

A **REGULAR MEETING** of the Board of Finance was held on Tuesday, July 21, 2020. In response to the Governor's Executive Orders regarding COVID-19, this meeting was held remotely using the ZOOM online meeting platform. Participants included Mayor Elinor Carbone and Board of Finance Members James Wright, Lance Boynton, Laurene Pesce and Christopher Beyus. Board of Finance members Mark Bushka and Christopher Anderson were absent.

City Comptroller Alice Proulx, Treasurer Dan Farley, Fleet Manager Emil Castro, Police Chief William Baldwin, Jr. and BlumShapiro accountants Leslie Zoll and Alaina Clausen also joined the meeting.

Mayor Carbone called the meeting to order at 5:01 p.m.

MINUTES APPROVED

On a motion by Mr. Beyus, seconded by Mr. Wright, the Board voted unanimously to accept the minutes of the special meeting held June 11, 2020.

On a motion by Mr. Boynton, seconded by Mr. Wright, the Board voted unanimously to accept the minutes of the regular meeting held June 16, 2020. Mr. Beyus abstained.

PRESENTATION OF ANNUAL AUDIT

BlumShapiro CPAs Leslie Zoll and Alaina Clausen presented the annual audit for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2019. Ms. Zoll explained the scope of the audit and reported that the City received an unmodified "clean" opinion on the financial statements and no significant deficiencies or material weaknesses were noted. She presented additional financial highlights and Ms. Clausen discussed the results of the Federal and State single audit. She noted that the Federal single audit identified a material weakness for procurement because the Board of Education had not updated their procurement policy to be in compliance with the procurement standards. Ms. Zoll also provided an update on upcoming GASB standards.

TRANSFERS TO CLOSE OUT SMALL INACTIVE FUNDS

On a motion by Mr. Wright, seconded by Mrs. Pesce, the Board voted unanimously to authorize the transfers described in the City Comptroller's memo dated June 30, 2020 to close out small inactive funds.

FISCAL YEAR 2019/2020 TRANSFERS AND BUDGET AMENDMENTS

On a motion by Mr. Beyus, seconded by Mr. Wright, the Board voted unanimously to authorize the Fiscal Year 2019/2020 transfers and budget amendments described in the City Comptroller's memo dated June 30, 2020.

Mr. Boynton requested clarification regarding the \$400,000 transfer to Vehicle Replacement and City Comptroller Alice Proulx explained that it was the amount that was budgeted for in the Fiscal Year 2019/2020 budget to fund the Vehicle Replacement account. Mrs. Pesce requested clarification regarding the transfer of funds to the TPD Detective Division for recording equipment. Ms. Proulx explained that there was an urgent need for the equipment but the TPD did not have enough funds in Capital Reserve. She noted that the City considered leasing the equipment but decided to borrow from the Capital Reserve fund instead in order to save from having to pay interest.

FISCAL YEAR 2020/2021 TRANSFERS AND BUDGET AMENDMENTS

On a motion by Mr. Wright, seconded by Mr. Beyus, the Board voted unanimously to authorize the Fiscal Year 2020/2021 transfers and budget amendments described in the City Comptroller's memo dated July 16, 2020.

FISCAL YEAR 2020/2021 VEHICLE REPLACEMENT PLAN

Mayor Carbone informed the Council that the Vehicle Replacement Advisory Board (VRAB) recommended moving the replacement of a Planning and Zoning vehicle for \$28,000 to the following fiscal year and stated that the Vehicle Replacement Plan that was presented to the Board should be amended as such.

On a motion by Mrs. Pesce, seconded by Mr. Beyus, the Board voted unanimously to accept the 2020/2021 Vehicle Replacement Plan at a total of \$361,000, as amended to reflect the \$28,000 reduction for the Planning & Zoning vehicle.

Mr. Boynton questioned why \$928,000 was budgeted for the TFD for Fiscal Year 2021/2022 and \$1,400,000 was budgeted for Fiscal Year 2026/2027. Fleet Manager Emil Castro reported that the \$928,000 budgeted for Fiscal Year 2021/2022 was for a new 110 ft. ladder truck to replace the existing apparatus. Mayor Carbone noted that the purpose of the vehicle replacement plan is to maintain the City's inventory. She explained that the Fiscal Year 2020/2021 plan was modified to allocate \$284,000 for a new crime van for the TPD to replace the existing vehicle which was in failing condition.

CONTRACT AWARD: TPD CRIME VAN

On a motion by Mr. Beyus, seconded by Mrs. Pesce, the Board voted unanimously to approve Chief Baldwin's request to purchase a new Crime Van for the Torrington Police Department from MHQ for the total amount of \$283,029.50 and authorize the Mayor to act on behalf of the City regarding the execution of the contract and its administration.

Mr. Boynton and Mrs. Pesce expressed their appreciation for the detailed information provided to the Board regarding the proposed funding and need to replace the existing vehicle. Chief Baldwin thanked the Board members and discussed the use of asset forfeiture funds to offset the final cost of the vehicle.

BUSINESS BY DEPARTMENT HEADS

On a motion by Mr. Wright, seconded by Mr. Beyus, the Board voted unanimously to consider business by Department Heads. Chief Baldwin thanked Mr. Castro, the Board of Finance and the VRAB for their support of the TPD.

BUSINESS BY MAYOR & MEMBERS

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

Mrs. Pesce thanked Ms. Proulx and those involved with the City's audit. She also emphasized the importance of improving internet service and availability throughout the Northwest corner and asked what the City could do to lead the way. Mayor Carbone reported that Northwest Connect had been trying to expand broadband service into the region and she explained that Torrington would likely bear the greatest burden of the expense due to the City's population density. Additionally, Ms. Pesce expressed her concerns regarding waste management costs and the Mayor discussed the possibility of transitioning to a user fee in order to sustain the City's operating budget.

Mr. Boynton expressed his concerns regarding the impact of COVID-19 on the school system and requested a financial status update for the Board of Education and City Departments. Mayor Carbone reported that the Board of Education had yet to move its COVID-related expenses to the COVID Fund #0282. She also reported that Supt. Lubomski would be presenting the TPS reopening plan to the Board of Education on the evening of Wednesday, July 22, 2020.

Mr. Wright stated that he was encouraged by the sale of property on Summer Street and requested clarification regarding the potential solar lease at the landfill property. Mayor Carbone discussed the City's history with solar plans and proposals over the past several years and explained that the most recent opportunity came out of a program offered through the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection. She explained that US Solar was the only company that proposed a straight land lease and the amount agreed upon was based on industry standards. The Mayor clarified that there would be up to a three-year option-to-lease period and the lease would be for a period of 20 years with the possibility of extending the lease by an additional five years up to four times. She also stated that there could be an option to benefit from some of the electricity produced.

Mr. Beyus thanked everyone for their hard work throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and requested additional information from the Board of Education, including an explanation of the anticipated costs of reopening the schools and a breakdown of funding for salaries. Mayor Carbone requested that Mr. Beyus submit his request in writing and stated that she would invite the Board of Education, Superintendent and Interim Business Manager to attend the next regular meeting of the Board of Finance on August 18, 2020.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Mrs. Pesce, seconded by Mr. Wright, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn at 6:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Jonathan Draper, Asst. City Clerk

ATTEST:



CAROL L. ANDERSON, MMC
CITY CLERK