

memo

To: Members of the Board of Finance and Board of Representatives Fiscal Committee

From: Fox, Bridget, Chief of Staff to Mayor Simmons

CC: Valerie Rosensen, Legislative Officer, BOR
Tracey Donoghue, Clerk, Board of Finance

Date: 3/8/22

Re: Summary of Mayor's Office, Economic Development, Youth Services Bureau & Citizens Services FY 22/23 Budgets

The following information will provide context to my presentation on March 9th to the joint Board of Finance and Board of Representatives Budget Meeting:

Mayor's Office

Changes from previous year:

- Three full time special assistants focused on the following functions:
 - Policy and Legislative Affairs
 - Communications
 - Press
- Special Assistants moved from permanent part time positions to full time positions
- *Rationale:* We charged all special assistants to the Mayor's Office budget this year. The Mayor has identified issue areas and capital projects that require legislative action and monitoring. It is critical that the Mayor's team include staff with the responsibility of monitoring what happens in Hartford in order to ensure that the city is well positioned for success and does not forgo funding and policy opportunities. City Government needs to be proactive, responsive and provide all city stakeholders with timely and useful information. The Mayor is committed to improving overall communications with internal (city departments, boards and commissions) and external stakeholders (residents, businesses and nonprofits). The Mayor recognizes how critical it is to consistently engage with the Board of Reps, Board of Finance and Board of Education. To achieve this goal, the Mayor has identified key positions that will focus on internal and external audiences that require different communications approaches.

Economic Development

Changes from previous year:

- One full time Special Assistant focused on Economic Development.
- *Rationale:* The Simmons administration is committed to growing Stamford's economy, which requires a focus on strategically positioning Stamford as a global innovation hub, a magnet for businesses, and a strong workforce. Furthermore, the Mayor will concentrate efforts to retain existing businesses and attract new employers to the City. In a post-pandemic business environment we must make a concerted effort to be work closely with the state and region on business attraction and retention. Mayor Simmons has launched a Business Advisory Council, including a CEO Roundtable, and a Small business and Entrepreneurship Roundtable aimed to gain input and maintain open communications between the city and our large, mid-sized and small businesses. The Special Assistant for Economic Development will work closely with the Director of Economic Development and the Mayor to support and drive these initiatives forward, acknowledging that Stamford is the fastest growing city in the state.

Youth Services Bureau

Changes from previous years:

- No change in headcount; increase in salaries due to executed contracts.
- No change in programs offered; increase of 2% to account for natural increased costs.

Citizens Services

Changes from previous years:

- This function has moved from Operations to IT and now to the Mayor's Office.
- Replaced Customer Service Representative with Customer Service Specialist.
- One full time Special Assistant to the Mayor for Community Engagement and Partnership responsible for oversight and functions of the department.
- *Rationale:* Mayor Simmons' priorities include creating a more responsive government. This will be achieved through a focus on FIX IT Stamford and educating the community about how to use this tool more effectively. The team will also work closely with city departments to ensure efficiency and responsiveness to residents. City departments have seen better performance outcomes by using the system in the last six months. It is a way that the City can hold itself accountable to responding to citizens' requests and needs.

The Special Assistant to the Mayor for Community Partnership and Engagement will be the point of contact for community nonprofit and civic organizations for the City and will assist the Mayor's Office in engaging constituents. She is responsible for facilitating opportunities for the Mayor to connect with citizens through regular Citizen Services Hubs and organizing around critical community issues.