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BOARD OF FINANCE

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May 7, 2020

SPECIAL BUDGET MEETING OF THE BOARD OF FINANCE

Pursuant to Section 6-20-2 of the *City of Stamford Charter*, Richard Freedman and Mary Lou Rinaldi called for a special meeting of the Board of Finance on Wednesday, May 6, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. The meeting was held via webinar

MINUTES

EXECUTIVE SESSION

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Richard Freedman called the meeting to order in executive session at 7:00 p.m. for the purpose of discussing collective bargaining.

MEMBERS PRESENT: CHAIR RICHARD FREEDMAN; VICE CHAIR MARY LOU RINALDI AND MEMBERS GEOFF ALSWANGER, FRANK CERASOLI, DAVID MANNIS AND KIERAN RYAN

OTHERS PRESENT: MAYOR DAVID MARTIN KATHRYN EMMETT, DIRECTOR OF LEGAL AFFAIRS; GABE JIRAN, COUNSEL; TAMU LUCERO, SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS; ANDY GEORGE, PRESIDENT BOARD OF EDUCATION; JACKIE HEFTMAN BOARD MEMBER; MARY FEDELI, MEMBER, BOARD OF REPRESENTATIVES; AL CAVA, DIRECTOR, HUMAN RESOURCES AND ANA GONZALEZ, HUMAN RESOURCES LABOR RELATIONS SPECIALIST

1. EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

At approximately 7:55 p.m. the Board came out of executive session. Chair Freedman said no votes were taken nor actions taken.

He then entered the Special Budget Meeting at 8:02 p.m.

SPECIAL BUDGET MEETING

MEMBERS PRESENT: CHAIR RICHARD FREEDMAN; VICE CHAIR MARY LOU RINALDI AND MEMBERS GEOFF ALSWANGER, FRANK CERASOLI, DAVID MANNIS AND KIERAN RYAN

OTHERS PRESENT: MAYOR DAVID MARTIN; JAY FOUNTAIN, SANDY DENNIES, TAMU LUCERO, RYAN FEALEY; AND BOARD OF REPRESENTATIVES FISCAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS MONICA DI COSTANZO, LINDSEY MILLER, DENNIS MAHONEY, MARY FEDELI, J. R. MCMULLEN; AND SUSAN NABEL

2. TIME FOR THE PUBLIC TO BE HEARD

There were 228 members of the public in attendance at the meeting. The following people addressed the Board:

Dayna Lee – on behalf of 300 Stamford families requesting that property taxes be lowered

Antonia Thompson – Proposed Youth Services Bureau cuts

Kirsi Balazs – Keeping Youth Services Bureau intact

Ashley Torres – Speaking on behalf of Youth Services Bureau

Aishwarya Svasubramanian – Speaking on behalf of Youth Services Bureau

Ella Devault – Speaking on behalf of Youth Services Bureau

Amelia Stone – Speaking on behalf of Youth Services Bureau and Pathfinders Adventure Camp

Heather Stramandinoli – Speaking on behalf of teachers

John Dalton – Speaking on behalf of the Board of Education budget

Terri Drew – Speaking on behalf of Youth Services Bureau

Nancy Mould – Speaking on behalf of Distance Learning and teaching

Darren Steck – Speaking on behalf of Youth Services Bureau

Mary Schoen – Speaking on behalf of Youth Services Bureau

Clerk Cynthia Winterle read into the record the following:

Petition with 671 signatures asking that Softball in Stamford not be canceled - submitted by Edgar Morales

Petition with more than 100 signatures asking that the City not cut the leagues by 50% - submitted by Michelle Hodges

Correspondence from Donna Aveni Jallouk in support of saving the Youth Services Bureau

Correspondence from Joshua Leferman in support of the Mayor's Youth Leadership Council

David Kooris, SDDS, wrote re the proposed cuts to the special events budget line.

The following attendees also spoke:

Peter Hennessey – Speaking in support of recreational services this coming year

Mark Malloy – Speaking on behalf of the Terry Connors Ice Rink

Sheena McCarthy – Speaking on behalf of students and teachers in Stamford

Christine Neely – Speaking on behalf of adult sports

Angela Colabella – Speaking on behalf of the Adult Recreation Softball League

James DiAndressi - Speaking on behalf of adult sports emphasizing the families and the community

Rocco Lucia – Speaking in support of the Youth Community Services

As the time set aside for public comments was 30 minutes and more than one hour had passed, Chair Freedman thanked the speakers and said the business side of the meeting would begin. He gave a short background on the Board of Finance, its purpose and the work done to date to address the difficult fiscal times we are experiencing, and the process going ahead so the Board will be ready to set the Mill Rate on June 4. He said the members of the Board have worked pretty much non-stop for the past month to try to grapple with the process and a projected \$65 million shortfall. The Board has to determine how it is going to manage to do this. It is important to remember that the job of the BOF is to protect the fiscal integrity of the City and its members take this seriously; balancing the needs of the City vs its financial capacity. It is very concerned about the City being in a fiscal position from which it will not recover for a very long time. Mr. Freedman indicated that the BOF will not be making final expense reductions until May 27, the date it will be voting on the budget. He said that six (6) members of the Board of Representatives (BOR) Fiscal Committee have been attending the BOF special budget meetings so there is a more coordinated process.

Mr. Freedman invited Mayor David Martin to speak on the BOF proposed reductions and the City's proposed expense reductions at this time.

3. REVIEW OF PROPOSED MUNICIPAL EXPENSE REDUCTIONS

Mayor Martin said he would not make specific recommendations at this time. He presented preliminary numbers pending the results of work that is still in progress. He gave an overview of OPM/City draft budget analysis including:

Framework from Board of Finance Summary
Specific Analysis and Recommendations
Work in Progress

He then discussed preliminary numbers throughout the budget and indicated that work is still being done in many aspects of the budget. He is hopeful that this work will be completed and he will be able to present at the next BOF special budget meeting scheduled for Monday, May 11.

Following a discussion between the Mayor and members of the Board on aspects of this budget and options available, Chair Freedman thanked the Mayor, saying he had clearly done a lot of work. He noted that this is an excruciating process and he likes to think everyone is going ahead with the best of intentions and goodwill.

Chair Freedman suggested that in light of the amount of work still to be done, another meeting date be established. Wednesday, May 20 will be added to the budget meeting calendar.

Please access the video of this meeting for a verbatim accounting.

4. ADJOURNMENT: A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Alswanger, second by Mr. Freedman. The meeting adjourned at 11:14 p.m.

[This meeting is on video.](#)

Cynthia Winterle
Clerk of the Board