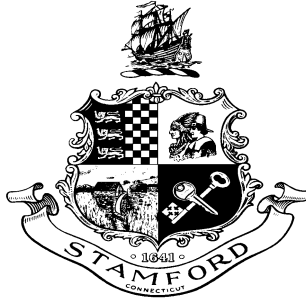


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## BOARD OF FINANCE

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April 20, 2016

### ACTION REPORT (MINUTES) OF THE BOARD OF FINANCE SPECIAL BUDGET MEETING

Tuesday, April 19, 2016  
Stamford Government Center  
Board of Finance Conference Room

A special meeting to approve the Mayor's Proposed FY 2016-2017 Operating, Special Fund, and Capital and the Board of Education Budgets of the City of Stamford was held by the Board of Finance on Tuesday, April 19, 2016 at the Stamford Government Center in the Board of Finance Conference room on the 4<sup>th</sup> Floor. *Members present* were Chairman Richard Freedman, Vice-Chair Mary Lou Rinaldi, and Board members Dudley N. Williams, Sal Gabriele, David Kooris and Shelley A. Michelson. Also present were Jay Fountain, Interim Director of OPM, Lee Berta, OPM Assistant Director, and Cynthia Winterle, Clerk of the Board. Chairman Freedman opened the meeting at 6:32 PM and invited all to recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Chairman Freedman reviewed the budget process to this point, thanked the public for their input noting their participation in the joint public hearing, which is live-streamed, and thanked his colleagues on the Board, noting the countless hours the Board spent on thoughtful analysis and consideration of the budget season and noted several heartfelt requests from residents regarding paying higher taxes.

Chairman Freedman then asked all to turn to page 307 of the budget book to start with the Board of Education.

The Board adjourned the meeting at 9:55 PM after passing the following motions:

#### BUDGET MOTIONS PASSED

##### OPERATING BUDGET

On a motion by Mr. Williams which was seconded by Ms. Rinaldi, Mr. Williams stated that on behalf of the Education Committee, and after careful review, that he was proposing to **cut \$3,250,000 from the Board of Education total budget.** (See Mr. Williams' comments attached as Exhibit 1.) Board Member Gabriele further made a motion to approve a higher amount of \$4,000,000, which was seconded by Ms. Michelson, but failed by a vote of 2-4-0. The Board then took up the original recommended cut of **\$3,250,000**, which was approved by a vote 4-2-0 with Mr. Gabriele and Ms. Michelson casting dissenting votes.

Mr. Gabriele made a motion, which was seconded by Ms. Michelson, to reduce the Mayor's Operating Budget to a zero percent (0%) increase this year. The motion failed 2-4-0 with Ms. Rinaldi and Messrs. Freedman, Williams, Gabriele and Kooris casting dissenting votes.

On a motion by Ms. Rinaldi, seconded by Ms. Michelson, the Board acted by unanimous vote to cut the **Director of Administration: Overtime** budget in the amount of **\$500**.

On a motion by Ms. Rinaldi, seconded by Mr. Freedman, the Board acted by unanimous vote to cut the **Director of Administration: Supplies** budget in the amount of **\$300**.

On a motion by Mr. Gabriele, which was seconded by Ms. Michelson, the Board acted by unanimous vote to make a **general reduction** in the amount of **\$16,000** to the **Financial Processing and Reporting** budget.

On a motion by Mr. Williams, seconded by Ms. Rinaldi, the Board acted by unanimous vote to eliminate a **cost reduction analyst** position in the amount of **\$65,312** to the **Office of Policy and Management** budget.

On a motion by Ms. Michelson, seconded by Ms. Rinaldi, the Board acted by unanimous vote to make a reduction in the amount of **\$200** in the **Office of Policy and Management: Purchasing/Utilities and Commodities** budget.

On a motion by Mr. Kooris, seconded by Ms. Michelson, the Board acted on a vote of 5-0-1 to cut the **Vehicle Maintenance: Full-time salary** budget in the amount of **\$20,000**.

On a motion by Mr. Gabriele, seconded by Ms. Michelson, to reduce the **Operations: Facilities/Parks overtime** budget by **\$25,000**, the motion failed 2-4-0 with Ms. Rinaldi and Messrs. Freedman, Williams and Kooris casting dissenting votes.

On a motion by Mr. Freedman and seconded by Ms. Rinaldi, the Board acted by unanimous vote to reduce the **Parks Maintenance: Overtime** budget by **\$5,000**.

On a motion by Mr. Kooris and seconded by Ms. Rinaldi, the board acted by unanimous vote to reduce the **Parks Maintenance: Supplies** budget by **\$15,000**.

On a motion by Ms. Rinaldi, seconded by Mr. Williams, to **cut** the **Operations: Solid Waste/Recycling Overtime** budget by **\$10,000**, the Board voted 5-0-1 to approve the cut. Ms. Michelson abstained.

On a motion by Ms. Rinaldi, seconded by Mr. Williams, the Board acted by unanimous vote to cut the **Operations: Solid Waste/Collection Overtime** budget by **\$10,000**.

On a motion by Mr. Gabriele, seconded by Ms. Michelson, the Board acted by unanimous vote to make a general reduction of **\$10,000** to the budget of the **Terry Connors Ice Rink**.

On a motion by Mr. Kooris, seconded by Mr. Williams, the Board acted by unanimous vote to cut the **Operations Administration: Full-Time Salary** budget by **\$90,356** and eliminate the position of Administrative Services Bureau Chief.

On a motion by Ms. Rinaldi, seconded by Mr. Williams, the Board acted by unanimous vote to cut the **Police Department** budget by **\$1,150,000: Employee Benefits (\$750,000), Retiree Benefits (\$180,000), and Salary Lines (\$220,000)**.

On a motion by Ms. Rinaldi, seconded by Mr. Freedman, the Board acted by unanimous vote to make a reduction of **\$20,000** in the **Police Administration: Employee Benefits** budget.

On a motion by Mr. Williams, seconded by Ms. Rinaldi to make a **general reduction** to the **Fire Department: Suppression** budget of **\$500,000**. The motion passed with a vote of 4-1-1 with Ms. Michelson dissenting and Mr. Gabriele abstaining.

On a motion by Mr. Williams, seconded by Ms. Rinaldi, the Board acted by unanimous vote to cut the **Fire Department: Suppression/Supplies** budget by **\$5,000**.

On a motion by Ms. Rinaldi, seconded by Mr. Kooris, the Board acted by unanimous vote to make a **budget reduction** of **\$20,000** to the **Health and Social Services: Laboratory/Professional Services** budget.

On a motion by Ms. Rinaldi, seconded by Mr. Kooris, the Board acted by unanimous vote to cut the **Health and Social Services: Community Nursing/Overtime** budget by **\$2,000**.

On a motion by Mr. Gabriele, seconded by Ms. Michelson, to make a **general reduction** of to the **Legal Affairs: Service** budget of **\$15,000**, the motion passed with a vote of 4-2-0 with Mr. Gabriele and Ms. Michelson casting the dissenting votes.

Mr. Freedman made a motion, which was seconded by Ms. Rinaldi, to make a cut in the **Human Resources: Purchased Professional Service** budget of **\$25,000**. A second motion was made by Mr. Gabriele, seconded by Ms. Michelson, to make a higher cut in the amount of \$50,000. The motion failed with a vote of 2-4-0 with Ms. Rinaldi and Messrs. Freedman, Williams and Kooris casting the dissenting votes. The original motion, made by Mr. Freedman and seconded by Ms. Rinaldi was then voted upon and passed with a vote of 4-2-0 with Mr. Gabriele and Ms. Michelson casting the dissenting votes.

On a motion by Mr. Freedman, seconded by Mr. Kooris, the Board acted by unanimous vote to cut the **Human Resources: Employee Benefits/Purchased Professional Service** budget by **\$15,000**.

On a motion by Mr. Freedman, seconded by Ms. Michelson, the Board acted by unanimous vote to cut the **Mayor's Office: Economic Development/Full-Time Salary** budget by \$81,896 and eliminate two (2) Economic Development positions.

On a motion by Mr. Freedman, seconded by Ms. Michelson, the Board acted by unanimous vote to make a **general budget reduction** of **\$20,000** to the **Board of Finance** budget.

On a motion by Ms. Rinaldi, seconded by Mr. Kooris, to reduce the budget of the **Stamford Museum & Nature Center: Cultural & Environmental** by **\$10,000** passed with a vote of 5-1-0 with Mr. Gabriele casting the dissenting vote.

On a motion by Mr. Kooris, seconded by Mr. Williams, the Board acted by unanimous vote to cut the **Stamford Partnership: Cultural & Environmental** budget by **\$20,000**.

On a motion by Mr. Freedman, seconded by Ms. Rinaldi, to cut the **Ferguson Library: Cultural & Environmental** budget by **\$40,000**, resulted in a passing vote of 5-1-0 with Mr. Gabriele casting the dissenting vote.

On a motion by Mr. Freedman, seconded by Mr. Gabriele to cut the **Mill River Collaborative Cultural & Environmental** budget by **\$25,000** resulted in a passing vote of 4-0-2 with Mr. Gabriele and Mr. Kooris abstaining.

On a motion by Mr. Freedman, seconded by Mr. Gabriele, the Board acted by unanimous vote to cut the **Risk Management: Full-Time Salary** budget by **\$78,451**, and eliminate one Safety and Training Officer position.

On a motion by Mr. Freedman, seconded by Ms. Rinaldi, to cut the **Scofield Manor Heating System** budget by **\$200,000** resulted in a passing vote of 5-1-0 with Mr. Gabriele casting the dissenting vote.

On a motion by Mr. Freedman, seconded by Mr. Gabriele, to cut the **Stamford Museum: Multi-Building Construction** budget by **\$400,000** failed to pass with a vote of 1-4-1 with Ms. Rinaldi and Messrs. Williams, Gabriele and Kooris casting dissenting votes and Ms. Michelson abstaining.

On a motion by Mr. Kooris, seconded by Ms. Rinaldi, to cut the **Stamford Museum: Multi-Building Construction** budget by **\$200,000** resulted in a passing vote of 4-1-1 with Mr. Gabriele opposing and Ms. Michelson abstaining.

*Cynthia R. Winterle*

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Cynthia R. Winterle  
Clerk of the Board

Exhibit 1

The Board of Finance is recommending a reduction of \$3,250,000, or 1.27% to the Board of Education's proposed \$12,040,141 budget increase for the 2016-17 school year. This recommendation results in an increase of \$8,790,000 in the 2016-17 budget – an increase of 3.45% over the current year's budget.

As has been the practice of the Board of Finance in recent years, our review of the BOE budget included two meetings solely dedicated to the BOE along with extensive review of the financial material provided and additional information requested.

The Board of Finance recognizes the school district is confronting unique circumstances – the opening of a new school and ongoing issues with special education – that present significant financial challenges. In recognition of these issues, we are proposing a budget increase of well over 3% - one that is also in excess of what we will recommend for the city overall.

The Board of Finance would like to commend the BOE on the thorough and efficient approach it took in budgeting for the opening of the new school on Strawberry Hill Avenue.

The Board of Finance understands that it does not have line-item control over the BOE budget and that the BOE is not obligated to follow our recommendations as to the specific budget reductions. However, we feel it is our responsibility to approach the BOE budget with the goal of identifying areas for reduction that will have minimal impact on the delivery of quality instruction to Stamford students. Our recommended budget reductions are as follows:

- **Special Education: \$2,200,000:** We recognize the challenges with Special Education. However, the BOE's proposed budget calls for a 14.5% increase in Out-of-District Tuition costs with the same number of students. The budget also calls for 19 new staff positions, and we believe the BOE can serve the anticipated roster of students next year with the still substantial special ed budget increase remaining even after our reduction. We encourage the BOE to continue to investigate ways to reduce the number of Out of District placements. We are prepared to support new program proposals if they include specifics in terms of costs, anticipated long-term savings and the number of students impacted.
- **Grant Supplantation-\$250,000:** The BOE budget calls over \$2,000,000 to address the loss of grant revenue. While ideal, we believe that dollar for dollar replacement may not be essential.
- **Alliance Grant-funded Pre-K - \$200,000:** As stated last year, while we recognize how important it is that every child, particularly children in the Alliance Grant "Focus" schools have the benefit of a quality pre-K experience, we think the BOE could provide Pre-K more cost effectively for these students if done in collaboration with the Childcare Learning Center and the School Readiness Partnership.
- **Healthcare City Cross-charge- \$200,000:** We have been informed by the City's Department of Administration that the city's cross-charge to the BOE next year will be approximately \$200,000 less than what the BOE budgeted.
- **BOE Healthcare - \$200,000; Transportation - \$100,000:** Based on historical budget vs. actual analysis we believe these accounts can be reduced.
- **Long-Term Sick Leave - \$100,000:** At the direction of Interim Superintendent Connelly the BOE has implemented steps to better monitor this account and we anticipate that improved management practices will result in a reduction of costs.