

A **REGULAR MEETING** of the Board of Finance was held on Tuesday, September 21, 2021. Present at City Hall were Mayor Elinor Carbone, City Comptroller Robin Stanziale and Board of Finance Members James Wright, Christopher Beyus, Christopher Anderson and Laurene Pesce. Board members Mark Bushka and Lance Boynton were absent. Superintendent of Schools Susan Lubomski, Board of Education Chairperson Fiona Cappabianca, Board of Education Building Project Chairmen Ed Arum and Mario Longobucco, and Board of Education Member Gary Eucalitto were also present.

Mayor Carbone called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

On a motion by Mr. Wright, seconded by Mr. Beyus, the Board voted unanimously to open the meeting to the public. There was no one present who wished to speak. The City Clerk read a letter and a memo into the record - one from Police Chief Baldwin and one from Public Works Director Drew, both requesting that no further budget cuts be made to their departments.

POLICE INTERCEPTORS

On a motion by Mr. Wright, seconded by Mr. Beyus, the Board voted unanimously to authorize the expenditure of \$96,765.82 from the Vehicle Replacement fund for the purchase of two Ford Police Interceptors on State Contract #12 PSX 0194, from MHQ of Middletown, CT, having been approved by the Board of Public Safety on November 4th and City Council on November 8, 2021.

PRESENTATION: BOARD OF EDUCATION INFINITE VISION SOFTWARE

Ms. Lubomski updated the Board of Finance on the Board of Education's recent software migration to Infinite Vision, listing its features and potential advantages for both Boards.

PRESENTATION: BOARD OF EDUCATION APPLICATION FOR ECS FUNDS

Mayor Carbone explained that the Board of Education's request for 2% or \$478,667 of the Education Cost Sharing allocation from the State resulted in a reduction to the city's revenue by the same amount.

Expressing serious concerns about budget instability, potential additional budget cuts, potential negative audit findings due to a significant change in the adopted budget and potential bond rating downgrade, Mayor Carbone proposed the Board of Finance monitor the city's budget performance and expenditure line items and, if necessary, impose a hiring and/or spending freeze to ensure a balanced budget at the end of the fiscal year.

More importantly, Mayor Carbone said, is ensuring that the city is better prepared for these occurrences by adopting a policy or ordinance that would require the Board of Education to notify the city of its intention to exercise its option under that statute before the budget is adopted so the Board of Finance can plan appropriately for the loss of revenue.

WAIVE BLDG. PERMIT FEES FOR THS/TMS

On a motion by Mrs. Pesce, seconded by Mr. Anderson, the Board voted unanimously to approve the Board of Education Building Committee request for a waiver of Building Permit Fees in the total amount of \$1,224,841 due to the City in connection with the construction of the Torrington High School/Middle School.

Mr. Arum said he has served on five building committees for the city, and the city has never charged the Board of Education building permit fees in the past.

Mr. Beyus expressed his concerns about the Skate Park relocation and ask for a more definitive plan. Ms. Cappabianca noted that the location of the Skate Park is a Parks and Recreation Commission decision.

Mayor Carbone explained that because the Skate Park is located at the Elise Besse Park property, was gifted to the city and constructed utilizing trust funds, it falls under purview of the Attorney General's office. Any change to that gift or those gifted funds would require input from the Attorney General's office. Mayor Carbone noted that the new location has not been determined yet.

Mayor Carbone said the city needs a policy or ordinance regarding building permit fees and that it would be helpful to have the Superintendent of Parks present a Skate Park relocation plan with associated costs. She said the Skate Park should be known as, and referred to as, a Trust Asset, and that we are doing our best to honor the gift.

INSURANCE BENEFITS/BUDGETING BOE EMPLOYEES

On a motion by Mr. Anderson, seconded by Mr. Beyus, the Board discussed insurance benefits and budgeting for new Board of Education employees. Mrs. Lubomski reported that the Board of Education has 44 new employees whose \$564,356 in medical insurance benefits are covered under entitlement grants and new grants.

**TABLED: COE MEMORIAL PARK BUDGETS
BUDGET MOD. & TRANSFER REQUESTS FY2020/2021
BUDGET MOD. FY2020/2021**

On a motion by Mr. Anderson, seconded by Mr. Beyus, the Board voted unanimously to table the following:

- Acceptance of the Coe Memorial Park Budgets approved by the Parks and Recreation Commission on February 3, 2021
- Approval of the budget modifications and transfer requests for FY2020/2021 described in the Comptroller’s memo dated November 9, 2021.
- Approval of the budget modifications request for FY 2021/2022 described in the Comptroller’s memo dated November 9, 2021.

Mayor Carbone explained that the Coe Memorial Park Budgets are the purview of City Council and that the other two items will go to Council first, and return to the Board of Finance on the December 21 agenda.

BUSINESS BY DEPARTMENT HEADS

On a motion by Mr. Beyus, seconded by Mr. Anderson, the Board voted unanimously to consider business by Department Heads. No business was presented.

BUSINESS BY MAYOR & MEMBERS

On a motion by Mr. Anderson, seconded by Mr. Wright, the Board voted unanimously to consider business by the Mayor and members of the Board of Finance.

Mrs. Pesce asked about the Recycling Coordinator position that was budgeted for. Mayor Carbone said it is in the works and that we must find ways to reduce our waste. Mrs. Pesce asked about the Yankee Pedlar building. Mayor Carbone said the city is still engaged in its request to be appointed the receiver by the Court. Mrs. Pesce asked about the building with plywood-covered windows next to the municipal parking lot on the north end and Mayor Carbone said they were cited for blight.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Mr. Anderson, seconded by Mr. Wright, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn at 6:52 p.m.

ATTEST:

Carol L. Anderson
CAROL L. ANDERSON, MMC
CITY CLERK