

The Grant Agency budget committee was called to order at 5:30 pm in the Council Chambers on the third floor of city hall by Chairman Riley, committee members Cavo, Nagarsheth, Saracino and Rotello.

Also in attendance were Mayor Mark Boughton, ex officio, Assistant Finance Director Dan Garrick, council members Seabury, Cutsumpas, Basso, Stanley, McMahon, Diggs, Johnson, Chianese and Taborsak.

Chairman Riley spelled out the format for the meeting. We want to try to get through everything tonight, but if not we will have another meeting on Thursday. We're here to look at grant agencies and funding. Please limit speaking for each agency to 2 – 3 minutes.

Mr. Garrick said you will see that the amount budgeted for this current year is pretty much carried through to next year. Ms. Saracino asked about the vetting that goes on between finance and the agency before the budget comes out. Dan said paperwork is submitted. Mayor reviews.

After budget procedure Mr. Riley is asking for a review of the grant agency procedure. He also asked that a consultant be hired for this process.

Ability Beyond Disability – proposed \$34,000 / Mayor \$26,317
Agency contacted Riley – they are OK with this.

AIDS project – proposed \$14,626 / Mayor \$0 – reason is that AIDS will now be funded by Interfaith AIDS Ministry. Roberta Stewart, Executive Director. She thought the application was not accepted. Mr. Riley said in discussions with the Finance Director this agency will be funded through Interfaith AIDS – Ms. Stewart is very grateful that they will get this amount – they pass through the money for interfaith aids food. Ms. Taborsak asked the Assistant Finance Director to clarify a point – AIDS project funded in this budget from Interfaith Aids Budget as \$26, 265 – Dan said he's not aware of it. The discussion was with Ms. Diorio and Mr. Riley.

Mr. Perkins arrived 5:42 pm.

American Red Cross – proposed \$20,000 / Mayor – \$0
Has not been funded in 7 years - they don't get government funding for local services but people donate. Mike Malone, Director of Development. Mr. Malone said they don't get any government aid – the money comes from the public. They're asking for support for the "wheels" program. They won't be able to continue this program in Danbury without support from the City. This program gives rides to medical appointments – it's a free service. Asking for a little bit of money to keep this program running. In trouble on the local level – 40% deduction in work force – wheels program is very important to this area – error in judgment not to fund them. Ms. Saracino would like the committee to consider funding for this program. Mr. Chianese said the lack of senior transportation is a problem – Senior housing has a van for their people – but the need for public transportation is to be addressed - if you could put something in the budget this year to help this program. Maureen Farrell, Director of Retired Senior Volunteer Program. Ms. Farrell said the wheels program is important for senior transportation – there needs to be mechanisms in place for seniors to get around their city. This program is a "gap" service. It is a car transport program so it gives the seniors a better route to their doctors etc. Ms. Stanley asked the Director of Red Cross what is percentage of Danbury residents that use the wheel's program. Mr. Malone will get that information & get back to committee. Ms. Waller said it's important for seniors to have the ability to have transportation to and from appointments – difficult for the seniors to get a ride home.

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Americares – proposed \$25,000 / Mayor \$17,510
Balance of \$4,000 – actual expenditures last year \$17,000

Amos House – proposed \$16,950 / Mayor – \$4,378
05/06 expenses – \$4,378. Joe Walkovich, President of Amos House & Gladys McFarland. Mr. Walkovich asked the committee to please seriously look at increasing the Mayor's funds- they are a small transitional living facility – with a budget of \$270,000. They get funding from United Way & CT Department of Social Services, but they need to raise \$150,000 within the community. The City has helped in past with CDBG grant – their needs are on the operating budget. The Mayor's task force created the partnership to end homelessness – the funds committed to Amos House do not match the support needed to help the partnership.

ARC – proposed \$7,125 / Mayor – \$7,004
Mr. Riley received an e-mail – they are delighted with funds as offered by the Mayor

C.A.R.D. Foundation – proposed \$8,755 / Mayor – \$8,755
Pam Samaha – Exec. Director of CARD. She has given approximately \$30,000 to Danbury residents over the past year – they work with high risk kids / intensive summer program / in process of expanding into full year program to service more children – last year they weren't in the budget – so they have a deficit - appreciates what money they're getting. Ms. Diggs asked how many children you serve. Ms. Samaha said typically 50/year of which 75–80 % is Danbury kids.

Community Action - proposed \$104,000 / Mayor – \$87,550
Expenditures as of 1/31/07 are \$200. Ms. Saracino concerned about large grant given but only \$200 spent so far. Mayor Boughton said a lot of their expenditures are back billed – won't show up until May. They do spend all the money.

Connecticut Institute for Communities - proposed \$250,000 / Mayor \$97,550
This program will help oversee HARAMBEE. Jim Maloney, President of CIFC. He passed out their 2006 annual report – his company will give help with grants to the Harambee program. Also looking for money for the Evenstart program provides continuing education to girls who are pregnant and leave regular school and they provide day care for the children. Last chance for these girls – CIFC has agreed to take on the childcare piece – i.e. through head start. Dr. Dawn Ballard – director of Evenstart program – gave overview of the program – local program has 71 graduates – 80% have gone on to be successful – can support themselves and child – off welfare. Michelle became pregnant in 2005 – Evenstart program really helped her. Mr. Maloney said this is a temporary request – there is federal money for early Headstart program – state money is available. Through Mayor's leadership we will have a new Headstart center and this facility will qualify CIFC for state funding. Ms. Saracino asked for a breakdown of the \$150,000 request for Evenstart. Mr. Maloney said there are 23 moms and 23 children. The total program cost is \$400,000 – child care is very expensive. Ms. Saracino asked about the relationship with HARAMBEE – is it a duplicate request / the other \$87,000 for Harambee is not in the budget. Mayor Boughton said the money will be given to CIFC to oversee and advise Harambee. Mr. Rotello said you requested \$250,000 – what will you reduce since the Mayor's proposed funds are \$97,550. Mr. Maloney said all the money is for Harambee – there is no money in there for Evenstart. Mr. Rotello asked that CIFC is looking for \$50,000 from the City and \$50,000 from the Board of Education for the Evenstart program. Mr. Maloney said Yes. Mayor Boughton said Evenstart was funded by a grant through the Board of Education - perhaps Board of Education should pick this up 100%. Mrs. Basso asked how much did Harambee raise in fund raisers this year. How many kids to you take? Mr. Curtis said they made approximately \$3,500 in fund raisers and they got a grant from the Cultural Commission. They usually have 65 to 100 kids per day. Lost funding for the van

last year. Alice Marciano asked Mr. Maloney is he could use volunteers to help with Headstart. He said volunteers are always welcome but that doesn't change the budget.

DAWS – proposed \$4,815 / Mayor \$4,378

Guy Bocchino, President of DAWS. He said all the money is spent within the clinic in Danbury to spay & neuter the animals and feral cats.

Danbury Children First – Proposed \$75,000 / Mayor 65,663

Linda Kosko, Director. This is a Danbury organization – 99% of the families / children from Danbury use their services. Their goals are for children's' school success, parental involvement, learning at home and communication with teachers / parents. Challenges with meeting annual budget – trying to cut expenses.

Council of Veterans – proposed \$24,025 / Mayor \$20,600

Downtown Council – proposed \$45,802 / Mayor \$40,802 Andrea Gartner Jabara, Manager. We appreciate the allocation you've given us.

Danbury Museum & Historical Society (Scott Fanton) – proposed \$31,518 / Mayor \$31, 518

Bridget Guertin, Director. We are very grateful for the funding.

Regional Child Advocacy Center - proposed \$38,522 / Mayor \$38,522.

Mr. Riley spoke with the director – they agree its good funding.

Visiting Nurses – proposed \$100,683 / Mayor \$100,683

Mary Ann Faraguna, CEO. Thanks for the funding - all of the dollars are direct service dollars.

Danbury War Memorial – proposed \$85,000 / Mayor \$75,000

Danbury Youth Services – proposed \$140,159 / Mayor \$135,825

Dream Homes Community Center – proposed \$54,500 / Mayor \$54,500

Mayor said he's been working with the other 9 towns in our region to get commitment of the balance of the \$40,000 that Dream Homes will need. Ms. Saracino said they are on target.

Families Network of Western Connecticut – proposed \$35,020 / Mayor \$35,020

Susan Gilleo, Executive Director. Thank you to the committee. Ms. Taborsak asked do you provide the same services as the Danbury Advocacy Center. Ms. Gilleo said their program is about preventing abuse before it happens – we form different panels and support each other's programs.

Family & Children's Aid – proposed \$5,000 / Mayor \$4,378

Geriatric Health Center – proposed \$21,000 / Mayor \$20,794

Green Chimney/Good Friend – proposed \$10,000 / Mayor \$7,348

Lisa Rodriquez, Director. Thank you on behalf of the children & families who will benefit.

Harambee Center – will be funded under CIFIC

Healing Hearts Regional Hospice – proposed \$4,378 / Mayor \$4,378

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Terri Nakid, Director for Regional Hospice. The center very much appreciates this support. It is the only program of this kind in Danbury – they provide services free of charge.

Hispanic Center – proposed \$32,160 / Mayor – 25,915

John Gogliettino, representing the executive Board of the Hispanic Center. There will be a new director on June 1st. There will be less advocacy going forward. Some of the services provided by the center are: we have a school that teaches English, we help with labor issues, rental issues & health referrals. Mr. Riley said there's been controversy as to where the money has been going. Mr. Gogliettino said there will be a complete audit done by May. Mr. Chianese said he would recommend that possibly we suspend funding until at such time as the new audited figures are provided so that we could do a thorough check before giving additional funding. Mr. Riley asked if under that consideration the Board would be willing to join the committee at a later date. Ms. Saracino asked if they could do something like the Council did with Dream Homes - granting them 1st quarter funds and they must come before a committee later. Mayor Boughton said payments go out in quarterly fashion- nothing to say we withhold payment until the council committee is satisfied. Mrs. Basso told John that when her friends wanted to have something interpreted at the center they were charged funds. Shouldn't they get it done for free? John said they're trying to raise funds other ways. Ms. Saracino said when the new director is appointed they would like him/her to meet with city officials to communicate when they're looking for. Mr. Cavo said along with final audit results. Mr. Marciano asked if it ever has been suggested that the users of the individual programs donate what they can. Alice Marciano aid the Hispanic Center owns 2 buildings on West Street and they have funds from other sources. Any reasons why city is funding. Mrs. Margaret Mitchell said thanks to the Hispanic Center for looking at themselves & charting a new course. Patricia Cadette asked if she will have the same opportunity to speak when they are ready to meet again with the committee? Mr. Riley said it should be similar to tonight's meeting.

Interfaith Aids Ministry – proposed \$30, 000 /Mayor \$26,265

Mr. Rotello asked the Mayor about the other aids group which got no money and this Interfaith agency would be getting funding. The Mayor said the other program never got any funding from the City. Several years ago the council decided not to add any more agencies. He's not aware of any pass through funding. He'll discuss with Ms. Diorio. Perhaps he can find some money for them. Mayor will meet with Roberta from this agency to discuss. Ms. Taborsak commented that some of the testing and outreach used to be done within the dept of health in Danbury. Wish we could help them more.

Literacy Volunteers – proposed \$8,000 / Mayor \$7,442

Midwest Council / Alcoholism - proposed \$40,000 /Mayor \$35,020

Joe Sullivan, President. Thanks to the council for the money – wishes the full request could be granted. About 50% of our people are Danbury residents. Lynn Waller asked if other towns support this program? Mr. Sullivan said they have no other financial support from any towns.

Northwest Reg. Mental Health – proposed \$8,661 / Mayor \$7,179

Ms. Taborsak said she'd like to see this item under memberships in our general fund budget.

Pembroke Grant Cemetery – proposed \$155 / Mayor \$155

Regional Hospice – proposed \$8,755 / Mayor \$8,755

Terri Nakid, Director said thank you - we are a not for profit 501C.

Boughton Street YMCA - proposed \$180,000 / Mayor \$180,000

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Mr. Riley received an e-mail today – they are very pleased. Ms. Taborsak asked was this a new grant last year. Mayor Boughton said this is the 2nd year of a 3 year commitment as they rebuild. Their enrollment is growing. Ms. Taborsak said she thought the City is not adding new agencies except for this one. Mayor said this is a bridge to help them get back on their feet.

YMCA - Escape to the Arts – proposed \$30,643 / Mayor \$30,643

Retired & Senior Volunteer (RSVP) proposed \$ 2,250 / Mayor \$1,751

Maureen Farrell, new Director. Thank you to Mayor Boughton and the Council for the support and funds.

TBICO – proposed \$10,000 / Mayor \$4,378

Louann Bloomer, President. She is hoping they can get an increase. They are the only agency that provides employment focus services in Danbury. AMOS house people need to participate in their program. Due to demand, they have started evening & Saturday programs. With housing & homelessness being critical - without a job they'll still be homeless. Mr. Gregory Marciano asked if they ask area companies for help. Ms. Bloomer said Yes, and GE is one of their biggest supporters. We provide services at no cost.

The Volunteer Center – proposed \$3,000 / Mayor \$2,101

Thank you for your support.

WeCahr – proposed \$32,394 / Mayor \$32,394

Pat Tomka, Director. Thank you.

Women's Center – proposed \$80,000 / Mayor \$70,040

This is the end of the grant agencies.

Mr. Cavo moved that the committee recommend to the Council of the whole to accept the Mayor's budget as presented with the exception that money for the Hispanic Center be withheld until a meeting with the Board. Seconded by Mr. Nagarsheth. Discussion of the Committee followed.

Ms. Saracino said a number of people made a good case for more funds – Red Cross wheels, Amos program, Evenstart and TBICO. She would like to take a look for more funds. Red Cross Wheels – AMOS only got 25% of what they asked for – Maloney asked for Evenstart funds - \$50,000 and he got nothing. TBICO – only 25% of what they requested. Mr. Cavo reminded the committee that any changes made to the proposed budget will change mill rate in taxes for citizens in Danbury. Funded close to what was last year – increase will be a burden to tax payers. Mayor Boughton said we are looking into investigating transportation for seniors – looking at creating a program. We may want to take these resources and give it to the Red Cross but they need to transport Danbury seniors. By adding dollars you may impact the mil rate. You could take the allocated dollars for the Hispanic Center and move them over to Red Cross and in July I will come back to fund the Hispanic Center. It's a significant request for Mr. Maloney for the Evenstart program. It is a Board of Education program and they should fund it. For TBICO Ms. Saracino asked is there anything we can do for them? Mayor said we can look at lapsed funds – Aids would need funds also. Mayor Boughton said the committee could split the Hispanic Center funds.

Ms. Saracino moved to Amend the motion to take \$25,000 dollars from the Hispanic Center and apply \$20,000 to the Red Cross funds for the Wheels transportation program for Danbury citizens only and \$5,000 to TBICO. Seconded by Mr. Cavo. Discussion followed.

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Mr. Rotello feels the Red Cross is not the appropriate venue for senior transportation – he'd like to see a separate program. Ms. Saracino said the Red Cross program is already in place and has been very successful, but, had to fall by the wayside because they had no funding. Mr. Cavo said sending the \$20,000 to Red Cross would have to be attached to a discussion with the new Director that it goes for Danbury citizens only. Mayor said he would tell the Red Cross that the money would only go to them if they could guarantee using the funds for the Wheels program for Danbury citizens.

Mr. Riley asked for a vote on the amendment. Ms. Saracino re-stated her amendment. Motion on amendment passed unanimously.

Discussion followed on original motion. Mr. Rotello said funds for grant agencies are just about 1% in total of the budget. This community has helped all the programs – up just \$63,000 from last year. He would like to see some fine tuning of these programs. Perhaps doubling on the mission statements are there – communities have several agencies that offer same services. He's comfortable with the money spent here. Ms. Saracino said that the City is not the sole source of funds for every agency – they get money from other areas. Mr. Riley thanked everyone for attending tonight. It would benefit the council to review the proposal of reviewing all agencies.

Mr. Riley asked for a vote on the original motion – all in favor; motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Cavo moved to adjourn. Seconded by Mr. Nagarsheth. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Robert Riley, Chair

Joe Cavo

Shay Nagarsheth

Mary Saracino

Paul Rotello