

**APPROVED
STATE OF CONNECTICUT**

MUNICIPAL ACCOUNTABILITY REVIEW BOARD (MARB)

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Date and Time: Thursday, December 5, 2019 10:00 AM –12:00 PM

Meeting Location: Board of Regents Conference Room, 61 Woodland St, Hartford, CT

Members in Attendance: OPM Secretary Designee Kimberly Kennison (Executive Finance Officer), State Treasurer Designee Christine Shaw (Assistant State Treasurer), Matthew Brokman, Patrick Egan, Stephen Falcigno (phone), Tom Hamilton, Scott Jackson, Sal Luciano, Mark Waxenberg, Robert White (phone), and David Wright-Biller

Municipal and State Staff and Others Present: Jolita Lazauskas (City of Hartford Budget Director), Cheryl A. Blanchard (First Selectman of Sprague) and staff, West Haven Mayor Nancy Rossi, West Haven finance director, Frank Cieplinski, West Haven City Attorney Lee Tiernan, Michael Milone (OPM liaison), OPM Staff - Julian Freund, Gareth Bye, and Bill Plummer

Agenda

I. Call to Order & Opening Remarks by Ms. Kennison and Ms. Shaw

The meeting was called to order at 10:03 a.m. by Ms. Kennison.

II. Public Comment* Period

Ms. Kennison acknowledged that there were individuals in attendance who wanted to make comments to the Board. She requested that each person identify themselves and indicate the Town they reside in.

Christine Gallo: Ms. Gallo identified herself as a resident of the City of West Haven. She commented that she is aware that high property taxes is often a complaint made by residents. She wanted to share with the Board her personal experience living in West Haven and the impact of the high property taxes.

Yola Pissela: Ms. Pissela identified herself as a resident of West Haven. She commented that as a retiree her income has been reduced but the level of taxation continues to climb and that property taxes are too high for both businesses and residents of the City.

III. **Approval of Minutes:**

- a. November 7, 2019 regular meeting

The minutes of the November 7th meeting were unanimously approved without changes.

IV. **City of West Haven Issues and Items**

- a. Subcommittee update

Mr. Julian Freund provided an update and summary of the November 19th West Haven Subcommittee meeting. He indicated that at the November 19th meeting, the Consulting firm hired to conduct a study of the City's human resource area went over the results of the study but due to time constraints was only able to get through the City side of the findings from the Study. It is anticipated that at the next Subcommittee meeting, the Consultant will go over the Board of Education findings. The subcommittee also discussed follow-up steps to the Fire District Study.

A brief description on the work done by the City in regard to the City joining the State partnership health insurance plan was provided. Mr. Milone provided a further update on the status of the City and Board of Education various bargaining units joining the Partnership plan. A number of questions were posed to Mr. Milone regarding the City migrating to the Partnership Plan.

- b. Review and discussion: Monthly Financial Report October 2019

Mr. Cieplinski, West Haven's finance director, referred Board members to the October report in today's packet and described various revenue and expenditure items within the October report. He indicated that at this point, the City is still on track to issuing the June 30, 2019 audit report by December 31.

- c. Update: 5-Year Plan

Mr. Cieplinski indicated that the City did take the advice of the Board by smoothing out the tax levy increases in the plan and the City also updated the actuarial contributions in the plan to reflect the true actuarial determined employer contribution provided by the actuaries which would reflect savings to the City vs. the earlier pension contributions provided in the plan. The 5-year plan also reflects the growth in the fund balance in that 5-year time period.

Various questions were posed by Board members regarding the 5-year plan including Municipal Restructuring Funds that would be provided to the City during this time period and how it was reflected in the 5-year plan presented. Ms. Rossi remarked that the City Council consisted of all new members and that she has not had the opportunity to share the 5-year plan yet with the Council, but that it will be done in the upcoming weeks.

- d. Update: MOA compliance

Mr. Freund provided an updated on the MOA compliance report. He indicated that there were basically 2 outstanding items which were remedying the findings from the Human Resource Study and adoption of the 5-year plan.

V. City of Hartford Issues and Items

a. Subcommittee update

Mr. Freund indicated that there was no subcommittee meeting held in November. He expects that at the next subcommittee meeting the Board of Education superintendent will be able to provide a forecast of tuition and special education costs and similar costs.

b. Review and discussion: Monthly Financial Report October 2019

Budget Director Jolita Lozauskas provided an update on the October finances of the City. Several questions were posed to Ms. Lozauskas and other City staff.

c. Review and discussion: Non-labor contracts

Ms. Kennison reminded Board members that the Board takes no action on non-labor contracts.

i. Community School Coordinating Agencies: Catholic Charities and Village for Families and Children (Board of Education)

Nuchette Black-Burke, Chief Outreach Officer of Hartford Public Schools, provided a description of the Contract, including the need for the services to be provided under the contract and the cost of the Contract.

ii. Workers' Compensation and Liability Claims Administration: PMA Management

Dominic Perno, Senior Vice President of PMA Companies provided a description of the contract between his company and the City.

VI. Town of Sprague Issues and Items

a. Subcommittee update

Mr. Freund indicated that, although the subcommittee had not met, OPM staff has been working with the Town and Board of Education. Ms. Kennison and Mr. Freund met with First Selectwoman Cheryl Blanchard at the Town to go over transition issues and various matters that the Town would need to address.

b. Review and discussion: Monthly Financial Report October 2019

First Selectwoman Blanchard provided an update on the Town's finances including cash flow matters. The anticipated signing of a property lease agreement is expected to generate sufficient revenue to mitigate the need for additional restructuring funds.

c. Update: Corrective Action Plan

First Selectwoman Blanchard provided an updated on corrective actions taken in regard to the audit findings identified in the June 30, 2018 audit report. Several questions were posed by Board members to First Selectwoman Blanchard and her staff.

VII. Other Business

a. Subcommittee assignments 2020

Mr. Freund referred members to the most current membership information for each of the subcommittees and any preferences indicated to date. Ms. Kennison indicated that it would be helpful to obtain more interest for membership in the Hartford subcommittee. Several members indicated that they would be willing to participate as a member of the Hartford subcommittee. Mr. Kennison indicated that the membership information would be updated and finalized.

b. Calendar 2020

Mr. Freund referenced the calendar information in today's packets and provided a description of the methodology. He also indicated that based upon feedback from Board members, he sought to achieve some additional time to allow members to review the various education budgets.

VIII. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 11:37 a.m.