

MINUTES

President David R. Martin called the meeting to order at 9:35 p.m.

President Martin read the call of the meeting:

NOTICE OF SPECIAL MEETING

I, David R. Martin, President of the 27th 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 6, 2008
8:00 p.m.
Legislative Chambers, 4th Floor
Government Center
888 Washington Boulevard
Stamford, CT 06904-2152

to consider and act upon the following:

1. [F27.406](#) - RESOLUTION; providing for a phase-in of the 2007 Stamford property revaluation.
2. Operating, Capital, E.G. Brennan Fund, Grants and Police Extra Duty Fund, Risk Management Fund, Marinas Fund, WPCA Fund and Parking Fund, and WPCA (WPCA Capital) Budgets for the fiscal year 2008/2009, as transmitted by the Board of Finance on April 10, 2008, pursuant to provisions of Section C8-30-7 of the Stamford Charter; and RESOLUTIONS associated therewith.

AGENDA

INVOCATION: Led by Rep. McGarry.

“God, thank You for all Your blessings. Bless all the peoples of the world and especially bless us here tonight with insight and wisdom that we may serve and honor all the people of Stamford who have entrusted their voices to us. Amen.”

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG: Led by President David R. Martin

ROLL CALL: Conducted by Clerk of the Board Annie M. Summerville. There were thirty-five members present and five members absent/excused: Reps. Figueroa, Lombardo, C. Martin, Molgano and Young.

CONSIDERATION OF PHASE-IN:

President Martin stated that ten members petitioned the President to call a special meeting to consider a resolution providing for a phase-in of the 2007 Stamford property revaluation. President Martin has included this item on tonight's agenda.

Rep. Cannady moved item No. [F27.406](#), RESOLUTION; providing for a phase-in of the 2007 Stamford property revaluation. Said motion was seconded and FAILED by a vote of 8-27-0 (Reps. Adams, Blackwell, Cannady, DePina, Heaphy, Lyons, Miller and Mitchell in favor; Reps. Aposporos, Berns, Boccuzzi, Coppola, Day, DeLuca, Diamond, Esposito, Fedeli, Franzetti, Gabriele, Giordano, Larobina, Layton, Lodato, Mallozzi, D. Martin, McGarry, Mirkin, Munger, Neary, Pia, Rauh, Skigen, Summerville, White and Zelinsky opposed) (See [Vote Record No. 914](#)).

COMMITTEE/BUDGET PRESENTATION: Randall Skigen, Chair, Fiscal Committee

President Martin stated that the Fiscal Committee has met long and hard for many meetings on reviewing this budget, ever since the public hearing several months ago. They have submitted a report this evening, and we will accept that as a motion. Mr. Skigen will report that; everyone has a copy of the [report](#) on his/her desk that details the specific line items that were cut. During a particular section, e.g., Operating Section, rather than going page by page, after Mr. Skigen has given his general report for that section, the President will entertain motions to amend the Committee's Report. You can amend the Committee's Report by asking for additional reductions or you can amend it by saying you want to take away one of the reductions that they recommended. All sections of the budget will be reviewed, and at the end of the evening the resolutions will be approved.

Rep. Skigen stated that the Committee met numerous times between March 10, when the budget was first submitted, and tonight. He thanked the members of his Committee; they not only attended numerous committee meetings but also, since he set up subcommittees and asked members to meet in smaller groups

with various departments, and everyone did pull their weight this year and put in an extraordinary number of hours in order to get to tonight's report. He specifically thanked Reps. Cannady, Day, DeLuca, Fedeli, Figueroa, Giordano, Lyons, Mirkin, Mitchell and Rauh. We would not be where we are tonight without them. The Committee met on Monday, April 28, 2008 at 7:30, and everyone has in his/her package the Budget Deliberation Committee Report that will form the basis of his motion. Chair Skigen moved the Committee's Report as a whole that contains the following reductions in the operating budget:

Chair Skigen moved the Committee's recommendations as follows; said motion was seconded.

Page #	Account/Amount		Comments
261	Private & Parochial School Health Program; Salaries \$45,537		Eliminate 1 of 4 new school nurse positions
261	Social Security \$3,484		Related reduction
281	Office of Legal Affairs; Professional Consultant \$25,000		
288	Employee Benefits; Labor Contract Estimate \$25,000		Pay plan employee increases
127	Land Use Administration; Contracted Services \$25,000		
104	Solid Waste; Haulaway; Haulaway Miscellaneous \$35,000		
70	Technology Management Services; Salaries \$50,000		Eliminate 1 of 2 new positions
70	Social Security \$3,825		Related reduction
285	Office of Legal Affairs Human Resources Dept.; Salaries \$37,608		Represents ½ salary for vacant position
285	Social Security \$2,877		Related reduction
Citywide	\$20,000		Natural Gas account
203	E-911 General budget reduction \$30,000		
305	Board of Representatives		

	General budget reduction \$5,000		
120	Engineering-Spec. Events General Budget Reduction \$15,000		
146	Facilities Management Government Center \$21,000		Various maintenance accounts

President Martin called on members to make motions to amend the Fiscal Committee's recommendations.

Rep. Zelinsky moved to restore the following two recommended cuts; said motion was seconded.

261	Private & Parochial School Health Program; Salaries \$45,537		Eliminate 1 of 4 new school nurse positions
261	Social Security \$3,484		Related reduction

Rep. Zelinsky reminded his colleagues that he respects the Fiscal Committee's hard work; however, in this case, Dr. Lee originally requested ten positions, and the Mayor only requested four, and this would eliminate one and bring it down to three. In all fairness to all the private schools in Stamford, they should have equal access to healthcare. We have heard there have been situations with students with diabetes and other illnesses that require a school nurse. The money will be well spent and will be helpful to those parents and children who go to private and parochial schools.

Chair Skigen stated he opposes this motion and the justification for three new positions is that this is the largest expansion in the budget this year. More importantly, by going to three school nurses, we achieve a ratio in the private and parochial schools which is equivalent to the ratio of student-nurse in the public schools. That was the driving reason behind this cut, and that reason stands.

The motion FAILED by a machine vote of 8-27-0 (Reps. Coppola, Franzetti, Giordano, Heaphy, McGarry, Pia, White and Zelinsky in favor; Reps. Adams, Aposporos, Berns, Blackwell, Boccuzzi, Cannady, Day, DeLuca, DePina, Diamond, Esposito, Fedeli, Gabriele, Larobina, Layton, Lodato, Lyons, Mallozzi, D. Martin, Miller, Mirkin, Mitchell, Munger, Neary, Rauh, Skigen and Summerville opposed) (See [Vote Record No. 915](#)).

Rep. Coppola moved the following reduction in the budget; said motion was seconded.

184	Glenbrook Fire Department \$100,000		FAILED 11-23-1
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Rep. Coppola stated that the reason for this is because he has come to learn that Glenbrook has a Stamford Fire & Rescue Department engine in that fire station, and basically, most expenses are being covered by the Stamford Fire & Rescue Department. The Department, by its own admission, has lost membership to the point where they have a very small group of certified people. Their responses with their own apparatus to calls is at best very, very scattered. Based on the fact that they are not getting the responses from their membership that would require them to have so much money, he believes the remaining amount (or \$63,000) should be sufficient. As the Mayor pointed out when he made his presentation, that should be plenty of money to cover their gasoline, and in their case, it will cover certainly their insurance and any personal equipment that they need to keep safe – unlike the other departments that were cut \$140,000 in the Belltown and the TOR case to the point where it simply leaves them without not even enough money to protect themselves. He believes this is a reasonable cut.

The motion FAILED by a vote of 11-23-1 (Reps. Aposporos, Coppola, Day, Fedeli, Franzetti, Gabriele, Larobina, Layton, Lodato, Mirkin and White in favor; Reps. Adams, Berns, Blackwell, Boccuzzi, Cannady, DeLuca, DePina, Diamond, Esposito, Giordano, Heaphy, Lyons, Mallozzi, D. Martin, McGarry, Miller, Mitchell, Neary, Pia, Rauh, Skigen, Summerville and Zelinsky opposed; Rep. Munger abstaining) (See [Vote Record No. 916](#)).

Rep. Franzetti moved the following reduction; said motion was seconded.

191	Police Department Administrative Manager \$93,950		FAILED 14-21-0
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Rep. Franzetti stated this is a new position to the City. In these economic times, the last thing we need to do is add new positions to the City. We hear time and time again from departments head that they need more personnel and they will reduce spending. This never happens. We have had classic examples from last year when department heads came before us and asked for more and we never got a return on our investment. Throwing money and adding personnel to fix a problem never works. The systematic cause of the problem needs to be fixed, and in these economic times, he recommends we do not hire an additional city employee.

Chair Skigen stated that he believes and hopes that this position will more than pay for itself by helping the Department control costs in a variety of ways. In particular, in manpower deployment and overtime deployment and if it does, that number, which keeps growing on an annual basis, the salary will be more than

worth it. He urges people to keep this in the budget. A similar position was proposed last year; it was cut out of the budget and he thinks that was a terrible mistake, and he hopes the same mistake is not made this year.

Rep. Zelinsky stated that he believes that the responsibility for what the previous representative said would be in the hands of the Chief of Police and the Assistant Chief of Police. That is how he understands the departments work, and he agrees with Rep. Franzetti. In these financial times, he doesn't think we should be adding new personnel.

The motion FAILED by a machine vote of 14-21-0 (Reps. Adams, Aposporos, Coppola, Day, Franzetti, Gabriele, Larobina, Layton, Lodato, Mirkin, Munger, Neary, Pia and Zelinsky in favor; Reps. Berns, Blackwell, Boccuzzi, Cannady, DeLuca, DePina, Diamond, Esposito, Fedeli, Giordano, Heaphy, Lyons, Mallozzi, D. Martin, McGarry, Miller, Mitchell, Rauh, Skigen, Summerville and White opposed) (See [Vote Record No. 917](#)).

Board of Education

President Martin and Reps. White and Miller left the floor for the discussion of the Board of Education budget. Majority Leader Boccuzzi took over as Acting President.

Chair Skigen moved the Fiscal Committee's reduction of \$350,000 to the Board of Education budget; said motion was seconded.

333	Board of Education \$350,000	DeLuca	APPROVED 31-1-0
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Rep. Zelinsky moved to restore the \$350,000 to the Board of Education budget.; no second was received.

The motion to reduce the Board of Education budget by \$350,000 was APPROVED by a machine vote of 31-1-0 (Reps. Adams, Aposporos, Berns, Blackwell, Boccuzzi, Cannady, Coppola, Day, DeLuca, DePina, Diamond, Esposito, Fedeli, Franzetti, Gabriele, Giordano, Heaphy, Larobina, Layton, Lodato, Lyons, Mallozzi, McGarry, Mirkin, Mitchell, Munger, Neary, Pia, Rauh, Skigen and Summerville in favor; Rep. Zelinsky opposed) (See [Vote Record No. 918](#)).

Fund Budgets

Chair Skigen moved the following fund budgets; said motion was seconded.

- \$1,239,818 – The E.G. Brennan Budget
- \$9,103,781 – The Grants Budget
- \$5,249,837 – The Police Extra Duty Budget
- \$413,409 – The Marinas Fund Budget

\$5,874,932 – The Parking Fund Budget
 \$75,616,229 – The Risk Management Fund Budget
 \$21,959,763 – The WPCA Budget

No motions to amend the Committee’s recommendation of full approval of these budgets were made.

Capital Budget

Chair Skigen noted the Committee’s recommended reduction below.

82	Center for the Arts \$115,000		
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Rep. White moved to reduce two projects within the capital item on Page 37 (artificial turf field installation for Leone Park & West Beach); said motion was seconded.

37	Fields – Leone Park & West Beach \$3,000,000		FAILED 9-26-0
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President Martin stated that it is his opinion that this is a separate project and should have been submitted as such; rather than getting into a lengthy process or a legal entanglement, he has requested that if there were cuts on items that looked like bundled projects that the representative should mention the specific project that they want cut from the bundle, as Mr. White has done, with the expectation that if the Board passes this reduction, that will be the particular project cut from the budget. This is a procedural note.

Rep. White stated that he has been opposed to this all along; his remarks are on record before other committee meetings. He has a long-standing opposition to the use of parks in this nature. Also, there have been other issues that were raised, safety issues among them, and he believes that at this time we should not go forward with artificial turf in parks.

Rep. Diamond stated that he is not confident that if we pass this reduction that this is the project that will be cut. He does not believe it is wise for the Board to proceed in this fashion.

Rep. Pia stated he has been working for 18 months on reforming the Jackie Robinson baseball league for children aged 7-12, and they are counting on the Leone Field being redone. He understands the reasons behind this motion, but for all the programs, the Boys & Girls Club, Yerwood Center, Chester Addison Center – all the kids are counting on these fields. To add Leone Field at the last minute is something he can never support. He has given his word to the people there that the City is going to do great things with that field.

Rep. Layton stated he is opposed to this motion. Currently, the West Beach field is unusable. It is covered with fecal material from geese, the field is uneven, has rocks and is muddy. If this money is not spent for artificial turf, the City will have to spend countless hundreds of thousands of dollars restoring it. The field literally could not be used this year. So, he is opposed to any cuts in this area.

Rep. Berns stated he is in favor of this motion. He is concerned, along with a large sector of the community, that the materials used for this are not proven. We received correspondence from the Health Department and other sources saying there is no evidence that there is nothing wrong with these materials, but he is sure that when lead paint was a new thing there were no reports about it being bad for people until many years later. The same applies to DDT and a number of pharmaceuticals, therefore, for the health and safety of the kids, recognizing there are physical dangers, looking at the biological and chemical dangers, he is in favor of this motion.

Rep. Franzetti asked how much in debt the city currently is. Chair Skigen replied that the total bonded indebtedness is in the neighborhood of \$527 million; this number does not include the WPCA bonds. Rep. Franzetti stated that since we are almost a half a billion dollars in debt in this City, he will agree with Rep. White.

Rep. McGarry stated she agrees with Mr. White also because of the chemicals involved and the possible danger to the children and also because of the money.

Rep. Day stated that chemicals are a part of life. Under the theories expressed, almost anything can be viewed as dangerous. We are talking about materials that come from tires. When you buy a tire, when it is new there is about ¼" of tread on it, and when the tire is turned in, it doesn't have much tread on it. What does everybody think happens to all that tire material during the course of the wear of the tire. It seems to him that the science would have long ago shown whether there is anything seriously harmful in this material. In addition, the material is recycled and cleaned up in the process. There is not one iota of information – all speculation – about any hazard associated with these materials.

Rep. Heaphy stated that in fact there is increasing attention to the risks associated with this turf and there are an increasing number of alternatives that we could look at. Her concern is that down the road we may face lawsuits for having ignored the early warnings; therefore, she thinks we should proceed with caution and she supports Rep. White's motion.

Rep. Coppola stated Ms. Heaphy just mentioned that we have to be careful of the warnings. What warnings? He does not recall that we received any warnings about installing the turf. When the Parks & Recreation Committee went over the materials submitted by a number of people on both sides of the issue,

he does not recall one warning. Yes, there are questions, but there are questions in everything we do.

Rep. Berns stated that in response to Mr. Day's remarks, yes, everything in life is chemicals, but there are good chemicals and bad chemicals. In response to the remarks that there is no hard evidence that this is bad, he returns to the point that when lead paint was first being used, there was no hard evidence that it was bad. It came out decades later. The same thing happened with DDT, which many people considered a good chemical. In fact, it did do a lot of good in the world reducing malaria, but nevertheless we found out in the long run it was bad. He doesn't want us to see using our children in Stamford as guinea pigs for new technology.

Rep. Mirkin moved the question; said motion was seconded and approved by a vote of 28-6-0 (Reps. Adams, Aposporos, Blackwell, Boccuzzi, Cannady, Coppola, Day, DeLuca, DePina, Esposito, Fedeli, Gabriele, Giordano, Heaphy, Larobina, Layton, Lodato, Lyons, Mallozzi, Miller, Mirkin, Mitchell, Munger, Neary, Pia, Rauh, Skigen and Zelinsky in favor; Reps. Berns, Diamond, Franzetti, D. Martin, McGarry and White opposed) (See [Vote Record No. 919](#)).

The main motion FAILED by a vote of 9-26-0 (Reps. Aposporos, Berns, Franzetti, Heaphy, Larobina, McGarry, Munger, Neary and White in favor; Reps. Adams, Blackwell, Boccuzzi, Cannady, Coppola, Day, DeLuca, DePina, Diamond, Esposito, Fedeli, Gabriele, Giordano, Layton, Lodato, Lyons, Mallozzi, D. Martin, Miller, Mirkin, Mitchell, Pia, Rauh, Skigen, Summerville and Zelinsky opposed) (See [Vote Record No. 920](#)).

Chair Skigen moved for approval of the [Operating Budget Resolution](#); said motion was seconded and approved by unanimous voice vote.

Chair Skigen moved for approval of the [Funds Budget Resolution](#); said motion was seconded and approved by unanimous voice vote.

Chair Skigen moved for approval of the [Capital Budget Resolution](#) (that also authorizes bond financing in the amount of \$43,535,000); said motion was seconded and approved by unanimous voice vote.

Chair Skigen moved for approval of the [Capital Budget Resolution](#) (that also authorizes for the issuance of revenue bonds in the amount of \$4,093,750); said motion was seconded and approved by unanimous voice vote.

Chair Skigen again thanked his committee members for their dedication and hard work. President Martin said that the Fiscal Committee, along with other board members who attended the budget hearings, that a great amount of work and diligence was put into this effort. He knows that not everyone agrees, but he appreciates the dedicated efforts. Chair Skigen noted that there was one

member of the Board who is not a member of the committee who he believes came to every committee meeting, and he recognized Clerk Summerville who really made an extraordinary effort to attend all meetings.

Rep. DeLuca asked to read a closing statement:

“We the members of the Board of Representatives, throughout these budget discussions and deliberations, find ourselves once again placed in a very, very agonizing position. We were forced to attempt to balance the costs around the City as presented to us in this budget against our elected responsibilities to keep taxes affordable for all our taxpayers. Unfortunately higher services and higher debt service – two major components that dominate all expenditures – have driven us to the point where we cannot make meaningful cuts to reduce taxes without incurring layoffs or further cuts in services. Nor can we expect to continue to raise taxes year after year in amounts that far exceed the rate of inflation and cost of living. We all must take notice tonight from this point forward and begin to compel changes that control expensive and continually upward cycles of taxing and spending. I can promise everyone here that I will never again support a budget that increases spending and raises taxes to the extent we have seen here tonight and over the last several years. On behalf of our taxpayers and for the future financial well-being of Stamford, I implore you all to do the same. Thank you.”

ADJOURNMENT:

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 10:25 p.m.