

**MINUTES  
CITY COUNCIL  
SPECIAL MEETING  
City Hall Auditorium / Zoom  
May 24, 2021**

**Vol. 26, Page 997**

A **SPECIAL MEETING** of the City Council and Water Pollution Control Authority (WPCA) was held at the City Hall auditorium on Monday, May 24, 2021. Attendance was by ZOOM and in person. Present at City Hall were Mayor Elinor Carbone, City Clerk Carol Anderson and \*Councilor Paul Cavagnero. City Comptroller Alice Proulx, Deputy Comptroller Gina Casper and Councilors Anne Ruwet, David Oliver and Sharon Waagner joined by Zoom. Councilor Drake Waldron attended part of the meeting by Zoom, but was unable to participate due to technical difficulties. Councilor Rubino was absent.

Mayor Carbone called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.

**Discussion & Tentative Approval of 2021-2022 City Budgets**

Mayor Carbone outlined the upcoming meeting schedule for review and adoption of the 2021-2022 budgets and she presented the proposed City budgets that were advanced by the Budget Subcommittee.

**Assessor's Budget:** On a motion by Councilor Ruwet, seconded by Councilor Oliver, the Council voted unanimously to tentatively approve the proposed Assessor's Department budget for the 2021-2022 fiscal year, as presented, for the total amount of \$423,605. Mayor Carbone explained that the 4.6% increase over the Department's current fiscal year budget was a result of wage increases and sinking funds toward the next revaluation.

**Board of Assessment Appeals:** On a motion by Councilor Waagner, seconded by Councilor Oliver, the Council voted unanimously to tentatively approve the proposed Board of Assessment Appeals budget for the 2021-2022 fiscal year, as presented, for the total amount of \$4,400. Mayor Carbone noted that \$4,400 would leave the budget level funded from the current fiscal year.

**Boards & Agencies:** On a motion by Councilor Oliver, seconded by Councilor Waagner, the Council voted unanimously to tentatively approve the proposed Boards & Agencies budget for the 2021-2022 fiscal year, as presented, for the total amount of \$316,067. Mayor Carbone explained that the 27.54% increase over the current fiscal year budget was a result of fee increases for gardening services, auditors, CCM and other association/membership dues.

**\*Council Cavagnero arrived at 6:39 p.m.**

**Building Department:** On a motion by Councilor Ruwet, seconded by Councilor Oliver, the Council voted unanimously to tentatively approve the proposed Building Department budget for the 2021-2022 fiscal year, as presented, for the total amount of \$367,517. Mayor Carbone explained that the 5.46% increase over the current fiscal year budget resulted primarily from restoring a staff position to full-time.

**City Clerk's Budget:** On a motion by Councilor Oliver, seconded by Councilor Waagner, the Council voted unanimously to table the review and tentative approval of the City Clerk's budget for the 2021-2022 fiscal year.

**Comptroller's Budget:** On a motion by Councilor Waagner, seconded by Councilor Cavagnero, the Council voted unanimously to tentatively approve the proposed Comptroller's budget for the 2021-2022 fiscal year, as presented, for the total amount of \$408,655. Mayor Carbone explained that the 13.73% increase over the current fiscal year budget was largely driven by the anticipated overlap in the hiring of a new Comptroller. Councilor Ruwet requested clarification regarding the anticipated salary for the new Comptroller position and questioned how it compared to Comptrollers' salaries in other municipalities. Mayor Carbone explained that the position was moved out of the Supervisors' Union and the salary was reduced. She also reported on the applications that the City received from candidates that were interested in the position.

**Corporation Counsel's Budget:** On a motion by Councilor Waagner, seconded by Councilor Oliver, the Council voted unanimously to tentatively approve the Corporation Counsel's proposed budget for the 2021-2022 fiscal year, as presented, for the total amount of \$163,807. Mayor Carbone explained that the proposed budget reflected a 2.1% reduction from the department's current fiscal year budget.

## CITY COUNCIL

May 24, 2021

**Mayor's Budget:** On a motion by Councilor Oliver, seconded by Councilor Waagner, the Council voted unanimously to tentatively approve the Mayor's proposed budget for the 2021-2022 fiscal year, as presented, for the total amount of \$226,809. Mayor Carbone explained that the proposed budget reflected a reduction of 0.43% from the department's current fiscal year budget. Councilor Ruwet questioned how the Mayor's salary compared to other municipalities and expressed her support for increasing the salaries of both the Mayor and the City Clerk, to keep the compensation for the two positions in line with comparable cities. Mayor Carbone clarified that salary increases for either position must be approved by majority vote of the City Council during the month of October in a municipal election year.

**Personnel Department:** On a motion by Councilor Oliver, seconded by Councilor Waagner, the Council voted unanimously to tentatively approve the proposed Personnel Department budget for the 2021-2022 fiscal year, as presented, for the total amount of \$237,581. Mayor Carbone explained that the 11.39% increase over the current fiscal year budget reflected the addition of a part-time clerk position, to be funded for half of the year.

**Planning & Zoning:** On a motion by Councilor Oliver, seconded by Councilor Waagner, the Council voted unanimously to tentatively approve the proposed Planning & Zoning Department budget for the 2021-2022 fiscal year, as presented, for the total amount of \$282,658, which reflects a 1.36% increase over the current fiscal year budget.

**Purchasing Department:** On a motion by Councilor Cavagnero, seconded by Councilor Ruwet, the Council voted unanimously to tentatively approve the proposed Purchasing Department budget for the 2021-2022 fiscal year, as presented, for the total amount of \$122,008, which reflects a 1.37% reduction from the department's current fiscal year budget.

**Registrars' & Elections Budgets:** On a motion by Councilor Waagner, seconded by Councilor Cavagnero, the Council voted unanimously to tentatively approve the proposed Registrar's Department budget, including the Election budget, for the 2021-2022 fiscal year, as presented, for the total amount of \$176,320. Mayor Carbone explained that the proposed budget represented a 2.56% increase over the current fiscal year budget.

**Services for the Elderly:** On a motion by Councilor Oliver, seconded by Councilor Waagner, the Council voted unanimously to tentatively approve the proposed Services for the Elderly budget for the 2021-2022 fiscal year, as presented, for the total amount of \$341,442, which reflects a 1.63% reduction from the department's current fiscal year budget.

**Treasurer's Office:** On a motion by Councilor Waagner, seconded by Councilor Cavagnero, the Council voted unanimously to tentatively approve the proposed Treasurer's Office budget for the 2021-2022 fiscal year, as presented, for the total amount of \$69,359, which reflects a 0.5% reduction from the department's current fiscal year budget.

**Information Services (IT):** On a motion by Councilor Oliver, seconded by Councilor Waagner, the Council voted unanimously to tentatively approve the proposed Information Services Department budget for the 2021-2022 fiscal year, as presented, for the total amount of \$1,051,405. Mayor Carbone explained that the proposed 41.5% increase over the current fiscal year budget was driven by the addition of a new staff position and significant software upgrades. Councilor Waagner requested improvements to the City's website, to make it more user friendly. Councilor Cavagnero requested clarification regarding the number of positions that would be funded by the proposed budget and requested that the City and/or Board of Education look for new opportunities to expand remote learning in Torrington's public schools. Mayor Carbone clarified that the budget included compensation for four total positions and she discussed the allocation of American Rescue Plan funds for technology upgrades. Councilor Ruwet expressed her interest in pursuing shared services between the City and the Board of Education. Mayor Carbone provided some background information regarding previous discussions about shared services and Councilor Waagner also expressed her support for continuing those discussions.

**Public Safety – Miscellaneous:** On a motion by Councilor Ruwet, seconded by Councilor Waagner, the Council voted unanimously to tentatively approve the proposed Public Safety-Miscellaneous budget, for the 2021-2022 fiscal year, as presented, for the total amount of \$1,789,339. Mayor Carbone noted that the proposed budget reflected a reduction of 18.78% from the current fiscal year. She clarified that the account provides funding for extra duty assignments for the Police and Fire Departments, but explained that the expenses are offset by revenues from the contractors that utilize extra duty personnel.

**Economic Development:** On a motion by Councilor Waagner, seconded by Councilor Cavagnero, the Council voted unanimously to tentatively approve the proposed Economic Development Department budget for the 2021-2022 fiscal year, as presented, for the total amount of \$104,272, which reflects a 0.41% increase over the current fiscal year budget.

**Bond & Debt Principal:** On a motion by Councilor Ruwet, seconded by Councilor Oliver, the Council voted unanimously to tentatively approve the proposed Bond & Debt Principal budget for the 2021-2022 fiscal year, as presented, for the total amount of \$3,241,825. Mayor Carbone explained that the proposed 40.17% increase over the current fiscal year budget reflected changes to the City's Clean Water funding and absorption of additional debt.

**Debt Interest & Expense:** On a motion by Councilor Oliver, seconded by Councilor Waagner, the Council voted unanimously to tentatively approve the proposed Debt Interest & Expense budget for the 2021-2022 fiscal year, as presented, for the total amount of \$1,375,727, which reflects a 0.16% reduction from the department's current fiscal year budget.

**Insurance:** On a motion by Councilor Cavagnero, seconded by Councilor Waagner, the Council voted unanimously to tentatively approve the proposed Insurance budget for the 2021-2022 fiscal year, as presented, for the total amount of \$1,572,945, which reflects a 2.67% increase over the current fiscal year budget.

**Pension & Benefits:** On a motion by Councilor Waagner, seconded by Councilor Oliver, the Council voted unanimously to tentatively approve the proposed Pension & Benefits budget for the 2021-2022 fiscal year, as presented, for the total amount of \$15,731,722. Mayor Carbone explained that the proposed 3.31% increase over the current fiscal year budget reflected adjustments to health insurance funding.

**Tax Collector:** On a motion by Councilor Ruwet, seconded by Councilor Waagner, the Council voted unanimously to tentatively approve the proposed Tax Collector budget for the 2021-2022 fiscal year, as presented, for the total amount of \$645,100. Mayor Carbone explained that the proposed 3.23% increase over the current fiscal year budget was the result of contractual obligations.

**Contingency:** On a motion by Councilor Ruwet, seconded by Councilor Cavagnero, the Council voted unanimously to tentatively approve the proposed Contingency budget for the 2021-2022 fiscal year, as presented, for the total amount of \$250,000, which reflects a 93.33% increase over the current fiscal year budget.

**Probate:** On a motion by Councilor Cavagnero, seconded by Councilor Waagner, the Council voted unanimously to tentatively approve the proposed Probate budget for the 2021-2022 fiscal year, as presented, for the total amount of \$44,950, which reflects a 10.14% increase over the current fiscal year budget. Upon a request made by Councilor Ruwet, Mayor Carbone identified the expenses that drove the increase. Councilor Ruwet questioned whether the rent expense gets paid back to the City and Comptroller Proulx confirmed that it does.

**City Wide Services:** On a motion by Councilor Oliver, seconded by Councilor Cavagnero, the Council voted unanimously to tentatively approve the proposed budget for City Wide Services for the 2021-2022 fiscal year, as presented, for the total amount of \$427,931. Mayor Carbone explained that the increase over the current fiscal year budget was largely the result of funding for the vehicle replacement schedule.

**Adjournment**

On a motion by Councilor Oliver, seconded by Councilor Ruwet, the Council voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 7:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by  
Jonathan R. Draper, Asst. City Clerk

ATTEST:

  
CAROL L. ANDERSON, CITY CLERK