



Fiscal Committee - Board of Representatives

Sean Boeger, Co-Chair

Lindsey Miller, Co-Chair

Committee Report

Date: Monday, March 27, 2023
Time: 6:30 p.m.
Place: *This meeting was held in the Democratic Caucus Room, 888 Washington Blvd, Stamford, CT, 4th Floor and remotely.*

The Fiscal Committee met as indicated above. In attendance in person were Co-Chairs Boeger and Miller and Committee Member Reps. Figueroa, and Shaw. In attendance remotely were Committee Member Reps. Coleman, Garst, Morson, Pierre-Louis, and Tomas. Also present in person were Re. Sherwood, Aaron Miller, Special Assistant to the Mayor, and Frank Petise, Transportation, Traffic, and Parking Bureau Chief; and present remotely were Reps. Adams, de la Cruz, Matheny, Summerville, and Walston; Mayor Simmons; Richard Freedman, Board of Finance Chair; Tom Cassone, Corporation Counsel; Anita Carpenter, Grants Officer; Jody Bishop-Pullan, Director of Health; Sandra Dennies, Director of Administration; Greg Stackpole, Tax Assessor; Cindy Grafstein, Ryan Fealey, and Kevin McCarthy, Stamford Public Schools; and Lynne Colatrella, Arts & Culture Commission.

Co-Chair Boeger called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m.

Item No.	Description	Committee Action
	A motion to suspend the rules to take up Item Nos. 8 and 9 first was made, seconded, and approved by unanimous voice vote. (Reps. Boeger, Miller, Coleman, Figueroa, Garst, Pierre-Louis, Shaw, and Tomas in favor).	
8. F31.190	ORDINANCE for publication; Amending Section 180-2 of the Code of Ordinances , Personal Property Tax District, to Provide for a Separate Mill Rate for Personal Property. 03/07/23 – Submitted by Mayor Simmons	Approved 8-0-0

Mr. Freedman explained that the personal property mill rate has been tied to the District “A” real property mill rate, so that if the District A mill rate goes up, the personal property mill rate will also increase, which in a typical year would be an increase of about 2 ½%. This year, the mill rate for District “A” will probably be decreasing approximately 16%, resulting in a windfall to personal property tax owners which would cost the City about \$6 million in tax revenue, which cannot then be used to offset the impact of the increase on real property values. The motor vehicle tax rate is already decoupled and has been held flat for many years.

Mayor Simmons stated that her office supports this proposed ordinance given the current high inflation rate and high cost of living in order to mitigate the impact of the increase on residential real estate. By separating out the personal property mill rate and holding it flat, the City will still be able to capture that revenue and not shift the burden further on to residents.

A motion to approve Item No. 8 was made, seconded, and approved by unanimous voice vote. (Reps. Boeger, Miller, Coleman, Figueroa, Garst, Pierre-Louis, Shaw, and Tomas in favor)

9. [F31.199](#) RESOLUTION; Implementing a Two Year Phase-In **Approved 8-0-0**
of the Stamford Property Revaluation.
03/08/23 – Submitted by Rep. Miller

Mayor Simmons stated that the goal of this ordinance is to mitigate the impact of the residents of the revaluation. The two-year phase in was selected because the longer phase-in scenarios showed diminishing returns. The two-year phase in will help the majority of people and mitigate their tax hike in the first year and compresses the extremes of the revaluation. It will help individuals whose percent increase went up above 10%.

Mr. Freedman explained that the BOF had differing opinions about this, ranging from no phase in to a four year phase in. Going from one year to two years mitigates the impact pretty substantially. The mitigation after 3 or 4 years becomes marginal. Mr. Freeman reviewed the attached [impact assessment](#) prepared by Mr. Stackpole. The worst impacts are above 10%, which is about 6900 households. With the two-year phase in, there is a significant drop to about 2700 households, primarily on single family homes.

The increase in home value does not mean an equivalent increase in taxes. This phase-in does not eliminate any tax payments, but mitigates the impact of the revaluation. The people who will be paying more will primarily be single family homeowners. There are 19,000 of them, paying an average of \$12,000. Owners of 2 family homes had a smaller increase than owners of 3 and 4 family homes. The average single family homeowner will probably see an increase of about 6½%.

A motion to approve Item No. 9 was made, seconded, and approved by unanimous voice vote. (Reps. Boeger, Miller, Coleman, Figueroa, Garst, Pierre-Louis, Shaw, and Tomas in favor)

1. [F31.192](#) **Failed 0-8-1**
\$950,000.00 ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION (Grants Budget);
Grant from the DECD for Brownfield Remediation
to Remediate Impacted Soil and Groundwater at
the Blickenderfer Building, 650 Atlantic Street.
[Total Project Cost is Estimated at \$10,300,000;
\$9,350,000 is committed by Henry Street LLC to
complete the construction phase] (Source of
Funds: 100% Grant Funded).
02/24/23 – Submitted by Mayor Simmons
03/09/23 – Approved by Board of Finance 5-0-0

A motion to approve Item No. 1 was made and seconded.

Ms. Carpenter explained that this is a DECD funded project to provide brownfields remediation at the Blickenderfer Building, primarily looking as soil excavation, and ground source contamination remediation. The intent is to develop the building into workforce mixed income housing and transit oriented development. It is the reuse of a historic property to include residential and commercial retail plans for this site. The final plans have not been approved.

Committee members expressed concerns regarding \$950,000 going to a for profit entity to remediate a private property. It was noted that this money could not be used for other purposes. This particular grant is only for a public private partnership. In this instance, the City is the conduit for the funds to Henry Street LLC. Ms. Carpenter was not aware of what the developer's plans would be if the grant did not get approved.

A motion to recommit Item No. 1 to Steering was made, seconded, and failed by a vote of 3-6-0 (Reps. Miller, Coleman and Shaw in favor; Reps. Boeger, Figueroa, Garst, Morson, Pierre-Louis, and Tomas opposed).

A motion to table Item No. 1 until after the budget presentations was made, seconded and approved by unanimous voice vote. (Reps. Boeger, Miller, Coleman, Figueroa, Garst, Morson, Pierre-Louis, Shaw, and Tomas in favor)

The Committee began budget presentations began at 7:30 p.m.

The committee resumed the meeting at 10:56 p.m.

A motion to take up Item No. 1 was made, seconded and approved by unanimous voice vote. (Reps. Boeger, Miller, Coleman, Figueroa, Garst, Morson, Pierre-Louis, Shaw, and Tomas in favor)

Ms. Carpenter stated that she does not know how many housing units are planned for the development. The State requires that 12% of the units be designated for affordable housing. This is a grant from DECD of \$950,000 for remediation, with the funds for the construction being paid by BLT.

The motion to approve Item No. 1 failed by a vote of 0-8-1 (Reps. Boeger, Miller, Figueroa, Garst, Morson, Pierre-Louis, Shaw, and Tomas opposed; Rep. Coleman abstaining)

2. [F31.193](#) GRANTS RESOLUTION; Authorizing the Mayor to enter into an agreement with CT Dept. of Economic and Community Development for Brownfield Remediation at the Blickenderfer Building. **Failed 0-8-1**
02/24/23 – Submitted by Mayor Simmons

A motion to approve Item No. 2 was made, seconded and failed by a vote of 0-8-1 (Reps. Boeger, Miller, Figueroa, Garst, Morson, Pierre-Louis, Shaw, and Tomas opposed; Rep. Coleman abstaining)

3. [F31.194](#) ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION (Grants Budget); **Approved 9-0-0**
\$25,000.00 Grant from the National Endowment for the Arts to the Stamford Arts Commission to Procure an Artist to Design and Paint a mural at the State Parking Garage by the Transit Center; Grant Funds are a 1:1 match, with \$25,000 in Matching Funds Coming from In-Kind Contributions and Cash Match in the City's Operating Budget for the Program Manager's Time and Effort on the Project. (Source of Funds: 100% Grant Funded).
02/24/23 – Submitted by Mayor Simmons
03/09/23 – Approved by Board of Finance 5-0-0

Ms. Carpenter explained that this grant requires no City funds. Aaron Miller's salary will be part of the cash match and the members of the Arts Commission will be making in kind contributions. There will be no additional taxpayer funds.

A motion to approve Item No. 3 was made, seconded and approved by unanimous voice vote Reps. Boeger, Miller, Coleman, Figueroa, Garst, Morson, Pierre-Louis, Shaw, and Tomas in favor).

4. [F31.195](#) **ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION (Grants Budget);** **Approved 9-0-0**
\$715,448.00 Department of Public Health; Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity (ELC) Enhancing Detection Grant from the State Department of Public Health to support ongoing Coronavirus Response and Relief activities; Funds are Budgeted for Salaries, Fringe Benefits, Subaward Contracts for Outreach, Translation and Interpreter Services, and Data Collection and Analysis, Printing, and Program Supplies. This award is from 3/1/22 thru 2/29/24. (Source of Funds: 100% Grant Funded).
02/24/23 – Submitted by Mayor Simmons
03/09/23 – Approved by Board of Finance 5-0-0

Ms. Bishop-Pullan explained that the City was supposed to get this grant last March. While things look different now, it is necessary to keep some level of response. There is flexibility to use the funds for other public health outbreaks.

A motion to approve Item No. 4 was made, seconded and approved by unanimous voice vote Reps. Boeger, Miller, Coleman, Figueroa, Garst, Morson, Pierre-Louis, Shaw, and Tomas in favor).

5. [F31.197](#) **ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION Capital Budget);** **Approved 9-0-0**
\$200,000.00 Citywide Signals; Private Contribution from the Development at 441 Canal Street to make Upgrades to the Traffic Signal Infrastructure at Canal Street, including Pedestrian and Safety Upgrades and Signal Timing Upgrades on the Corridor.
02/24/23 – Submitted by Mayor Simmons
03/07/23 – Approved by Planning Board
03/09/23 – Approved by Board of Finance 5-0-0

Mr. Petise explained that this is a private contribution and no City funds are being used.

A motion to approve Item No. 5 was made, seconded and approved by unanimous voice vote Reps. Boeger, Miller, Coleman, Figueroa, Garst, Morson, Pierre-Louis, Shaw, and Tomas in favor).

6. [F31.198](#) **ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION (Capital Budget);** **Approved 9-0-0**
\$108,000.00 Roadway Design and Reconstruction; \$100,000 Private Contribution from the Development at 441 Canal Street to make Upgrades to make Pedestrian Safety and ADA Upgrades and Signal Timing Upgrades on the Corridor; \$8,000 Private Contribution from the Development at the Corner of Stillwater and Liberty Street to Upgrade the ADA Curb Ramps and Thermoplastic Crosswalk at the Intersection.
02/24/23 – Submitted by Mayor Simmons
03/07/23 – Approved by Planning Board
03/09/23 – Approved by Board of Finance 5-0-0

Mr. Petise explained that this is a private contribution and no City funds are being used.

A motion to approve Item No. 5 was made, seconded and approved by unanimous voice vote Reps. Boeger, Miller, Coleman, Figueroa, Garst, Morson, Pierre-Louis, Shaw, and Tomas in favor).

7. [F31.172](#) ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION (Capital Budget); **Approved 8-0-1**
\$300,000.00 001313; District Wide Window AC Unit Project;
Window AC Unit Installations District Wide at
Schools that do not have Building Wide AC
Systems. Total Project Cost is Estimated at
\$300,000 (\$150,000 Split Between City and BOE
Surplus) and is Estimated to Provide 200 Window
AC Units Installed. (Source of Funds: Capital Non-
Recurring).
01/04/23 – Submitted by Mayor Simmons
01/10/23 – Approved by [Planning Board](#)
01/19/23 – Held by Board of Finance
01/30/23 – Held by Committee 11-0-0
02/09/23 – Held by Board of Finance
02/13/23 – Held at Steering
03/09/23 – Approved by Board of Finance 5-0-0

Mr. McCarthy explained that these units are being purchased for 10 schools which do not have building-wide HVAC. This is a two phased approach. 200 units will be purchased this year and an additional 148 units will be purchased next year.

A motion to approve Item No. 5 was made, seconded and approved by unanimous voice vote Reps. Boeger, Miller, Coleman, Figueroa, Garst, Morson, Pierre-Louis, and Tomas in favor; Rep. Shaw abstaining).

Co-Chair Boeger adjourned the meeting at 11:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Sean Boeger, Co-Chair

This meeting is on video ([Pt.1](#) & [Pt.2](#))