

FINAL

THIRD TAXING DISTRICT
of the City of Norwalk
Special Commission Meeting
February 5, 2018

ATTENDANCE: Commissioners: David Brown, Chair; Debora Goldstein;
Pamela Parkington; Treasurer: Johnnie Mae Weldon

STAFF: Ron Scofield, Assistant General Manager

OTHERS: Matt Allred (Bliss Allred & Co.)
Peter Johnson (CMEEC Ratepayer Member Representative)
Sarah Mann, Sylvia Archibald, Kathy Cray (ENIA)
Andrew Strauss, Rich Whitehead (Norwalk Tree Alliance)

CALL TO ORDER

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

PUBLIC COMMENT

No one from the public was in attendance to comment.

LIBRARY BUDGET PRESENTATION OF MODIFIED BUDGET (ENIA)

Ms. Archibald reviewed the amended 2018-19 budget with the Commission line by line. Overall, the Library is asking to be funded from the District in the amount of \$188,500 compared to the original request of \$180,000.

Representatives from the Library agreed to eliminate the 401k pension administration fees in the amount of \$2,600. The modified amount of \$188,500 was reduced to \$185,900 accordingly in the District Budget.

Commissioner Goldstein asked about the Library Foundation that was supposed to be formed. It was her understanding that the paperwork had been filed. Ms. Mann stated that no one from the Library Board showed any interest in being part of the Foundation. In its place, is a new formation called "Friends" which is a group of people who are advocates for the Library. Paperwork for "Friends" 501c3 will soon be filed.

FINAL

Commissioner Goldstein raised the point that at last year's Annual Meeting, the ratepayers were informed that the large increase in the Library budget would be a one-time asking and this year they are asking for an amount just slightly less than last year. Ms. Cray told the Commission the reason was that the fundraising efforts did not pan out the way that had expected. Further discussion took place on this subject. The concern appears to be in what the ratepayers may or may not say/do at the upcoming Annual Meeting with regard to the request.

TREE ALLIANCE GRANT

Mr. Strauss began by introducing Rich Whitehead, Chair of the Norwalk Tree Advisory Committee. Mr. Strauss' objective was to share a change in plans for the upcoming tree planting. He reviewed the newly hung map of the District showing where all the trees have been planted to date.

Mr. Strauss would like to change the direction for the upcoming Spring planting and concentrate on a non-residential area, but have a high public access. The Tree Alliance believes the best area would be to plant at Taylor Farm. The idea has been approved by Ken Hughes who is the new Interim Director. Mr. Strauss showed on the map where 12 trees would be planted.

Commissioner Goldstein stated that Taylor Farm is a City of Norwalk Park, not a TTD park, and the funds that are donated to the Tree Alliance are from TTD's District Budget. The City of Norwalk is already granting funds from the Capital Budget for tree planting. She asked if there was any place within 06855 which is not a City of Norwalk park. Discussion took place about the areas near Taylor Farm which are not City-owned parks that would be good for canopy tree planting.

The Tree Alliance will review their plan for future plantings.

KOWALSKI INFORMATION

Mr. Bill Kowalski, Consumer Advocate employed by the State, placed a phone call to Commission Goldstein.

Commissioner Goldstein stated for the record that she wanted the agenda to read as an Update to the Full Commission by the CMEEC Appointees and any discussion the Commission would like to have. Kevin Barber and Commissioner Brown are the Board members, Peter Johnson is the Ratepayer Representative, who is also a CMEEC Board member, and Commissioner Goldstein is an alternate.

During a recent CMEEC Board meeting, the newly appointed Consumer Advocate, in response to the new law that was passed, was in attendance and gave a presentation. Commissioner Goldstein just wanted to be sure that the full Commission was able to review Mr. Kowalski's presentation, and that it also appears on TTD's website for any ratepayer to review.

FINAL

Commissioner Goldstein was not comfortable speaking with Mr. Kowalski at this time until the full Commission can formalize an approach to communicate with him. One thought would be to assign Mr. Barber, who is already a CMEEC Board member, to be the voice for TTD.

Commissioner Goldstein would like to be able to have someone (either a Commissioner or staff) to at least return his phone call to find out what information he might be wanting initially.

Discussion took place on how to handle the situation and what next steps should be taken in the matter. Commissioner Brown is going to speak with Mr. Barber to see which of the two will be the communicant with Mr. Kowalski. Commissioner Brown has started to write a letter which will be sent to Atty. Studer for his comment and feedback prior to sending.

Three actions steps to be taken:

- 1) Figure out who will be the point of contact for TTD.
- 2) Is the Commission in agreement that a letter needs to be written to Mr. Kowalski advising him, similar to the Senator Somers letter?
- 3) Can the Commission request of Mr. Kowalski that he provide TTD with any communication that he may have intended for TTD that may have been addressed to Mayor Rilling since his appointment to the office so TTD can see what is possibly missing?

As for the letter to be written by Atty. Studer, Commissioner Goldstein suggested that Peter Johnson be cc'd on the letter as the CMEEC Ratepayer Representative.

DISTRICT BUDGET AND AGENDA PRESENTATION TO COMMISSION

Mr. Scofield presented the District Budget to the Commission and informed them that Mr. Allred would walk the Commission through the line items. Any changes that need to be made can be done on the spot, so the Commission will be able to see the effect of those changes.

Discussion took place around the capital monies set aside for both the Firehouse and the Library. Mr. Scofield will be meeting with Capt. Hines to discuss the Firehouse's current capital funds in the amount of \$17,840 to see if they will be using the funds before the end of the fiscal year. Capt. Hines will be informed that if the funds are not used by the end of the fiscal year, the funds will be lost.

Further discussion took place around the capital items for the Library. The \$40,000 for the current fiscal year have been earmarked for the replacement of the roof. There was then further discussion regarding the possible installation of solar shingles. Further discussion took place as to what is included in the \$25,000 for the library capital projects.

The Commission added a Stipend for the CMEEC Ratepayer Member Representative in the amount of \$1,800. The budget was updated to reflect this as well as a corresponding update to the payroll figure.

FINAL

The District Budget was revised accordingly.

**** COMMISSIONER BROWN MOVED TO TABLE THE ITEMS MINUTES OF MEETING FOR JANUARY 8, 2018 AND ANNUAL MEETING PROCEDURES TO FEBRUARY 12, 2018.**

**** COMMISSIONER GOLDSTEIN SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** COMMISSIONER BROWN MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** COMMISSIONER GOLDSTEIN SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 10:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Tenney
Executive Assistant
Third Taxing District