

# 29<sup>TH</sup> BOARD OF REPRESENTATIVES CITY OF STAMFORD

President  
RANDALL M. SKIGEN

Clerk of the Board  
ANNIE M. SUMMERVILLE

Majority Leader  
ELAINE MITCHELL

Minority Leader  
MARY L. FEDELI

## MINUTES

President Skigen called the meeting to order at 8:00 p.m. and read the call of the meeting:

I, Randall M. Skigen, President of the 29<sup>th</sup> Board of Representatives of the City of Stamford, Connecticut, and pursuant to Section C2-10-4 of the Stamford Charter, hereby call a Special Meeting of said Board of Representatives at the following time and place:

Tuesday, May 2, 2017

8:00 p.m.

Legislative Chambers, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Government Center  
888 Washington Boulevard  
Stamford, CT 06904-2152

to consider and act upon the following:

1. Operating (including Board of Education budget), Capital, E.G. Brennan Golf Course Fund, Grant Funded Programs Fund, Police Extra Duty Fund, Risk Management Fund, Marina Fund, WPCA Fund, Parking Fund, Harbor Management Commission Fund, Debt Service Fund, and Active Medical Fund Budgets for the fiscal year 2017/2018, as transmitted by the Board of Finance on April 20, 2017, pursuant to provisions of Section C8-30-7 of the Stamford Charter; and RESOLUTIONS associated therewith.

## AGENDA

<sup>1</sup>INVOCATION: Led by Rev. Mark Lingle.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG: Led by President Randall M. Skigen

<sup>2</sup>ROLL CALL: Conducted by Clerk of the Board Annie M. Summerville. There were 36 members present and 4 absent or excused (Reps. Cerasoli, Coleman, Coppola, Custis, Day, de la Cruz, DePina, Di Costanzo, Fedeli, Figueroa, Franzetti, Giordano, Giraldo, Heaphy, Hoch, Jacobson, Kolenberg, Liebson, Mahoney, McMullen, Miller, Mitchell, Moore, Nabel, Okun, Patterson, Pratt,

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Quinones, Ryan, Savage, Silver, Skigen, Summerville, Wallace, Watkins and Zelinsky present; Reps. Adams, Caterbone, DeLuca and McGarry absent or excused). [See Vote Record 1977](#).

<sup>3</sup>COMMITTEE/BUDGET PRESENTATION: Monica Di Costanzo, Chair, Fiscal Committee

Chair Di Costanzo reviewed the Fiscal Committee's [recommendations](#) on the City's proposed budgets.

**Operating Budget** (*Rep. DePina left the floor during the discussion of the Operating Budget*).

Chair Di Costanzo reported that the Fiscal Committee recommended a \$150,000 citywide cut to the City Operating Budget, with no cuts to outside agencies, which was approved by the Committee 10-0-0, which cut was moved and seconded.

<sup>4</sup>Rep. Cerasoli made a motion to amend the amount of the cut to \$4,000,000, which motion was seconded.

Rep. Cerasoli read the following statement into the record:

There was some back and forth in our caucus on how best to determine the true 'change in expenses' in this proposed budget compared to last year's budget. There are many moving parts, and there are budgetary rules and guidelines that, I believe, cloud what is really going on. I would like to describe what we finally arrived at.

The first thing to point out is that we had three union contract settlements this year. Budget years from 2011-2016 were impacted with additional expenses allocated for each of those years. However, there are increased expenses for the 2011-2015 years that are being allocated to the 16/17 year. While there may be budgetary reasons to do it this way, it makes no sense from the perspective of understanding how expenses are actually moving. These prior year expense increases should be taken out of the current year, 16/17.

The second adjustment is to add Contingency Reserves to 16/17 and 17/18, as these amounts will be rolled into the Operating Expenses over the course of the year.

So...for 16/17, the Projected Operating Expenses are \$223.8 million, take out the prior year expenses shown in the current year, which OPM had confirmed with a member of my caucus stands at \$7.9 million (it is tied to the Use of Fund Balance shown on the summary page), and add in the Year End Contingency Reserve of \$2.7 million. This results in an adjusted figure of \$218.6 million.

For 17/18, the proposed is \$226.4 million. Add in the Contingency Reserve of \$3.4 million, and you get \$229.7 million. Dividing 17/18 by 16/17, or \$229.7 million by \$218.6 million results in an increase of 5.1%. This is how we determined the change in

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expenses once you unwind the budgetary rules and guidelines in order to get a clearer idea as to how expenses are changing.

Anyone who has looked at these budgets over the years knows this is not the biggest increase we've ever seen, but there a couple of things I would like you to consider.

First, there is a large discrepancy between the BOE budget and the City budget increases. The BOE side is up 1.6% (this is what you get when you consider the projected 16/17 budget, which is consistent with how we are looking at the city side. There was an additional adjustment to OPEB on the BOE budget for 16/17 that is not reflected in the budget book). The city side is up the 5.1% discussed earlier. So, you've got 1.6% versus 5.1%, with the city increase more than three times the size of the BOE increase, for budgets that are roughly the same size.

And it's not just benefits that are driving the city side up – although retirement benefits are certainly up substantially, up 15.7% over last year's budget, and we need to figure out how to reign in those costs. But employee benefits increased by a much more reasonable amount, and payments to insurance funds and debt service were essentially flat.

But the full time salary in the city budget is up 9.0%, budget over budget. Even after adjusting 16/17 for the union contract settlements, even after that, the salary line is up 5.1%. Do you know how much the teachers' salary line is up in the BOE budget? 2.2% - and that's before the Board of Finance cuts so it could be scaled back further. 5.1% versus 2.2% - it almost seems like one side of the budget is subsidizing the other side.

And other items in the city budget – Proposed expenditures for part time employees is up 11%, Permanent part time is up 5%, Seasonal is up 12%, and overtime is up 26%, budget over budget (all the percentages just described are proposed budget over approved budget). I could go on and on, but I think you get the point.

And that leads to my second consideration. If we can find a way to bring down expenses in the Operating Budget, shouldn't we by trying to do so? Don't we owe that to the taxpayers?

Rep. Watkins read the following statement into the record:

As described, the FY 17/18 Proposed Budget represents a 5.1% increase over the prior year. I understand those who say the Budget is heavily freighted by non-discretionary items like wage contract terms. I understand those who say we need to provide further services, not less. I understand that what one person may view as an easy target for cost reduction, another will see as a vital function.

But I also understand that it is simply not possible for us to believe that we can go forward with underlying 5+% annual cost increases. No one has suggested that this year's Budget proposal is an aberration embodying cost increases that somehow will be ameliorated in the future. No one has described how our embedded wage cost escalations will somehow be less burdensome in the future than they are now. No one has suggested that the fiscal issues existing at State level will have less effect on us in the future. These cost pressures are not like fine wine, they don't get better with time.

Thus I believe we need to send clear messages to our citizens.

- A message that we understand their increasingly strident view that the Property tax escalations are on an unsustainable trajectory.
- A message that we understand that we are going to have to accelerate our efforts to solve the structural budget cost elements that the Mayor has frequently acknowledged are a major impediment.
- A message that we are going to have to do more with less, as difficult as that path may seem.

It was recently suggested at the Fiscal committee that a small reduction to the Proposed Budget would be a symbolic statement we should be making. In my view, our constituents are demanding, and our fiscal reality is requiring, far more than a symbolic gesture. Please join me in a substantive first step on what I accept, and we all know, is going to be a really tough journey.

Rep. Mahoney spoke in support of the amendment.

Rep. McMullen read the following into the record:

I was disappointed in the Mayor's presentation of the budget when he openly talked about the fat he left in place in the budget. I am tired of playing this game of Treasure Island with David Martin. He is not Captain Flint. I personally don't have the time, the patience, or the inclination of a Jim Hawkins. Our colleagues on the Board of Finance and our peers here on the Board of Reps shouldn't be expected to search for treasures David Martin's left hidden in this budget.

I am disappointed the Board of Finance, specifically the democrats on that board, failed to reel their leader in by making any kind of meaningful cuts to this budget. I am afraid that our board is heading to the same place with the proposed symbolic budget cut of \$150,000. I would describe that in my view, but I don't think I can do it in polite company. I guess I shouldn't be surprised. David probably forgot to give the Democrats the treasure map to where he hid the money.

It is unconscionable that in response the Mayor is being rewarded for his behavior with 3x the money that we have been allowed to approve for the Board of Ed. I think it is unconscionable and I hope everybody will support the \$4M cut to the Mayor's city budget."

Rep. Silver spoke in opposition to the amendment.

The motion failed by a vote of 12-23-0. (Reps. Cerasoli, Coppola, Day, Fedeli, Franzetti, Hoch, Kolenberg, Mahoney, McMullen, Okun, Ryan and Watkins in favor; Reps. Coleman, Custis, de la Cruz, Di Costanzo, Figueroa, Giordano, Giraldo, Heaphy, Jacobson, Liebson, Miller, Mitchell, Moore, Nabel, Patterson, Pratt, Quinones, Savage, Silver, Skigen, Summerville, Wallace and Zelinsky opposed). [See Vote Record 1978](#).

The original motion to approve a \$150,000 citywide cut to the City Operating Budget, with no cuts to outside agencies was approved by a vote of 23-11-1 (Reps. Coleman, Custis, de la

Cruz, Di Costanzo, Figueroa, Giordano, Giraldo, Heaphy, Jacobson, Liebson, Miller, Mitchell, Moore, Nabel, Patterson, Pratt, Quinones, Savage, Silver, Skigen, Summerville, Wallace and Zelinsky in favor; Reps. Cerasoli, Coppola, Day, Fedeli, Franzetti, Hoch, Kolenberg, Mahoney, Okun, Ryan and Watkins opposed; Rep. McMullen abstaining). [See Vote Record 1979](#).

#### **5Board of Education Budget**

Char DiCostanzo reported that the Fiscal Committee made no reductions to the City's Board of Education Budget. The Fiscal Committee recommended approving the Board of Education budget in the amount of \$269,736,292 was approve by the Committee 9-0-1.

A motion to approve the Board of Education Budget in the amount of \$269,736,292 was made, seconded and approved by a vote of 27-0-8 (Reps. Coleman, Coppola, Custis, de la Cruz, DePina, Di Costanzo, Fedeli, Franzetti, Giordano, Giraldo, Heaphy, Jacobson, Liebson, Miller, Mitchell, Moore, Nabel, Okun, Patterson, Pratt, Quinones, Savage, Silver, Skigen, Summerville, Wallace and Zelinsky in favor; Reps. Cerasoli, Day, Hoch, Kolenberg, Mahoney, McMullen, Ryan and Watkins abstaining). [See Vote Record 1980](#).

#### **6Capital Budget**

Char DiCostanzo reported that the Fiscal Committee made no cuts the City's Capital Budget. The Fiscal Committee recommended approving the Capital budget in the amount of \$26,636,529 by a vote of 10-0-0.

A motion to approve the Capital Budget in the amount of \$26,636,529 was made, seconded and approved by a vote of 35-1-0 (Reps. Cerasoli, Coleman, Coppola, Custis, Day, de la Cruz, DePina, Di Costanzo, Fedeli, Figueroa, Giordano, Giraldo, Heaphy, Hoch, Jacobson, Kolenberg, Liebson, Mahoney, McMullen, Miller, Mitchell, Moore, Nabel, Okun, Patterson, Pratt, Quinones, Ryan, Savage, Silver, Skigen, Summerville, Wallace, Watkins and Zelinsky in favor; Rep. Franzetti opposed). [See Vote Record 1981](#).

#### **7Special Funds Budgets**

Char DiCostanzo reported that the Fiscal Committee made no cuts to the E.G. Brennan Golf Course Fund Budget. A motion to approve the E.G. Brennan Golf Course Fund Budget in the amount of \$1,540,017 was made, seconded and approved by unanimous voice vote.

Char DiCostanzo reported that the Fiscal Committee made no cuts to the Grant Funded Programs Fund Budget. A motion to approve the Grant Funded Programs Fund Budget in the amount of \$10,193,087 was made, seconded and approved by unanimous voice vote.

Char DiCostanzo reported that the Fiscal Committee made no cuts to the Police Extra Duty Fund Budget. A motion to approve the Police Extra Duty Fund Budget in the amount of \$9,003,000 was made, seconded and approved by unanimous voice vote (*Reps. Figueroa, Franzetti and McMullen abstaining*).

Char DiCostanzo reported that the Fiscal Committee made no cuts to the Risk Management Fund Budget. A motion to approve the Risk Management Fund Budget in the amount of \$14,223,430 was made, seconded and approved by unanimous voice vote.

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Char DiCostanzo reported that the Fiscal Committee made no cuts to the Marina Fund Budget. A motion to approve the Marina Fund Budget in the amount of \$364,166 was made, seconded and approved by unanimous voice vote.

Char DiCostanzo reported that the Fiscal Committee made no cuts to the WPCA Fund Budget. A motion to approve the WPCA Fund Budget in the amount of \$26,524,012 was made, seconded and approved by unanimous voice vote.

Char DiCostanzo reported that the Fiscal Committee made no cuts to the Parking Fund Budget. A motion to approve the Parking Fund Budget in the amount of \$6,710,000 was made, seconded and approved by unanimous voice vote.

Char DiCostanzo reported that the Fiscal Committee made no cuts to the Harbor Management Commission Fund Budget. A motion to approve the Harbor Management Commission Fund Budget in the amount of \$34,421 was made, seconded and approved by unanimous voice vote. *(Rep. Ryan abstaining)*

Char DiCostanzo reported that the Fiscal Committee made no cuts to the Debt Service Fund Budget. A motion to approve the Debt Service Fund Budget in the amount of \$57,168,347 was made, seconded and approved by unanimous voice vote. *(Rep. Figueroa abstaining)*

Char DiCostanzo reported that the Fiscal Committee made no cuts to the Active Medical Fund Budget. A motion to approve the Active Medical Fund Budget in the amount of \$40,433,265 was made, seconded and approved by unanimous voice vote. *(Rep. Hoch abstaining)*

#### **<sup>8</sup>Operating Budget**

A motion to approve Operating Budget, including General Fund Support to the Board of Education Budget, in amount of \$554,653,746 was made, seconded and approved by a vote of 24-12-0 (Reps. Coleman, Custis, de la Cruz, DePina, Di Costanzo, Figueroa, Giordano, Giraldo, Heaphy, Jacobson, Liebson, Miller, Mitchell, Moore, Nabel, Patterson, Pratt, Quinones, Savage, Silver, Skigen, Summerville, Wallace and Zelinsky in favor; Reps. Cerasoli, Coppola, Day, Fedeli, Franzetti, Hoch, Kolenberg, Mahoney, McMullen, Okun, Ryan and Watkins opposed; Rep. abstaining). [See Vote Record 1982](#).

#### **<sup>9</sup>Budget Resolutions**

A motion to approve the [Operating Budget Resolution](#), in the amount of \$554,653,746 was made, seconded and approved by a vote of 23-12-0 (Reps. Coleman, Custis, de la Cruz, Di Costanzo, Figueroa, Giordano, Giraldo, Heaphy, Jacobson, Liebson, Miller, Mitchell, Moore, Nabel, Patterson, Pratt, Quinones, Savage, Silver, Skigen, Summerville, Wallace and Zelinsky in favor; Reps. Cerasoli, Coppola, Day, Fedeli, Franzetti, Hoch, Kolenberg, Mahoney, McMullen, Okun, Ryan and Watkins opposed; Rep. DePina abstaining). [See Vote Record 1983](#). *(Rep. DePina left the floor during the discussion of this item)*

Chair Di Costanzo noted that the amount of General Obligation Bonds to be authorized in Section 1 of the proposed Capital Budget Resolution failed to include the amounts for the EG Brennan Fund and the Parking Fund for a total of \$750,000. A motion to amend the amount of General Obligation Bonds to be authorized in Section 1 of the proposed Capital Budget Resolution from \$18,960,318 to \$19,710,318 was made, seconded and approved by a vote of 33-2-1 (Reps. Cerasoli, Coleman, Coppola, Custis, Day, de la Cruz, DePina, Di Costanzo, Fedeli, Figueroa, Giordano, Giraldo, Heaphy, Hoch, Jacobson, Kolenberg, Liebson, Mahoney,

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Miller, Mitchell, Moore, Nabel, Patterson, Pratt, Quinones, Ryan, Savage, Silver, Skigen, Summerville, Wallace, Watkins and Zelinsky in favor; Reps. Franzetti and McMullen opposed; Rep. Okun abstaining). [See Vote Record 1984](#).

A motion to approve the [Capital Budget Resolution](#) in the amount of \$26,636,529, including an authorization for the issuance of general obligation bonds in the amount of \$19,710,318, was made, seconded and approved by a vote of 34-1-1 (Reps. Cerasoli, Coleman, Coppola, Custis, Day, de la Cruz, DePina, Di Costanzo, Fedeli, Figueroa, Giordano, Giraldo, Heaphy, Hoch, Jacobson, Kolenberg, Liebson, Mahoney, Miller, Mitchell, Moore, Nabel, Okun, Patterson, Pratt, Quinones, Ryan, Savage, Silver, Skigen, Summerville, Wallace, Watkins and Zelinsky in favor; Rep. Franzetti opposed; Rep. McMullen abstaining). [See Vote Record 1985](#).

A motion to approve the [Board of Education Budget Resolution](#) in the amount of \$269,736,292 was made, seconded and approved by a vote of 29-0-7 (Reps. Coleman, Coppola, Custis, Day, de la Cruz, DePina, Di Costanzo, Fedeli, Figueroa, Franzetti, Giordano, Giraldo, Heaphy, Jacobson, Liebson, Miller, Mitchell, Moore, Nabel, Okun, Patterson, Pratt, Quinones, Savage, Silver, Skigen, Summerville, Wallace and Zelinsky in favor; Reps. Cerasoli, Hoch, Kolenberg, Mahoney, McMullen, Ryan and Watkins abstaining). [See Vote Record 1986](#).

A motion was made to approve the [Special Funds Budget Resolution](#) in the amounts of:

**\$1,540,017** – E.G. Brennan Golf Course Fund  
**\$10,193,087** – Grant Funded Programs Fund  
**\$9,003,000** – Police Extra Duty Fund  
**\$14,223,430** – Risk Management Fund  
**\$364,166** – Marina Fund  
**\$26,524,012** – WPCA Fund  
**\$6,710,000** – Parking Fund  
**\$34,421** – Harbor Management Commission Fund  
**\$57,168,347** – Debt Service Fund  
**\$40,433,265** – Active Medical Fund

Said motion was seconded and approved by a vote of 33-0-3. (Reps. Cerasoli, Coleman, Coppola, Custis, Day, de la Cruz, DePina, Di Costanzo, Fedeli, Figueroa, Giordano, Giraldo, Heaphy, Hoch, Jacobson, Kolenberg, Liebson, Mahoney, McMullen, Miller, Mitchell, Moore, Nabel, Patterson, Pratt, Quinones, Savage, Silver, Skigen, Summerville, Wallace, Watkins and Zelinsky in favor; Reps. Franzetti, Okun and Ryan abstaining). [See Vote Record 1987](#).

**ADJOURNMENT:**

President Skigen adjourned the meeting at 9:01 p.m.

*This meeting is on [video](#).*