

Finance and Government Operations Commission Meeting Minutes
Middletown, Connecticut
April 2, 2014
Municipal Building Room 208
7:00 P.M.

Present: Thomas Serra, David Bauer, Hope Kasper, Deb Kleckowski, Wayne Bartolotta, Carl Erlacher, Deb Stanley, Robert Kronenberger, Kori Wisneski, John Paulino, Aristia Partiss, Sebastian Micciulla, Geen Thazhampallath, Mikiel Wackers, Bruce Driska, William Russo, Salvatore Nesci, Dammon Braasch, Guy Russo, Alex Gecan (Middletown Press), Sean Beals (Hartford Courant)

Absent: Mary Bartolotta

1. Thomas Serra began the meeting asking if there were any public comments, seeing none, the commission moved onto the agenda. David Bauer requested to have the voted elected officials be moved to the top of the agenda. Tom stated the motion was made and Hope Kasper seconded, approved unanimously. *
2. Public Comments on the Agenda: None
3. The following Departments have submitted items to be discussed:

Assessor/Board of Assessment Appeals – update of appeals process, revaluation and payments

- David Bauer inquired about the extension which was granted for the Board of Assessment Appeals.
- Sebastian Micciulla discussed that the BOAA meetings were concluded on March 27, 2014. He extended a thank you to Tara Connelly who was hired to assist in the clerical duties for their commission.
- Damon noted that there was an apparent oversight and eighty six homeowners were not notified of the results of their meeting with Vision; which resulted in their inability to submit an appeal with the Board of Assessment Appeals.
- Deputy General Counsel Kori Wisneski said the city would invoke the “equitable tolling principle” to give the homeowner the opportunity to appeal their appraisal.
- On April 30, 2014 this committee will potentially hear the eighty six tax payers that did not receive their letters in a timely fashion.
- Damon Braash also stated that there are 54 appeals that will probably go through the court system.
- Damon stated that the balance owed to Vision is \$222,000.
- Carl stated that a reserve has been built into the Mayors budget for appeals.
- Carl notified the Accounts Payable Department not to remit a payment to Vision unless it is been approved by him.

- Informational Only-

General Counsel – Resolution establishing a Charter Revision Commission; Resolution appointing seven members to Charter Revision Commission; Appropriation Request for \$25,000 for Charter Revision; Appropriation Request for \$11,740 for arbitration services, Appropriation Request for \$12,600 to fund two temporary employees in Office of General Counsel and Personnel Office

- Thomas Serra stated he doesn't want to take any action at this time regarding this request regarding the Charter Revision Commission for \$25,000 and simply stated that we are funding a Claims Administrator and a Deputy General Council position at this time.
- Hope made the motion to reject this request and Deb seconded. Rejected unanimously.

***Hope Kasper discussed the oversight of the minutes not being approved earlier. Councilman Serra called for a motion to approve February 26, 2014 minutes, David Bauer made the motion to approve and Deb Kleckowski seconded. The vote was unanimous.**

- Hope made the motion to approve the appropriation request for \$11,740 payment for arbitration services and Deb seconded.
- Dave made the motion to approve the appropriation request of \$12,600 to fund the two temporary employees in Office of General Counsel and the Personnel Office, Deb seconded.
- Both of these requests were approved unanimously.

- Send to the Council Floor-

Tom asked this commission if they could adjust the agenda and hear the non-controversial departments at this time, all agreed.

Public Works – Request for approval of annual membership to Connecticut Tree Protective Association, Inc. totaling \$55.00

- David Bauer made the motion to approve and Hope seconded.

- Approved unanimously-

Emergency Management – Request for approval of Director of Emergency Management to attend three CT Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security endorsed workshops totaling \$40.00

- Dave made the motion to approve the \$40.00 request for Bruce Driska to attend the three workshops, Deb seconded.

- Approved unanimously -

Planning & Zoning – Grant Confirmation totaling \$20,000 of State of CT funding for purpose of Middletown Historic (structures) Inventory

- Hope made the motion to approve the grant confirmation and Deb seconded.

- Approved unanimously-

Human Relations/Finance – Request for approval of FHACT membership renewal and attendance at FHACT Fair Housing conference totaling \$115.00

- Faith Jackson, Director of Human Relations was unable to attend tonight's F & G meeting, instead she submitted a letter to the commission stating her request.
- The request was denied 3 to 1, Thomas Serra voted in favor.

- Request denied -

Health- Grant Confirmation totaling \$2000 for Kids Safety Expo; Grant Confirmation totaling \$3500 for NACCHO grant providing training and supplies to Medical Reserve Corps

- Salvatore Nesci discussed both grant confirmation requests and also explained their process of including a list of proposed expenditures along with the grant confirmation when submitted to the council.
- David Bauer requested all City grant confirmations include a list of proposed expenditures.
- Dave made the motion to approve and Deb seconded.

- Approved to send to Council Floor --

Finance – Grant Confirmation totaling \$319,254 of (annual) State of CT LoCIP funds; Grant Confirmation totaling \$5000 of Middlesex County Community Foundation donation for School Readiness – Storytelling for children

- Carl Erlacher discussed both grant confirmations, stating that \$40,000 was carried forward in LoCIP funds and the \$5,000 is a donation for books for the children.
- Hope made the motion to approve and Deb seconded.

- David inquired on who has the list of intended LoCIP projects, and also if the list can be distributed to the members of this commission.
- Carl responded that the list is in the Mayor's Office with Tina Gomes.

- Approved to send to Council Floor-

Senior Services – Resolution authorizing application of CT DOT grant for \$52,000 or 80% of cost/purchases of wheelchair accessible bus with matching City funds of \$13,000

- Deb Stanley discussed the \$13,000 matching of City funds towards the cost of the wheelchair accessible bus for the Senior Center.
- Hope asked if there is money in the CNR to cover this request, after much discussion the final decision was yes, the money is to come from CNR.
- Hope made the motion to approve and Deb seconded

- Approved to send to the Council Floor-

Central Communications – Resolution authorizing Mayor Drew to sign \$75,000 LoCIP application for purchased and installation of equipment needed for communications and backup power, also including creation of new Capital Improvement line entitled, “Westfield Communications Project”

- Hope made the motion to approve and Deb seconded. Approved unanimously.

- Approved to send to the Council Floor-

Fire – CNR Budget request for 2014-2017 fiscal years totaling \$437,500

- Tom stated the amount requested would be contingent upon the caucuses meeting and discussing their budgets.
- Dave inquired on how much of the money is statutorily required in their budget and to be prepared to answer questions at the council workshop.
- Carl stated part of this CNR money requested was to purchase the Safety packs (air-packs) for the Fire department which have are due to expire this year.
- Dave asked if this was information only.
- Tom said yes, informational at this time, just letting the department know where this commission stands on the request.

Parking – Update on revenue collection

- Geen Thazhampallath discussed the possibility of increasing the parking costs from .75 to \$1.00 per hour and lowering the free time to 30 minutes in Parking Lot areas. Also increasing the hours of meter enforcement from 8 am to 8 pm to increase their revenue.
- Hope asked if the revenue supports the operating budget.
- Geen explained they are short roughly \$30,000 yearly.
- Dave suggested going back three years and doing a comparison to other towns our size, what can we do differently to cover our costs.

- Informational Only-

Water & Sewer – Ordinance appropriating additional \$3,000,000 for portion of the Force Main and Inter-Municipal Pump Station in connection with Mattabassett Regionalization Project and authorizing issue of \$3,000,000 bonds and obligations

- Guy Russo discussed the additional \$3 million needed on top of the original \$37 million to complete the Force Main and Inter-Municipal Pump Station in connection with the Mattabassett Regionalization Project.
- Dave asked that a narrative be drafted for the public to understand the inefficient projection costs done by the consultants as well as the time frame being forced to avoid having an inferior pump station constructed.
- Hope moved approval and Tom seconded.

- Carl is looking to issue notes in August for roughly \$20 million, then roll them into bonds in the spring.

Other:

- Carl also noted that the Police Department has \$6,000 left in their OT budgeted line item, so they may be coming to this commission for an appropriation.

Regular Reports -- Information Only

- Transfer of Funds/BOE Transfers
- General Fund Appropriations
- City's Investments
- Monthly Expenditure Summary Report
- Tax Collection Recap Report
- Department Over-Time Reports

6. The next meeting is April 30, 2014 at 7pm in Room 208

Meeting Adjourned
Tracks: MZ0000117-138

Respectfully
Submitted by,

Tracy Vess on behalf of Carl R. Erlacher