

16D

*~City Council Committee~  
Public Works - Budget  
Thursday, April 21, 2016*

Chairman Jack Knapp called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, April 21, 2016, in the Caucus Room, 3rd Floor, Danbury City Hall, 155 Deer Hill Avenue. Present were Committee members Phil Curran, Vinny DiGilio, Michael Esposito, and Ben Chianese and Ex-Officio Members Joe Cavo, Warren Levy, John Priola, and Paul Rotello. Also present were representatives as follows: Robert Yamin, Corporation Counsel; Les Pinter, Deputy Corporation Counsel; David St. Hilaire, Director of Finance; Antonio Iadarola, Director of Public Works; David Day, Public Utilities Superintendent; Jean Natale, Legislative Assistant; Harvey Center, Chair of the Cultural Commission; and Becky Petro, Tarrywile Park Authority Executive Director. Present representing the Danbury Museum were: Trustees Paul Valeri, Ann Harrigan, and Marian Hesemeyer; Director of Operations Levi Newsome, and President of the Friends of the Danbury Museum Joretta Kilcourse. Other groups discussed include Lake Kenosia and the Ives Authority.

Mr. St. Hilaire noted budget amounts as follows:

Danbury Museum: \$90,972. Mr. Valeri reviewed the budget noting they are grateful for these funds which represent approximately half their costs with the remainder coming from fundraisers and the work of volunteers and Friends of the Danbury Museum. The lead budget keeps the lights and utilities on, and covers a large part of staff. The obligation to keep the doors open for their 10,000 visitors annually including 2,500-3,000 children learning area history and more. The Charles Ives Birth House and Marion Anderson were also mentioned.

Tarrywile Park: \$218,153. The budget is flat. Ms. Petro stated Tarrywile Park Authority is grateful for the assistance and responded to questions regarding the house with the barn in the back, roof repair, and oil and gas conversion. She invited all to visit the 21 miles of hiking trails and 16 buildings.

Cultural Commission: \$17,718. The budget is flat. Mr. Center remarked that the Commission promotes and encourages culture and the arts in the community. He noted the poetry contest, scholarships, and that they reach approximately 30,000 people. They sponsor Danbury Music Center, Concerts on the Green, Richter Arts Association, Richter musicals, and 25-30 organizations requesting over \$100,000. They are grateful to receive the same budget as last year. He responded to questions noting they do not charge admission; however, various organizations may charge. Tickets are available to some who may not be able to afford them.

Lake Kenosia Commission: \$15,236. The budget is flat. No comments.

Ives Authority: \$55,404. The amount is flat in the amended budget. There would be a lot of coordination involved in any merge with the Cultural Commission, which could happen in the future.

Sewer: The budget is roughly flat, although there was a rate increase in conjunction with lower consumption and lower collection rates. It was 93-94% and is now in the 90's% - 1.4M gallons. Mr. Day commented on conservation's financial impacts. Mr. St. Hilaire responded to questions regarding depreciation, charge for services, trends, timing of revenues, operating capital, plans related to phosphorus, and debt service.

Water Fund: At just under \$9.4M it went up a bit and represents a \$119,000 increase. Mr. St. Hilaire discussed a slight drop in usage due to conservation, although there are more customers. There are still fixed costs that need to be covered. He responded to questions regarding legacy costs in relation to pensions, the General Fund, and the Enterprise Fund as well as long-term debt bonds and water capital debt. Mr. Day responded to questions corrections in Other Revenue.

**Public Buildings:** The budget is somewhat flat. Mr. St. Hilaire noted there are several departments in Public Buildings and the presentation may change next year in relation to accounts under Public Buildings for flexibility, efficiency, and control. The amount did go up a bit this year. The main Public Buildings Account, and Building Maintenance and Repair accounts were mentioned. Mr. Iadarola noted some changes in contractual increases, several of which have been mitigated somewhat. Union contracts were noted. It was noted that Report Line Items 1340, 1350, 1360, 1371, 1380, 1385, 1390, 1391, and 3010 are included. Mr. Iadarola responded to questions regarding contractual changes, projected expenditures, trends and tie-back to original budget, alarm systems, library buildings' outside services such as air conditioning maintenance, and the old library building maintenance. Mr. St. Hilaire responded to questions regarding the old library building use.

**Director of Public Works:** Mr. Iadarola noted contractual increases for secretarial staff and his stipend.

**Highways:** Mr. Iadarola noted a \$75,000 increase in contractual raises with the remaining budget flat other than trending expenditures. He responded to questions regarding street sweeping overtime related to working Saturdays noting high efficiencies in having 10 hour days as opposed to regular hours. There may be improved efficiency with the use of the new salt product; all work is done in-house.

**Highway State Aid:** \$360,000. The projection is flat.

**Street Lighting:** Mr. Iadarola noted this is the expenditure for the street light electric bill. It is a flat rate. He responded to questions regarding LED lights and the potential savings of buying and relamping street lights.

**Park Maintenance:** Mr. Iadarola noted what looks like an increase is due to the addition of a Foreman which has been a vacant position for several years. The remainder are contractual increases.

**Forestry:** Mr. Iadarola noted this is a baseline, flat budget other than contractual Teamsters Union increases. He responded to questions regarding tree workers, highway personnel assistance, and park maintenance assistance. Corrections may be needed between parks and forestry workers. He responded to questions regarding the large amount of tree work needed.

**Equipment Maintenance:** Mr. Iadarola noted the \$2,577 increase does not cover the contractual increases.

**Recycling and Solid Waste:** Mr. Iadarola noted a slight increase of \$10,000 which will cover increased disposal costs for large events in the City.

**Engineering:** Mr. Iadarola noted this division took a large hit of \$2,600 and had to absorb their union contractual increases with some funds going to other departments. Mr. DiGilio stated the 2015/2016 accomplishments, notably Crosby Street, were impressive and the word should go out to residents about it.

**Construction Services:** Mr. Iadarola noted a slight increase of \$13,000 in outside services and contractual increases.

**Recreation:** Mr. Knapp stated he spoke with Mr. Kaplanis who indicated satisfaction with the allocation which is flat. He did note that the change in minimum wage will be a bit of a hit this year, but his concern is more for next year. Mr. Day stated they are aware and took a very close look at it; although they are satisfied, next year may be different. Mr. Iadarola and Mr. St. Hilaire responded to questions regarding the dog park and basketball construction and softball lighting.

**Public Works Employee Benefits:** Mr. St. Hilaire discussed and responded to questions regarding this item noting it is needed for adjustments and flexibility and needs to go up about \$1,500.

Discounts: Mr. St. Hilaire noted they do not budget for discounts, but put it in the report for transparency.

*A motion was made by Councilman Digilio and seconded by Councilman Curran, to accept the Public Works budget for the 2016/2017 Fiscal Year proposed by the Mayor totaling \$35,489,125 as presented. The motion passed unanimously.*

*A motion was made by Councilman DiGilio and seconded by Councilman Curran to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 8:42 p.m.*

Respectfully Submitted,

Jack Knapp, Chairman

Ben Chianese

Phil Curran

Vinny DiGilio

Michael Esposito