

CCC 111 / Microsoft "TEAMS"

BUDGET COMMITTEE

April 29, 2024

PRESENT Don Bell Jr., Temporary Chair, Councillors Sebrina Wilson (via Teams, departed 7:30 pm) and John Morrison

ALSO  
PRESENT Melissa McCaw, CAO and Finance Director  
Councillor Travis Simpson  
Councillor Awet Tsegai (via Teams, arrived 6:29 pm)  
Councillor Harry Amadasun, Jr. (via Teams, arrived 6:29 pm)  
Mayor Connor Martin (arrived 6:35 pm)  
Councillor Rich Kehoe (arrived 6:45 pm)  
Councillor Angie Parkinson (arrived 7:01 pm)

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Bell called the meeting to order at 6:04 pm.

NOMINATION OF OFFICERS

Chair

MOTION By Sebrina Wilson  
seconded by John Morrison  
  
to **appoint** Don Bell Jr. as **Chair** of the Budget Committee.  
  
Motion carried 3/0

Secretary

MOTION By Don Bell Jr.  
seconded by John Morrison  
  
to **appoint** Sebrina Wilson as **Secretary** of the Budget Committee.  
  
Motion carried 3/0

ADOPTION OF RULES GOVERNING MEETINGS

MOTION By Sebrina Wilson  
seconded by John Morrison  
  
to **adopt** Robert's Rules of Order as the rules that shall govern  
parliamentary procedure at all subcommittee meetings, with the exception

Motion carried 3/0

Motion carried 3/0

Motion carried 3/0

Motion carried 3/0

Chair Bell stated that the Budget Committee previously had met before the pandemic. During the 2024 Budget Workshop meetings it was decided that the Council's Budget Committee convene with Administration to discuss Town operations and goals under Mayor Martin's leadership. The goal of the administration is to provide high level of services and resources to residents while keeping the mill rate and taxes stable. The Chair stated that the goal of the Committee is to work collaboratively with the Administration to find the balance between efficiency and cost and think thoughtfully about long term investments and budgetary obligations.

#### Review of Personnel and Department Services

The Committee discussed what opportunities are available for the Town to evaluate its current financial position relative to other municipalities such as resource assessment, levels of bonding, and comparison of expenditures by individual department.

Discussion also included ways that the Town can best evaluate return on investment through data collection and using additional tools to evaluate community impact within departments. Director McCaw noted that any grant-supported programs will have performance metrics and indicators in place to assure funds are used properly. Proposed items of focus by the committee included Parks and Recreation programming, resident use of the Library's Digital Navigation resources, and the Town's inspection and permit cycle within the Building Department.

Mayor Martin shared that the Administration has completed a survey of senior residents and results will be provided to the Council in the coming weeks. The Administration is also currently developing a new platform for employee performance assessment to provide for better accountability of staff.

#### Police Athletic League – 2 Community Service Officers

Mayor Martin shared that in partnership with Police Chief Hawkins, he feels that the Town would benefit greatly from the development of a Police Athletic League. To launch the program, the administration is currently developing a non-profit entity to provide the structure, and evaluating for the allocation of dedicated staff to handle operations. Long term goals will include a potential venue to host programs and events.

The Mayor stated that the city of Hartford has a well established PAL that provides a number of programs and can serve as a model for East Hartford to mirror. Plans to tour Hartford's facility with members of the Council are in place later this week. The Committee confirmed that while Hartford's programming is notable, the city has more limited resources dedicated to Parks and Recreation programming relative to East Hartford.

#### Finance Department – Accountant (Grants/Other)

Director McCaw stated that over her two years in her current role as Director, the Finance Department had experienced a great amount of turnover with employees growing into larger responsibilities as the department has evolved. An item of concern based on current resources is the need to better manage accountability with regards to grants. The Director feels that the Town would be best served to have additional staff

dedicated to maintaining spending and receivables related to the high number of grants provided to the Town. The Director believes that there are opportunities to pursue funding through grants to support the staffing expense.

#### Review of Town Vehicles

The Committee discussed the potential effects on the budget made by extending what is considered an acceptable life-span for Town Vehicles the regards to mileage. Additional considerations with regards to types of vehicles (SUV's vs. Sedans) were also proposed as ways to accommodate inventory needs while also limiting expense. In addition, the committee reviewed how investments in upkeep and maintenance of vehicles can extend their use, as well as opportunities to repurpose vehicles amongst departments. The Committee also proposed a more centralized approach to fleet shopping as opposed to individualized departments.

The Chair asked that in addition to the items discussed on the agenda, given the increase in significant weather events of recent history, the Town consider deeper evaluation of infrastructure related to addressing storm management and climate issues with the goal of building a stronger climate resilient infrastructure going forward.

#### ADJOURNMENT

MOTION        By John Morrison  
                     seconded by Don Bell

to **adjourn** (7:33 p.m.).

Motion carried 2/0.

c: Town Council