if we would pay as much interest if we re-allocated projects and Mr. Stafstrom indicated less interest would be paid since those re-allocated new projects would now not be bonded.

Council Member McCarthy asked more old unspent bond funds weren't re-allocated. Mr. Nkwo and Mr. Flatto indicated they would look for more old projects to re-allocate from in the future but that most of funds bonded are for projects in the works.

Council Member McCarthy further asked if there were authorized capital projects that had never been bonded and whether those could be closed and deauthorized. Mr. Flatto indicated that there are some not yet bonded but authorized projects on a list that Pullman Comley and Finance keeps. Mr. Flatto said some of those projects are being phased in for bonding, such as Bassick school, but that others could be de-authorized.

Council Member Newton and Council Member McCarthy requested that Finance and OPM come back in September with another resolution to decommit those authorized projects no longer needed and to further identify old bonded projects that could be re-allocated toward new projects. Mr. Flatto and Mr. Nkwo agreed to do this.

Council Member Burns requested that this item be noted in the minutes as the intent of the Committee in regards to this resolution. Mr. Stafstrom recommended the Committee go ahead and approve this resolution as is, rather than amending it for future items that will have to come back to the Committee anyway.

Council Member Newton asked about the other future CIP projects listed in future years of the 2024-2028 Capital Plan. Mr. Nkwo and Mr. Stafstrom indicated that those projects would have to be re-approved in the next 5 year CIP plan and then authorized for bonding in the future.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 73-22 PROPOSED APPROVAL OF GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS AND THE REALLOCATION OF THE CITY BOND PROCEEDS FOR CERTAIN BOARD OF EDUCATION CAPITAL PROJECTS – TO FUND CERTAIN CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS.**

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

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**GENERAL DISCUSSION RE: REVIEW OF THE
MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT.**

Mr. Flatto was asked to present his monthly report and he indicated that the year is going well with no large changes from the last monthly report. Mr. Flatto said the projected surplus is nearly \$4 million for Fiscal Year 2023.

Council Member Burns asked if there is enough in the budget for estimated union contract increases within the contingency accounts. Mr. Nkwo indicated that while the new PD contract is high, there should be nearly enough within that account for the retroactive increase along with accruals Mr. Flatto had stored from previous year contingency accounts.

Council Member Newton asked why the City keeps assuming uncertain revenues in proposed budgets and that is not a good idea. Mr. Nkwo explained why the City felt the need to budget more state aid and airport revenues.

Council President Nieves asked about building fee income and why some permits get delayed and also why some home permits are not obtained from the City. Mr. Nkwo indicated that this continues to be an issue.

Council Member Newton and Council President Nieves asked about news reports about possible state bond projects for Bridgeport and Mr. Nkwo and Mr. Flatto sought to explain the State also has a two-stage process and that such projects then have to get authorized by the Governor's State Bond Commission.

ADJOURNMENT.

- ** COUNCIL MEMBER MCBRIDE-LEE MOVED TO ADJOURN.**
- ** COUNCIL PRESIDENT NIEVES SECONDED.**
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 6:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Telesco Secretarial Services