

Public Works Budget Committee

15-D

The Public Works Committee meeting was called to order on April 21, 2010 at 6:30PM by Councilman Knapp, Chair. Committee members Councilman Curran, Councilman Seabury, Councilman Halas and Councilman Visconti were present.

Also in attendance were Wayne Shepperd, representing the Mayor's Office; David St. Hilaire, Director of Finance; Antonio Iadarola, P.E., Director of Public Works; David Day, Public Utilities Superintendent; Levi Newsom, Danbury Museum, Sandra Moy, Executive Director of Tarrywile Park.

Ex-Officio Council members Mary Teicholz, Paul Rotello, Nancy Deep-Damici, Colleen Stanley, Charles Trombetta, Joseph Cavo and Duane Perkins and members of the public were also present.

Director of Finance, David St. Hilaire gave an overview of the approach used for FY 2010-2011. Commission budgets were reduced by 10% across the board.

7002 Recreation Department

David St. Hilaire, Director of Finance advised that the mayor has recommended a budget of \$428,101. There are very few changes from prior years with the exception of a reduction in funding for the YMCA. Overtime has also been reduced.

7003 Tarrywile Park Authority

David St. Hilaire stated that the mayor has recommended a budget of \$255,150. The budget was reduced across the board by 10%. Director Sandra Moy explained that over the last two years, the budget has been reduced by \$60,000. Overtime will be reduced to zero and there is extensive use of volunteers to make up for the shortfall. At the request of Councilman Rotello, Director Moy stated that approximately \$148,000 in revenue comes from rentals.

7005 Cultural Commission

David St. Hilaire stated that the mayor has recommended a budget of \$85,250 reflecting a 10% reduction.

7006 Lake Kenosia Commission

David St. Hilaire stated that the mayor has recommended a budget of \$17,820 reflecting a 10% reduction.

7007 Ives Center for the Performing Arts

David St. Hilaire stated that the mayor has recommended a budget of \$64,800 reflecting a 10% reduction.

7008 Danbury Museum Authority

David St. Hilaire stated that the mayor has recommended a budget of \$76,950 reflecting a 10% reduction.

7999 Employee Service Benefit

David St. Hilaire explained that the amounts under Employee Service Benefit, which is also included in the Public Works Budgets, represents unfunded positions. The funds may be utilized to fill a critical position and will offset transferring resources, offering more budgetary control.

1340 Public Buildings

David St. Hilaire discussed Public Buildings as a whole. Overall, increases result from costs associated with OSHA and HAZMAT studies and heating costs associated with the new police station.

1350 City Hall Building

1360 Library Building

1370 Police Station (Old)

1371 Police Station (New)

1380 Senior Center Building

1390 Old Library Building

1391 Park Buildings

1999 Employee Service Benefit

Upon request of Councilman Curran, Antonio Iadarola, P.E., Director of Public Works explained that the \$28,040 amount recommended by the mayor for the old police station reflects costs associated with ventilation to deter mold growth and security to protect the building. The costs associated with OSHA resulted from an unannounced audit.

3000 Director of Public works

David St. Hilaire advised that there are currently six (6) vacancies and contractual increases have been absorbed. The increases result from the rise in the cost of motor fuel, heating fuel, diesel fuel and state inspection fees.

3001 Highways

3002 State Aid-Highway Project

3003 Snow & Ice Removal

3004 Street Lighting

3005 Parks Maintenance

3006 Forestry

3010 Public Buildings Maintenance-Repair

3020 Equipment Maintenance

3030 Recycling/Solid Waste

3040 Engineering Department

3041 Construction Services

3999 Employee Service Benefit

Antonio Iadarola, P. E. gave a brief overview of some of the cost saving measures taken. He advised that out-servicing costs have been reduced as a result of the purchase of some equipment, which gives the department the opportunity to perform more tasks in-house. The Construction Services Division has worked out very well and has brought forth substantial savings to the City resulting in funding for additional paving and drainage work.

Ninety (90) day drivers were hired to staff snow plowing operations this past winter due to several vacancies. Snow and ice removal costs were discussed. If a shortfall occurs before the end of the snow season, a request would have to be made to the Council. The amount budgeted is based on an average to mild winter.

The increase in the Equipment Maintenance budget is directly related fuel costs.

Upon the question of Councilman Seabury, Antonio Iadarola, P.E. explained that private roads present a number of questions to the Public Works Department. A lot of private roads have been let go by communities. Private roads can be done as assessment projects, however they get denied due to the cost. A significant amount of study would need to be done by the City.

Upon the request of Councilman Curran, the Director explained that street lights are billed at a special, unmetered rate by CL&P.

Councilwoman Stanley inquired about potholes and paving projects. The Director advised that with heavy rains three (3) years in a row, followed by deep freezes increases the number of potholes. This year, four (4) trucks were dedicated to patching. The purchase of a patching machine resulted in significant savings. There were four in-house paving projects completed last year.

Councilman Nero inquired about the purchase of fuel efficient vehicles. Mr. Iadarola explained that fuel efficiency is one of the considerations when a vehicle is purchased. He also stated that a lot of good, low mileage, used vehicles were purchased from a vendor at very reasonable costs.

Councilwoman Stanley discussed concerns regarding special features on some of the trucks. The Director explained that they are safety features/equipment and are regulation driven.

Sewer Fund

David St. Hilaire advised that there are no new projects proposed, only forward movement on current projects. Sewer revenues would increase slightly to make up for the increases in expenses. He also added that there has been a drop in connection charges.

David Day, P.E., Public Utilities Superintendent advised that the rate increase to approximately \$188 per year, or \$.05 per day, to the average user will still be the lowest in the state. The Veolia contract is in force until 2017 and a study would be conducted prior to the end of the contract to determine if it is more cost effective for the City to take over the sewer operation.

Water Fund

David Day, P.E. advised that the rate increase to approximately \$153 per year, or \$.02 per day, to the average user and would still be the lowest in the state. Upon the request of Councilman Rotello, Mr. Day stated that the revenues stay in the enterprise fund and do not go into the general fund.

Councilman Seabury moved to accept the budget as presented and to make a recommendation to the Council as a whole, seconded by Councilman Curran. ***Motion approved by unanimous vote.***

Councilman Seabury moved to adjourn at 7:50 PM, seconded by Councilman Curran. ***Motion passed by unanimous vote.***

Respectfully submitted,

Jack Knapp, Chair

Phil Curran

Gregg Seabury

Mike Halas

Fred Visconti