

AD HOC REPORT BOE Administrators Salaries

Honorable Mark D. Boughton, Mayor
Common Council Members

August 25, 2010

Chairwoman Stanley called the meeting to order at 6:29PM. Committee members Visconti and Arconti were present. Laszlo Pinter, Deputy Corporation Counsel; David St. Hilaire, Director of Finance and Mayor Mark Boughton, petitioner were also present. Council members Seabury, Curran and Deep-Damici, ex-officio and members of the public were also present.

Chairwoman Stanley stated that the call of the meeting was to discuss the salary increases for four school administrators.

Mayor Boughton, the petitioner, stated that he requested the meeting to discuss the decision made by the Board of Education to grant salary increases to the cabinet level staff. There are several unions working for the BOE, but the cabinet level staff are not part of any union. The salary increases are discretionary, determined by a recommendation by the superintendent and approved by the BOE. The BOE opted to give raises to the cabinet staff. The Mayor has two concerns: the message that is being sent to the taxpayers and the policy side of the issue. Giving raises to the cabinet staff, at this time, sends a message on what the City can afford and impacts future salary negotiations, which could translate into \$2M when other contracts are negotiated. The Mayor's Cabinet has not received a salary increase in 18 months. Consideration can only be given to cutting the appropriation by the \$35,300 in raises that have been granted. The budgets for the next two years will be even more challenging. In addition, the BOE hired a new Director of Personnel and added \$20,000 to the salary line item for that position. An increase was also granted to a staff member who will be retiring in February 2011. Mayor Boughton emphasized how difficult it is to make all of the budget numbers work with in the current economy and when he saw this issue arise, he felt it should be discussed. Dr. Pasquarella has stated that he would return his increase after he receives it. The BOE did not come back with any concessions to help pay for the salary increases for the cabinet.

Chairwoman Stanley requested information from Corporation Counsel regarding the placement of the \$35,300 into a reserve account. Atty. Pinter discussed several legal points. Atty. Pinter advised that the legal arguments could be extensive, but according the City Charter and state law a financing board, in this case the Council, appropriated a certain amount of funding to its BOE and there would have to be a supplemental appropriation by the same board should the amount exceed what was originally appropriated. This is due to the fact that the Council was not apprised of the allocation of this amount of fund, for that purpose. Previously, when Councilman Seabury brought up the question of raises the comment was that it would be dealt with later and the implication was that it would not be appropriated in the budget and would therefore have to be an additional appropriation. If the BOE, subsequent to the appropriation by the City Council, provided a salary benefit that extends into further years it is not in accordance with the appropriation for that year. The Council can therefore approve an additional appropriation or not provide and continue to reserve that amount of funds. The Council has been denied the opportunity to factor into the appropriation.

Upon the requests of Council members Arconti and Visconti Atty. Pinter advised that the court could be petitioned by the BOE to render a decision on the matter. David St. Hilaire advised that the funding included benefits. Mayor Boughton advised that the BOE received some federal \$1.3M and suggested that the funds should be saved, however the BOE decided to spend half and save the other half for next year. Councilman Arconti suggested that a very strong message needs to be sent to the BOE given the current economic climate.

Councilman Curran expressed concerns about the ramifications when other contracts are negotiated in 2011.

David St. Hilaire advised that there are no additional funds coming from any other sources at the present time. The bottom line is that it is going to be very difficult; in the next couple years, the economy is still

very challenging and the City is doing everything possible to lower expenses, keep taxes in line and still provide services.

Councilman Arconti moved recommend the reservation of the allocation of \$35,300 from the BOE Danbury School's annual budget allocation 2010/2011 for the school's cabinet salary increases inappropriately designated to that purpose as a result of such action being taken without the City Council prior knowledge or authorization, seconded by Councilman Visconti. **Motion passed by unanimous vote.**

Councilman Visconti moved to adjourn at 6:56 P.M. Seconded by Councilman Arconti. **Motion passed by unanimous vote.**

Respectfully submitted,

Colleen Stanley, Chairwoman

Robert Arconti

Fred Visconti