

FINAL

THIRD TAXING DISTRICT
of the City of Norwalk
October 6, 2014

ATTENDANCE: Commissioners: Charles Yost, Chair; David Brown; Debora Goldstein, Dr. Michael Intrieri, Treasurer

STAFF: James Smith, General Manager; Ron Scofield, Assistant General Manager

OTHERS: Stan Siegel, East Norwalk Library; Jim Hines, Norwalk Fire Department; Rob Frasier, Norwalk Tree Advisory Committee; Kiki Kydes, TTD; Paul Hedrick, TTD

CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Yost called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. A quorum was present.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no one from the public present to comment at this time.

INTRODUCTION OF TTD NEW HIRES

Jim Smith introduced TTD's new Lineman, Paul Hedrick. Paul comes to TTD with a 34 year history of employment at SNEW, holding various positions such as meter man, substation and the line department.

Mr. Scofield introduced TTD's new Customer Service Rep, Kiki Kydes. Kiki comes to TTD with a background in running a family business. Her job duties included customer service, bookkeeping and office management.

Jim Smith introduced TTD's new Executive Assistant, Cynthia Tenney. Cynthia comes to TTD with a background of administrative assistant from various corporations over the years.

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MINUTES OF MEETING

September 8, 2014 Regular Meeting

**** COMMISSIONER BROWN MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 8, 2014 REGULAR MEETING.**

**** COMMISSIONER GOLDSTEIN SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 8, 2014 PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

August 21, 2014 Special Meeting

**** COMMISSIONER BROWN MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF AUGUST 21, 2014 REGULAR MEETING.**

**** COMMISSIONER GOLDSTEIN SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF AUGUST 21, 2014 SPECIAL MEETING PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**PRESENTATION OF BUDGETS FROM
THE LIBRARY, FIREHOUSE & CEMETERY**

Preliminary budgets were presented by all.

Library

Stan Siegel presented the upcoming budget for the East Norwalk Library in the amount of \$193,676. He indicated that there should not be any increase over last year. The Commission posed numerous questions with regard to the budget.

Chairman Yost asked what the savings to date is on the conversion of the heating system from oil to gas. Stan stated that they did not have a solid figure on this since they have not had a full winter with the new heating system. Chairman Yost asked Stan to please provide how much was spent on oil the year prior to the conversion.

Commission Brown asked about the Van Zilen Hall rentals and why there was no change from last year to the proposed 2015/16 year. Stan stated that the library has standard renters from year-to-year, including 3 or 4 churches.

Commission Brown asked why the Library Material/Programs are expected to be lower in the upcoming year. Stan indicated that this is due mainly to the fact that the library has been getting sponsors for the materials, thus lowering out-of-pocket costs for the library. Attendance for these programs have been very good. Parents have become more involved.

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Commission Goldstein asked about book donations and wanted to know how many books are donated to the library. Stan is going to check on the number and get back to the Commission.

Commission Goldstein asked if the library is considering extending the hours. Stan mentioned that it has been talked about, but nothing has been decided as yet. They are hoping to open a little earlier and have at least one evening with extended hours.

Chairman Yost asked if they knew how many people come to the library on a regular basis. Stan stated that there is no door count, but they do have count on the computer users and books borrowed from the library.

Firehouse

Jim Hines presented the budget for the East Norwalk Firehouse. As of right now there is an estimate of \$42,530 for upcoming work in next year's budget. The work is being done in three phases. Phase 1 is complete, Phase 2 is in process and Phase 3 is scheduled for next year. Phase 3 includes work in the stair tower hallway (removing the asbestos tile, installing new tile, and painting), installing a heater on the apparatus floor, remove dead equipment from apparatus floor and ceiling (fix, patch and paint the apparatus floor ceiling) and install a new half bath on the apparatus floor.

Mr. Hines indicated that the estimate could be a little on the high side and would hope that the actual would be a bit lower. He also mentioned upgrading the sub-panel and Mr. Smith said that TTD may be able to help out with this project. They will meet in the future on this subject.

Cemetery

Mr. Scofield presented the budget for the East Norwalk Historical Cemetery in Chris Burr's absence.

Mr. Scofield presented the yearly maintenance budget on the cemetery in the amount of \$22,340 which includes the sprinkler system, watering, landscaping and tree & shrub care.

In addition to the general maintenance, two additional requests have been made. They would like to add two additional sprinkler heads to cover the rose bushes and some professional tree maintenance (tree pruning, tree removal, stump removal and planting of new Dogwood trees). The estimated cost for these two additional items is \$15,920.

The question was raised as to whether or not the work would be performed by a licensed Landscape Architect, as well as concern whether or not the proposed work would disturb

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any of the surroundings since it is a historical site. Mr. Frasier from the Tree Advisory was on-site and provided helpful information with regard to these concerns.

NORWALK TREE ADVISORY PRESENTATION

Mr. Frasier from the Norwalk Tree Advisory came to propose what the City of Norwalk, in conjunction with the Tree Advisory, is planning with regard to tree plantings in order to beautify Norwalk's main thoroughfares.

The original proposal was for five trees to be planted on properties that are either owned or maintained by Third Taxing District. These include: 1) one on the island next to Sweet Ashley's; 2) one outside the fence on the Gregory Boulevard side of the East Norwalk Historical Cemetery; 3) one on the island on Gregory Boulevard; and 4) two in the Roger Ludlow Triangle.

Discussion took place about the plantings on the two islands and what impact it could have on visibility for vehicle traffic. It was decided to not include the islands and just add the remaining three tree plantings.

**** COMMISSIONER GOLDSTEIN MOVED THAT THE COMMISSION APPROVE THE PLANTING OF THE TWO TREES IN ROGER LUDLOW TRIANGLE AND ONE ON THE EXTERIOR CORNER OF THE HISTORICAL CEMETERY AS REQUESTED BY THE TREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE AT NO EXPENSE TO TTD.**

**** COMMISSIONER YOST SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mr. Frasier also suggested to the Commission that they include a line item in their district budget in the amount of \$5,000 for future tree plantings in/around East Norwalk. The Commission said they would consider this request in the future.

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT.

Status of Audit

Mr. Smith indicated that we should have final figures from Hope & Hernandez around the third week of October. He is comfortable with the fact that Hope & Hernandez are doing a thorough job with the audit. He will report back to the Commission once he has the final numbers.

Signage

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Mr. Scofield presented the signage issue to the Commission. It appears that the signs throughout the district do not match each other's style. Discussion then took place about two signs in particular - Hanford Switch and Governor Fitch Park. These two are approximately 20 to 22 years old and have about 3 to 4 years left before they need to be replaced. Since these signs will need to be replaced, the Commission decided to have all the signs replaced at this time so the styles match throughout the district. Mr. Scofield will look to get 3 to 4 designs of new signs and present them to the Commission at a future meeting.

Chowdafest

TTD hung 16 banners for the upcoming Chowdafest. The signs are located on Seaview Avenue, Winfield Street, East Avenue, Gregory Boulevard and Beach Road. VIP tickets were issued to TTD. To date, the tickets that are at TTD for sale to the public have not been sold.

Customer Appreciation Luncheon

Mr. Smith has indicated that he would like to host a Customer Appreciation Luncheon for the top 25 commercial customers of TTD. A suggestion was made that perhaps it could be held at the East Norwalk Library.

Rates & Bill Redesign

Mr. Scofield said that TTD and Cogsdale have been working on implementing and testing the new billing system over the past few months and that the new system went "live" on October 6th. Everything appears to have gone smoothly. Cogsdale is currently at the office through Thursday, October 9th to oversee any problems that may arise. Reports and bills have tested well and look good.

The system will now be able to handle budget billing and Cogsdale will train the staff on how to do this.

CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHTING CEREMONY

Mr. Scofield presented what he had to date with the planning of the Christmas Tree Lighting which is to be held on Sunday, December 14th (rain date – Monday, December 15th). Mr. Scofield contacted Marvin School to see if their chorus would like to perform at the ceremony and received a positive response. They will be planning on performing at least 2 Christmas songs.

Mr. Scofield also reached out to Nathan Hale to see if they would be interested in participating in the program as well, but unfortunately due to prior commitments, they cannot. Dr. Intriери then reached out to the other middle schools in Norwalk (West

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Rocks, Ponus and Roton). West Rocks is not available and he has not heard back as yet from Ponus and Roton.

Discussion then began about the performances that were being planned. Commissioner Brown felt that we needed someone more professional than the chorus groups from the middle schools to perform. Commissioner Yost and Dr. Intrieri both indicated that the event was for children and that we should have the children performing. This went back and forth and then it was decided that we would just keep the Marvin chorus and pursue a professional band for the remaining music. Mr. Scofield will be reaching out to Tim Currie to see if they would be available to perform.

Dr. Intrieri also mentioned that it might be a good idea to change the start time of the program from 6:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m., but on the rain date, it should remain at 6:00 p.m. It was agreed to change the start time for Sunday, December 14th to 5:00 p.m.

2015 COMMISSION MEETING SCHEDULE

Mr. Scofield presented the 2015 Commission Meeting Schedule. The only change that was noted is the meeting in December. It should be scheduled for Monday, December 7th instead of Tuesday, December 8th.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS/KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Mr. Smith indicated that the full financial highlights for July/August 2014/2013 was located on page 27 of the information packets. He informed the Commissioners that the District was on the right track and expenses are being controlled. Discussion ensued and all questions were answered satisfactorily.

Mr. Smith updated the Commissioners on the Maplewood situation. As of today, they are current on their bill, but still have not paid on their deposit. Mr. Smith has been having regular contact with Atty. John Bove on this subject and they are trying to find a way to collect the deposit. Mr. Smith is looking get a face-to-face meeting with Maplewood, their attorney, Atty. John Bove and himself to see if they can get this resolved. In the meantime, their lighting upgrade rebate in the amount of \$33,000 has not been issued pending resolution of the matter.

ADJOURNMENT

- ** COMMISSIONER YOST MOVED TO ADJOURN.**
- ** COMMISSIONER GOLDSTEIN SECONDED.**
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

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The meeting adjourned at 9:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Tenney
Executive Assistant
Third Taxing District