

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
MUNICIPAL ACCOUNTABILITY REVIEW BOARD
DRAFT SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Date and Time: Thursday, June 27, 2024, 10:00 AM

Meeting Location: Legislative Office Building
300 Capital Avenue - Hearing Room 1D
Hartford, CT 06106

Meeting materials can be found at
<https://portal.ct.gov/OPM/Marb/Full-Board-Meetings-and-Materials>

Call-In Instructions: Telephone: 1-860-840-2075
Meeting ID: 840 088 824

Members in Attendance: Secretary Jeffrey Beckham, Kevin Alvarez (State Treasurer's-Designee), David Biller, Thomas Hamilton, Stephen Falcigno, Lisa Hammersley, and Susan Weisselberg. TEAMS: Sal Luciano, Mark Waxenberg and Robert White.

Municipal Officials in Attendance: Mayor Dorinda Borer, Michael Gormany, Rick Spreyer, and Michael Terenzio. TEAMS: Julian Freund, Paul Foster, Leigh Ann Rails, David Taylor, Paul Dorsi, Ken Carney, James O'Brien, Matthew Cavallaro, Neil Cavallaro, and Nick Pascale.

Staff in Attendance: Gareth Bye, John Mehr, Simon Jiang, and Lori McLoughlin. TEAMS: Kimberly Kennison, Bill Plummer, and Michael Reis.

OAG Staff in Attendance: James Caley, Assistant Attorney General

- I. Call to Order & Opening Remarks by Secretary Jeffrey Beckham and Kevin Alvarez (State Treasurer's Designee)

The meeting was called to order at 10:03 AM. The Secretary noted that this is a special meeting rescheduled from June 13th. Mr. Alvarez acknowledged that a group of interns from the Treasurer's office were attending the meeting to learn more about the varied responsibilities of the Office of the Treasurer.

- II. Public Comment Period

There was no public comment.

- III. Approval of Minutes

- a. May 16, 2024, Regular Meeting

Secretary Beckham noted two corrections to the minutes on page four, item C. The first was clarifying that it was the General Assembly Budget that enacted the changes to magnet school tuition liability not the Governor's budget and the second was a spelling correction.

Mr. Luciano made a motion to approve as corrected the Regular Meeting Minutes of May 16, 2024, seconded by Mr. Biller. Motion carried.

IV. City of Hartford

a. Review and Discussion: City and BOE Monthly Financial Report: April 2024

Mr. Freund reviewed the City financials stating that as of the end of April total revenues are projected to be just over \$15 million favorable. Expenditures are projected to be just over \$3 million favorable for a projected surplus of around \$18.2 million. This is a change of about \$1 million compared to last month.

On the revenue side very little change with some additional favorability from ongoing permit fee collections being offset by lowering the projection for police private duty revenue. On the expenditure side, looking at total year to date expenditures plus encumbrances at the end of April being 84.9% of budget. Compared to the same period last year of 83.8%. In payroll, recognized another month of vacancy savings. The overtime projections stabilized with slightly higher projections for the part-time and for the seasonal employees. Overall, the payroll projections were reduced just over \$800,000. No changes were made to the benefit projections. The utilities projection was increased by \$200,000 for water expenses and for solid waste tip fees. Overall, net expenditure declined by about \$960,000.

Mr. Foster reviewed the BOE financials noting that spending accelerated in April due to tuition payments and transportation bills being paid earlier in the fiscal year, but at this point in the year, paying close attention to the potential FY24 deficit.

Currently tracking non-certified severance, fringe benefits costs and tuition expenses. Non-certified severance continues to be over budget. Fringe benefits costs are considerably higher than budget with higher healthcare claims being paid during the month along with workers compensation claims significantly above budget. Tuition is running about \$10.4 million higher than FY23. This reflects a 6.5% increase in the number of students heading out of the district. A 10% increase in the average cost per student for special education services. For general education tuition, the average cost per student has gone up 12%. Projecting a tuition deficit in the range of \$14 to \$17 million. A factor used in the FY24 adopted budget was the anticipated use of about \$9 million of fundings from the three Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Grants to cover those eligible expenses to reduce any anticipated deficit in FY24. If you take out that \$9 million, the potential deficit looks like \$5 to \$8 million. We are looking for opportunities and for ways of mitigating this deficit.

Members of the MARB and Mr. Foster discussed many educational topics that included the increase in average per student cost for special education services and does Hartford Public Schools (HPS) have any say in how much it is being charged for out of district tuition. Relating to the end of the year deficit, question about the use of the Non-Lapsing Fund. Mr. Foster said that after using all available funds that support eligible costs to balance as much as possible the FY24 budget, there is the non-lapsing fund. HPS is going to do everything in our power to avoid tapping the fund in FY24 because from the FY25 budget presentation, there are large reductions in the FY25 budget. Even with those large reductions, the FY25 budget anticipates the use of the non-lapsing fund next year. There has been some conversation about covering some of the retiree healthcare costs with the use of funds that from the OPEB Trust to help solve the deficit. There are conversations with the City about other resources that could be used to support FY24 without going to the non-lapsing fund. Mr. Foster should have a better picture of that for the MARB at the next meeting.

V. City of West Haven

a. Mayor's Executive Summary

Mayor Borer began by acknowledging the recent incident in West Haven that made national news about a father trying to drown his children in Long Island Sound. The Mayor wanted to recognize the heroic efforts made by those in Police and Fire Departments, and the dispatchers that were involved with rescue of those in this incident.

The Economic Development Director met with several developers and held a small business forum in June attended by over 100 businesses. The forum included the State, Chamber of Commerce and the Small Business Administration (SBA) to let people know what resources are available. Still looking to fill the Grants Director and the Water Control Pollution Superintendent positions. The City continues working on collecting grant fundings in order to close them out.

b. Tier IV Action Plan Update:

i. Organizational Assessment – Whittlesey

The City of West Haven's Assessment Status Report from Whittlesey was provided to MARB members in the packet for review.

ii. Finance Manager – Protiviti

The City of West Haven's Status Report, prepared by Protiviti, was provided to MARB members in the packet for review. Mayor Borer commented that Protiviti has been helpful with the writing of policies and has been assisting the staff with their experience and knowledge.

c. Presentation: FY2023 Audit

The City of West Haven Annual Financial Report for the year ended June 30, 2023, has been completed and filed with OPM. MARB members should have received a copy of the financial report by email on Tuesday, June 25th. Mayor Borer noted that the auditors, PKF O'Connor Davies LLP, would be making a presentation at the next MARB meeting as they were unable to attend this meeting due to a conflict.

d. Review and Discussion: City and Board of Education (BOE) Monthly Financial Report: April 2024

Mr. Gormany provided an update on the City April Financials. The City has expended 75% of the fiscal year 2023-2024 budget and is estimating around \$4 million as a surplus. On the revenue side, tax collections are at 96.5% and projecting to collect the budgeted amount for the year. The City received 59% excess from the State in the Municipal Revenue Sharing grant. Investment income and building permits are projected above budget. On the expenditure side, there are two areas of concern: overtime and vacancies. The City is expecting to exceed the overtime budget but looking to supplement with the vacancy savings from the aggressive hiring by the City. Also, a slight savings on the debt service account from the City most recent bond issuance in February. The Sewer Operations has 95% of the sewer fees being collected and the Allington Fire Department is estimated to have a \$800,000 surplus.

Mr. Cavallaro provided an update on the April BOE Financials. The BOE is running favorable as compared to last year and expects to be on budget at year end. Excess cost reimbursement for special education tuition is being tracked this fiscal year in a separate grant fund not in the General Fund any longer. After working with the City to determine the large increase in property and liability insurance,

the increase is the result of cost increases and inflation. Meetings are being held with the grant managers to ensure that the allocations are spent in full and by June 30.

e. Review, Discussion, and Possible Action: BOE Operating Budget Transfers FY2024

Mr. Cavallaro provided MARB members with a schedule of FY2024 budget transfers for review. These budget transfers were approved by the Board of Education at its June 3rd meeting

Ms. Weisselberg made a motion to approve the BOE FY2024 Operating Budget Transfers seconded by Mr. Falcigno. The motion passed unanimously.

f. Review, Discussion and Action: Firefighters Hazard Pay – ARPA Funding

Included in the meeting package was a memorandum from Mayor Borer to the MARB to modify the amount of Hazard Pay for West Haven Firefighters. This has been approved by the Union and the Administration. The original Hazard Pay was \$10,000 per firefighter for approximately 100 firefighters at a total cost of \$1,000,000. The revised proposal for Hazard Pay is \$2,500 per firefighter for approximately 100 firefighters at a total cost of \$250,000. The remaining balance of these ARPA funds will be reallocated to be used for firefighter training (\$300,000), for turn out gear (\$300,000) and for community projects (\$150,000).

Mayor Borer reviewed the memorandum sent to the MARB to modify the amount of Hazard Pay for West Haven Firefighters. Wanting to use the \$1 million to support the firefighters and support the operations. MARB members had a lengthy discussion about the positive and negatives of using the ARPA funds for hazard pay for the West Haven firefighters.

Ms. Weisselberg made a motion to approve the Mayor's Use of ARPA Funds for Firefighters Hazard Pay Proposal seconded by Mr. Biller. The motion passed, with Mr. White, Mr. Falcigno and Mr. Waxenberg opposed.

g. Review and Discussion: Fire Service Feasibility Study Master Plan

As part of appropriating ARPA funds to the three fire districts, the West Haven Subcommittee approved that a fire service feasibility study master plan be performed using ARPA funds. The City contracted Emergency Services Consulting International (ESCI) to perform the Study at a cost of \$31,323. ESCI performed the last study in July of 2019.

Mr. Spreyer stated that the contract would be provided promptly to OPM staff. ESCI is in the initial phase of the study. Ms. Weisselberg asked if ESCI will provide interim reports, and at what intervals. Mr. Spreyer said the interim reports would follow the timeline in the ESCI proposal. Mr. White said that a study is needed, and that the consultant be informed that the City is the client of this study. Ms. Kennison reminded the MARB that the Subcommittee had requested the feasibility study or "master plan" to have a clean slate for what West Haven needs are for fire service, including the prospect of building new fire station.

h. Review, Discussion and Actions: Non-Labor Contracts:

- i. Diversity Group Construction – Construction of a detached two bay block garage for Allingtown Fire District

The City went out for bids for the construction of a detached two bay block garage annex for the Allingtown Fire District. Four bids were received. The City is seeking approval to award this bid to Diversity Group Construction LLC, Wallingford, CT for \$597,000. This project is being funded with ARPA funds that have been appropriated to the Allingtown Fire District.

Mr. Spreyer stated that the garage went out to bid this past April with eight contractors attending the mandatory walk-through. Mr. Hamilton asked if this project is within budget. Mr. Spreyer replied yes.

Mr. Alvarez made a motion to approve the contract for construction of a detached two bay block garage for Allingtown Fire District seconded by Ms. Hammersley. The motion passed unanimously.

ii. Air Compressor Engineering – The replacement of the SCBA compressor and fill station at Allingtown Fire Department

In February 2023, the Allington Fire Department went out for bids for the complete replacement of the Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) compressor and fill station. Three bids were received with the bid being awarded to Air Compressor Engineering of Milford, CT on February 22, 2023, for \$58,561. This project is being funded by a Department of Homeland Security - Assistance to Firefighters Grant. Due to a back order, the equipment was not received until May 2024. However, this bid was not submitted to the MARB for approval. The City is submitting this now to the MARB to award the bid to Air Compressor Engineering for \$58,561.

Ms. Weisselberg made a motion to approve the contract for replacement of the SCBA compressor and fill station at Allingtown Fire Department seconded by Mr. Hamilton. The motion passed unanimously.

ii. CDM Smith - Stormwater Infrastructure Assessment and Design:
- Sanford Street Basin Stormwater Study – Project 2
- Lake Street / Colonial Boulevard Area Flooding– Project 3

The City of West Haven issued a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) solicitation for Stormwater Infrastructure - Assessment & Design for three (3) projects. The vendors submitted their qualifications which were reviewed, and vendors were interviewed by the City Engineering Department. CDM of East Hartford, CT was awarded. Project 2: Sanford Street Basin Stormwater Study at a cost of \$609,000; and Project 3: Lake Street/Colonial Boulevard Area Flooding at a cost of \$303,300.

Mr. Spreyer provided an overview. The City is addressing areas that have flooding issues. The Engineer Department deemed CDM the most qualified for these two projects.

Mr. Biller made a motion to approve the contract to CDM for Stormwater Infrastructure Assessment and Design for Sanford Street and Lake Street Projects seconded by Mr. Alvarez. The motion passed unanimously.

iv. SLR International Corp. – Stormwater Infrastructure Assessment and Design:
- Flood Impacts along the Cove River Study – Project 1

The City of West Haven issued a Request for Qualification (RFQ) solicitation for Stormwater Infrastructure - Assessment & Design for three (3) projects. The vendors submitted their qualifications that were reviewed, and the vendors were interviewed by the City Engineering

Department. SLR International Corp of Cheshire, CT was awarded Project 1: Assessing Nature-Based Solutions to Mitigate Flood Impacts along the Cove River Study at a cost of \$506,000.

Mr. Spreyer noted that this was the third project in the Stormwater Infrastructure Assessment and Design RFQ. SLR International worked on the previous Cove River project and is knowledgeable of the Cove River area.

Mr. Falcigno made a motion to approve the contract for Stormwater Infrastructure Assessment and Design - Assessing Nature-Based Solutions to Mitigate Flood Impacts along the Cove River Study seconded by Ms. Weisselberg. The motion passed unanimously.

- v. Westcott and Mapes, Inc. – Design Services for Open Space Passive Recreation on Plainfield Avenue

The City of West Haven is looking to hire Westcott and Mapes, Inc. of New Haven, CT for Design Services for Open Space passive recreation, community gardens, and an urban farm project at 100 Plainfield Avenue at a cost of \$59,400. Westcott and Mapes is a vendor on the South Central Regional Council of Governments (SCRCOG) Vendor List.

Mr. Spreyer noted that this is a City-owned deed restricted property that has been overgrown for a long period of time and this will be a welcome addition to residents of the area. This is for the design phase to develop passive open space that will be funded by the Parks ARPA funds.

Mr. Falcigno made a motion to approve the contract for Design Services for Open Space on Plainfield Avenue seconded by Mr. Biller. The motion passed unanimously.

- vi. Bond Resolution – Dawson Avenue Area - Rehab of Sewer Pipes and Manholes

The City is seeking approval of the Ordinance appropriating \$1,125,000 for the costs of rehabilitation of sewer pipes and manholes related to the Dawson Avenue area and for the issuance of Bonds to meet this appropriation. The West Haven City Council approved this ordinance at its May 28, 2024, council meeting. The Ordinance needs MARB approval so that the City can participate in the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) Clean Water Program.

Mr. Spreyer noted that this is a continuation of the Dawson Avenue project with a few other different tasks that have been brought before the MARB for the rehab of sewer pipes and manholes. This is a formality to accept the bonds and enter into the agreement with the Clean Water Program. Mr. Hamilton and Mr. Spreyer discussed the bond resolution and the Capital Budget process.

Mr. Weisselberg made a motion to approve the Bond Resolution – Dawson Avenue Area - Rehab of Sewer Pipes and Manholes seconded by Mr. Biller. The motion passed unanimously.

- vii. F&F Mechanical Services – To provide the services, equipment, and materials required for the boiler upgrade project at Carrigan Intermediate School

The City went out for bids for a contractor to provide the services, equipment, and materials required for the boiler upgrades project at the Carrigan Intermediate School. One bid was received. The City is seeking approval to award this bid to F&F Mechanical Services LLC, Trumbull, CT for \$934,907.61. At the July 13, 2023, MARB meeting, the City was seeking pre-

approval of the purchase of boilers for Carrigan School. This was based on a quotation from a commercial heating supply company. The MARB approved a motion that pre-approved the purchase of boilers for Carrigan School by competitive or state bid up to \$529,000. The City's Finance Director did provide an updated summary of this project by email to MARB members on Wednesday.

The Mayor and Mr. Spreyer provided an update on this boiler project. This is a \$4 million project for a very large and archaic school. The Mayor stated that she started to receive other requests that included \$2 million for the cafeteria and the kitchen, \$500,000 relating to asbestos flooring, \$350,000 for science labs, and \$350,000 for electrical. Working with the Board of Education to develop a prudent way of fixing the boiler situation for a school that was built in the 1960's without air conditioning, the F&F Mechanical, the only bidder, bid addresses the current Carrigan School needs.

Mr. Alvarez made a motion to approve the F&F Mechanical contract for the boiler upgrade project at Carrigan Intermediate School seconded by Ms. Hammersley. The motion passed unanimously.

viii. W. J. Mountford Co. – Exterior renovations at the West Haven High School Pool

The City issued an RFP for exterior renovations at the West Haven High School Pool. One bid was received. The City is seeking approval to award this bid to W.J. Mountford Company, South Windsor, CT for \$1,353,000. This project is being funded with Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funds.

Superintendent Cavallaro provided an overview noting that the pool is 60 years old and is not handicapped accessible. The entrance stairs are in disrepair and these renovations will also make it more accessible for the community. This has been approved as a project through the State Department of Education. The pool was exempt as part of the West Haven High School project.

Ms. Weisselberg made a motion to approve the W.J. Mountford Company contract for exterior renovations at the West Haven High School Pool seconded by Mr. Alvarez. The motion passed unanimously.

ix. Fuss and O'Neil – Hazardous Building Materials Consulting Services

The City of West Haven is looking to hire Fuss and O'Neil of Manchester, CT to conduct Hazardous Building Material Consulting Services for eight (8) City-owned properties in West Haven at a cost of \$94,273. In addition, Fuss and O'Neil is a vendor on a State contract.

Mr. Spreyer noted that these properties were purchased through a USDA grant for floodplain damaged homes. The City must assess the environmental levels of each home before the demolition and abatement process.

Mr. Falcigno made a motion to approve the Fuss and O'Neil contract for Hazardous Building Material Consulting Services seconded by Mr. Biller. The motion passed unanimously.

x. Gengras Ford LLC – Purchase of six (6) 2025 Ford Police Interceptors

The City of West Haven is looking to purchase six (6) 2025 Ford Police Interceptors for the Police Department at a total price of \$399,582. The vendor is Gengras Ford LLC, of Plainville,

CT, which has a State contract. This purchase will be funded through Bonding and Special Duty Funds.

Mr. Spreyer noted that this is part of the City's capital plan and will allow the Police Department and the Finance Department to gradually replenish the police fleet.

Mr. Hamilton made a motion to approve the contract for the purchase of six (6) 2025 Ford Police Interceptors seconded by Mr. Falcigno. The motion passed unanimously.

xi. Mike's Famous Harley Davidson – Purchase of two Police Motorcycles

The City issued an RFP to purchase two (2) Motorcycles for the Police Department. Only one quote was received totaling \$60,947.48 from Mike's Famous Harley Davison, New London, CT. This purchase will be funded through the City's Special Duty Account.

Mr. Spreyer said this purchase is to replenish the only two motorcycles in the police fleet.

Mr. Falcigno made a motion to approve the contract for the purchase of two (2) Police Motorcycles seconded by Ms. Weisselberg. The motion passed unanimously.

VI. Executive Session pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes Section 1-200(6), Section 1-210(b) and Section 1-225(f), and 1-231 for the purpose of having an attorney client privileged discussion.

The MARB members went into Executive Session pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes sections 1-200(6), 1-210(b), 1-225(f) and 1-231 for communications privileged by the attorney-client relationship. Also joining the Executive Session were Assistant Attorney General James Caley, Attorney Gareth Bye, and OPM staff.

Ms. Weisselberg made a motion to go into Executive Session seconded by Mr. Luciano. Motion carried. The MARB went into Executive Session at 11:30AM.

Mr. Alvarez made a motion to leave Executive Session seconded by Ms. Hammersley. Motion carried. The MARB returned to the Special Meeting at 12:30PM.

After returning to the Special Meeting, Secretary Beckham stated that the MARB had attorney client privileged discussion.

VII. Adjourn

The next regularly scheduled MARB meeting is September 12, 2024.

Mr. Biller made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Falcigno. Motion passed. The meeting was adjourned at 12:31 PM.