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AD HOC COMMITTEE
CERTIFICATION OF FUNDS—FARIOLY FUNDS FOR CONSULTANT

Chairman, Philip Curran called the meeting to order at 6:20pm.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Philip Curran, Chairman, Robert Arconti, and Ex Officio Benjamin Chianese
Committee MEMBER ABSENT: Thomas Saadi due to military service.

ALSO PRESENT: Virginia Alosco-Werner, Director of Human Resources

Mark Hasskarl, Library Director; Michelle Capozzella, Assistant Library Director; Edward "Ned" Moore, Sr.; President Library Board of Directors; Gary Falkenthal -Library Board.

And interested members of the public.

After making introduction and stating the purpose of the meeting, Chairman Curran asked the Library representatives to give an overview of the request. Mr. Moore stated that due to the hiring freeze and excessive vacancies, the Library staff have been asked to do more with less. With no ability to hire additional staff the LBOD felt it was time to look at Administrative Supervisory functions and gain additional efficiency. They have researched library consultants and selected The Singer Group to assist the staff and LBOD get an outside perspective on the operations of the Library. Mr. Hasskarl stated that they have made it clear to the consultant that hiring additional staff was not an option.

Chairman Curran asked how many employees at the Library are represented by a union. Mr. Hasskarl stated that all full-time employees and one part-time employee are represented. The Administrators and other part-time employees are not. Chairman Curran stated that he was concerned about implementing any consultant recommendations as they would violate union agreements.

Mr. Arconti began a discussion regarding the current staffing and the anticipated gains from hiring the consultant. Mr. Moore stated that they were hoping to learn ways to adapt job description, change administration and prioritize activities which were specific to the Danbury Library. A discussion of these ensued.

Mr. Arconti asked if there were publication and professional journals that would be able to give them ideas that they could implement at the Danbury Library. Mr. Hasskarl stated that there are numerous resources which he and Ms. Capozzella read. However, they need something specialized. Further discussion ensued.

Mr. Curran asked Ms. Alsoco-Werner what the City and the Library should consider in implementing consultant recommendations. Ms. Alsoco-Werner stated that evaluations, work duties, seniority, training, and job classifications were all bargaining unit issues which would have to be considered. Mr. Moore stated that the consultant is aware that the employees are represented by a union.

Mr. Chianese asked Mr. Hasskarl if the biggest problem is not enough staff. Mr. Hasskarl confirmed this assessment. Mr. Chianese suggested that Mr. Hasskarl work with Ms. Alsoco-Werner and the Mayor's office to find a remedy to the staffing issue and save the consultant fee. A discussion ensued regarding vacancies, staff realignment, and department heads. Mr. Chianese stated that he did not believe a consultant could identify and offer solutions to the library that cannot be addressed by working with the Mayor's office and Human Resources to match staffing to essential library services. He stated that in his opinion, hiring a consultant was a waste of money.

A discussion of state resources, the consultant proposal, staff meetings and the role of the board ensued.

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Mr. Hasskarl stated that the library is currently conducting a survey to determine which services are most wanted by the community, which it will use to help create a long range plan. Further, discussion occurred.

Mr. Arconti stated that he does not believe a consultant would give them any suggestions that the professional staff at the library working in conjunction with the city departments could not be obtained without spending this money. Mr. Moore stated that it was a risk to hire a consultant, but they are hoping it will give them some new perspective. Mr. Falkenthal stated that the consultant would be able to look at the problems with fresh eyes and no agenda.

A discussion regarding the library's administration, staffing and re-organization which has already occurred ensued. Ms. Capozzella stated that the library has not decreased any programs or services.

Mr. Curran stated that this is a problem that could be solved without hiring a consultant. The Library Director needs to gather information from the survey to prioritize services and programs, and then work with the Mayor and Human Resources to re-align staff responsibilities. Ms. Alosco-Werner stated that it would be necessary for the library to have a well defined plan for adding staff, cutting services, and changing responsibilities.

Robert Arconti moved to recommend to the City Council to decline the certification of Funds requested to hire a consultant at the library. The motion was seconded by Philip Curran. Vote, all in favor, motion unanimously approved.

There being no further business before the committee, Robert Arconti made a motion which was seconded by Philip Curran to adjourn the meeting. Vote, all in favor, motion unanimously approved. The meeting ended at 7:20 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Chairman, Philip Curran

Robert Arconti

Thomas Saadi