

~City Council Committee~
Health, Housing, Public Safety, Social Services - Budget
Thursday, April 21, 2016

Chairman Phil Curran called the meeting to order at 5:45 p.m. on Thursday, April 21, 2016, in the Caucus Room, 3rd Floor, Danbury City Hall, 155 Deer Hill Avenue. Present were Committee Members Christina Chieffalo, Jack Knapp, John Priola, and Paul Rotello; and Ex-Officio Members Joseph Cavo, Ben Chianese, Warren Levy, Gregg Seabury, and Fred Visconti. Also present were representatives as follows: Robert Yamin, Corporation Counsel; Les Pinter, Deputy Corporation Counsel; David St. Hilaire, Director of Finance; Jean Natale, Legislative Assistant; Alan Baker, Police Chief and Animal Control; PJ Prints, Fire Chief; David Newland, Building Inspector; Dean Esposito, Consumer Protection; Scott Leroy, Health, Housing and Welfare; Danny Hayes, Veterans Affairs Committee; Susan Tomanio, Commission on Aging; Paul Estefan, Civil Preparedness and the Airport; and Caroline LaFleur, United Way of Western Connecticut Community Impact Coordinator. Shawn Stillman, U.N.I.T. was not present.

Mr. Curran introduced the members and noted the purpose of the meeting.

Elderly Services: \$260,000. Mr. St. Hilaire noted the change is just under \$5,000 which is relatively flat. Ms. Tomanio stated she is very satisfied with the allocation. Elderly transportation has remained flat. Mr. St. Hilaire responded to Mr. Rotello's inquiry regarding the increase in part time salaries based on staying in line with actual projections with discussion on sick time and other line items. Ms. Tomanio responded to Mr. Visconti's inquiries regarding line items for materials and supplies.

Health & Human Services: \$1,335,000. Mr. St. Hilaire noted the increase of just under \$50,000 is primarily related to contractual wage increases with some adjustments in professional and outside services. Mr. Leroy reviewed the specifics of outside services and special projects. He is satisfied with the budget provided the State comes through on their promises. In addition, he responded to Mr. Chianese's questions regarding line item projections and a contractor change related to moving abandoned property to storage due to evictions. Mr. St. Hilaire responded to Mr. Priola's inquiries regarding contributions and grant types.

Community Services: \$513,898. Mr. St. Hilaire noted the \$1,000 increase is from the Volunteer Center with all other line items remaining flat. This fund relates to the Volunteer Center, Downtown Council, United Way, and PAL. Mr. Prints stated he appreciates the support. Ms. LaFleur commented on the United Way as it relates to the budget. She responded to Mr. Rotello regarding a one-year cycle of review. Mr. Prints and Mr. St. Hilaire responded to Mr. Visconti's questions regarding the \$31,398 item which covers festival events and holly lights downtown. Mr. St. Hilaire responded to Mr. Chianese's inquiry regarding the Volunteer Center which coordinates the SAVE Program and the volunteers.

Police Department: \$16,900,000. Mr. St. Hilaire noted this is a \$144,000 increase. Mr. Curran thanked Mr. Baker for his service and wished him well in his upcoming retirement. Mr. Baker stated this is a realistic budget considering the economy and what is happening at the State level. He responded to Mr. Knapp's question regarding overtime noting minimum staffing level requirements, current turnover, training time, and surcharge for special events. Mr. St. Hilaire and Mr. Baker responded to Messrs. Chianese, Rotello, and Priola regarding salary, overtime, actual staff numbers, as well as budget transfers, surpluses, and supplies. Mr. Baker responded to Mr. Visconti's questions regarding the Administrative Services Manager duties.

Animal Control: \$320,600. Mr. St. Hilaire noted this is a \$5,400 increase. Capital reserve and equipment/structures has been growing for future building replacement needs. Mr. Baker commented on a retirement in

the Animal Control Department and that they are trying to modernize and comply with all regulations. A new equipment truck was needed and they have the money to pay for it due to saving for it each year. Mr. St. Hilaire responded to Mr. Rotello's questions regarding capital outlay and capital fund procedures. Mr. Knapp received answers regarding communications systems status and upgrades from Mr. Baker and Mr. Wiedl with the caveat that there will be a need for a new system in the future.

Fire Department: Mr. Wiedl stated the budget is workable. Mr. Rotello commented on dispatch fluctuations. Mr. St. Hilaire noted there were start-up costs. He also responded to Mr. Visconti regarding Frontier Communications VOIP. He commented that the ambulance fund was doing well with monies going for the fire training center and equipment purchases for the ambulance itself. Mr. Wiedl noted they added another ambulance shift. Mr. Rotello inquired whether an ambulance could be at Engine 26. Mr. Wiedl commented on potential places to park the ambulance, increase in calls for service, and discussions with the hospitals.

Building Inspector: \$600,000. Mr. St. Hilaire noted a \$12,000 increase primarily in contractual salary increases. Mr. Newland indicated he is satisfied with the allocation. He, along with Mr. St. Hilaire, responded to Mr. Knapp's inquiries regarding technologies that may be useful in the future. He commented on housing starts following Mr. Rotello's question.

Veterans Advisor: Mr. St. Hilaire noted the budget is flat. Mr. Hayes indicated he will work with it.

Civil Preparedness: \$202,000. Mr. St. Hilaire noted this is a \$50,000 increase attributed to additional contributions to the War Memorial. Mr. Estefan noted he could work with the allocation and responded to Mr. Rotello regarding funds from Homeland Security that go into the emergency planning account. Mr. St. Hilaire responded to Mr. Knapp regarding the State allocation, and to Mr. Priola regarding revenue that was held up by the State.

Airport: \$554,000. Mr. St. Hilaire noted this \$9,500 increase is primarily due to contractual salary increases. Mr. Estefan indicated he could work with this allocation.

Consumer Protection: \$21,300. Mr. St. Hilaire noted this is a \$18,200 reduction primarily due to a full time going to a part time position. Mr. Esposito indicated he could work with this allocation explaining that he will be taking over some of the paperwork and phone calls with the part-timer out doing inspections, etc. He responded to Mr. Rotello regarding the some of the details.

U.N.I.T.: \$232,000. Mr. St. Hilaire noted this is a \$57,000 increase is primarily due to a new staff member. He responded to questions regarding staffing.

HART: \$730,000. Mr. St. Hilaire noted the decrease of approximately \$3,000 is primarily due to fewer costs. He responded to Mr. Chianese noting shifts in hours of operation and routes due to low ridership periods.

Health and Employee Benefits: Mr. St. Hilaire noted sometimes vacant position titles change. This item also relates to timing of starting salaries, etc. If unused, it falls to the bottom line.

Discounts: Mr. St. Hilaire noted the City does not budget for discounts.

A motion was made by Councilman Knapp and seconded by Councilman Rotello, to accept the Mayor's Budget as presented for Health, Housing, Public Safety, and Social Services of \$40,726,669. The motion passed unanimously.

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A motion was made by Councilman Knapp and seconded by Councilman Rotello to adjourn the meeting.
The motion passed unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 7:12 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Phil Curran, Chairman

Christina Chieffalo

Jack Knapp

John Priola

Paul Rotello