

MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING

President Martin called the meeting to order at 9:15 p.m.

President Martin read the call of the 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:

Monday, May 11, 2009
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. Operating (including Board of Education budget), Capital, E.G. Brennan Fund, Grant Funded Programs Fund, Police Extra Duty Fund, Risk Management Fund, Marina Fund, WPCA Fund and Parking Fund, and WPCA Capital Budget for the fiscal year 2009/2010, as transmitted by the Board of Finance on April 14, 2009, pursuant to provisions of Section C8-30-7 of the Stamford Charter; and RESOLUTIONS associated therewith.”

AGENDA

INVOCATION: Led by Clerk Summerville

“Dear Lord, we thank You for another day; we thank You for the presence of our fellow board members. We thank You for all the wonderful things that You are going to instill in our hearts, in our minds and in our souls tonight to try to do the right thing for the taxpaying citizens of Stamford. I ask You for a special blessing for this City, which we all live in. We ask You to shine upon it, give it all of the

things that one would want it to have. Give us the courage and the wisdom to do that. Ask us to love one another, trust each other, respect each other and those from all walks of life. We also pray for our Board of Education, who we entrust our children to here in Stamford. We entrust them to do the best they can with what they have. We ask a special blessing for the children, all children, of this City and throughout the world. We also ask for peace. Dear Lord, once again, peace. Give us that throughout the world, and we will be so ever grateful to You and give You all the praise. Thank you, Dear God. 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-six members present and four members absent/excused. Excused were Reps. Adams, Giordano and C. Martin; absent was Rep. Aposporos.

COMMUNICATIONS:

President Martin announced:

1. The Steering Committee meeting is tomorrow night at 7:00 p.m.
2. On Wednesday night, the citizen of the year is being honored, and Gabe DeLuca will be honored at that event as well. Phil Giordano and John Boccuzzi have been honored in the past.

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

Deliberations Meetings: [May 6,](#)

[2009](#) & [May 11, 2009](#)

Chair Skigen stated that the Fiscal Committee has met repeatedly throughout March, April and into May to go through this budget with a fine-toothed comb. Chair Skigen thanked the Mayor and the Board of Education, who both submitted budgets that are reasonable in light of the current economic circumstances. The Mayor's budget was at an approximately 1% increase, and the Board of Education was at 3.75% when it was originally sent down, and it is now down to a .75% increase after the Board of Finance actions.

This is Chair Skigen's eighth year as Chair of Fiscal, but with experience things are not getting easier but are getting more difficult. The real pressures come not on the spending side but on the revenue side. We are down in building permits, conveyance taxes, interest income; it is a difficult revenue year and the Committee took that into consideration.

Chair Skigen thanked his Committee Members: Rep. Cannady, Vice Chair, and Reps. Day, DeLuca, Fedeli, Figueroa, Lyons, Mirkin, Mitchell, Rauh and a special

thanks to Clerk Summerville who jumped in the last minute to fill in for Rep. Giordano. This is not a task that anyone would be assigned, but Annie jumped in with both feet and was as helpful as any other member of the Committee.

Chair Skigen stated that there would be a vote on the City side of the budget, followed by a vote on the Education side, followed by Special Revenue and Grants Budgets and finally capital.

President Martin stated this would be a rolling motion. The Motion from the Fiscal Committee will be its report. We normally went page by page; he plans to hear the Fiscal Committee recommendations for the Operating Side of the City Budget, he will entertain any motions from the floor to amend the report by recommending cuts or eliminating cuts. The other budgets will follow as Mr. Skigen stated.

Chair Skigen also thanked Pete Privitera and Jim Hricay who attended all of the meetings, Director of Administration Sandy Dennies, Superintendent Dr. Joshua Starr, members of the Board of Education Hugh Murphy, the finance director for the Board of Education. Everyone provided information requested in a very timely fashion.

Operating Budget:

Chair Skigen moved to approve the cuts in the Operating Budget as recommended by the Fiscal Committee at its May 8, 2009 Budget Deliberation Meeting, all of which were approved by a unanimous vote of the Committee (except the 2nd Board of Education vote). They are as follows:

General	Budget cut in the 3202 Conferences & Training Account	\$30,750
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Chair Skigen stated that there is a general budget cut in Conferences & Training, and this will be distributed by OPM throughout various departments.

Page 34	General Budget Cut: Office of Administration	\$25,000
Page 177	General Budget Cut: Office of Operations	\$75,000
Page 83	Office of Operations – Gasoline Account	\$10,000
Page 106	Office of Operations – Snow Removal/Salt & Sand	\$50,000
Page 107	Special Events – Overtime & related Social Security costs	\$27,000 \$2,066
Page 209	Stamford Fire & Rescue; Salaries & related social security costs	\$55,000 \$798

Rep Day moved to cut an additional \$165,000 in salaries and \$2,392 in social security and related costs from the Stamford Fire & Rescue Department. Rep. Day stated this would reflect the amount of the five funded but unfilled firefighter

vacancies. Said motion was seconded. Chair Skigen stated that this cut was discussed. There are an anticipated 5 vacancies in SFR. The fact is that the Board of Finance in their zeal to cut salary increases, cut the salary increase in the SFR line even though it was not included in the budget, so they cut over \$700,000 in salary and step increases that was not there, so in essence made a double cut. They are going to have to address that when they set the mill rate and the contingency fund for this year. This \$165,000 will just help fill that gap that has been created by cutting a line that was not really there. Chair Skigen stated he would vote in opposition.

The motion FAILED by a machine vote of 16-19-1 (Reps. Caterbone, Cerasoli, Coppola, Day, DeLuca, Fedeli, Franzetti, Gabriele, Larobina, Layton, Lodato, Lombardo, Mirkin, Neary, Pia and Zelinsky in favor; Reps. Berns, Boccuzzi, Cannady, DePina, Diamond, Figueroa, Heaphy, Lyons, Mallozzi, D. Martin, McGarry, McNeil, Mitchell, Rauh, Skigen, Summerville, Wallace, White and Young opposed; Rep. Esposito abstaining) (See [Vote Record No. 1009](#)).

Page 273	Human Resources; Civil Service Exams	\$35,000
Page 273	Human Resources; recruitment & Hiring	\$25,000
Page 273	Human Resources; Contract Administration	\$3,000
Page 273	Human Resources; Deferred Compensation	\$7,000
Page 293	Board of Reps; Copying & Printing	\$2,000
Page 306	Registrars of Voters; Perm. Part Time Salaries & related Social Security	\$6,025 \$461

Funds Budget:

Page 356	WPCA; recommendation to reduce budget <i>*(inclusive of Board of Finance \$94,407 cut)</i>	\$344,407*
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Chair Skigen stated that on the grant funded budgets, there are no recommendations; E. Gaynor Brennan Fund – no reductions; Police Extra Duty Fund – no reductions; Risk Management Fund – no reductions; Parking Fund – no reductions and the Water Pollution Control Authority Fund – the committee recommended a total reduction of \$344,407 that incorporates \$94,407 that the Board of Finance recommended to this Board as well as an additional \$250,000, for a total of \$344,407.

Board of Education Budget:

President Martin turned the meeting over to Majority Leader Boccuzzi to chair. President Martin and Reps. White and Esposito left the floor for the discussion of the Board of Education cut.

Page 322	Board of Education	\$500,000
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Chair Skigen moved a \$500,000 reduction to the Board of Education operating budget. Said motion was seconded.

Rep. Zelinsky moved to amend the motion to reinstate the \$500,000 cut to the Board of Education from the Fiscal Committee Report. Said motion was seconded. Rep. Zelinsky stated that he is not in favor of the cut. As we know, there was a \$5 million cut by the Board of Finance already. He spoke with Dr. Starr, and Dr. Starr told him that if this \$500,000 cut is approved, it would mean that 18 of our teachers would be laid off. He also spoke to Pete Privitera and was told that this would save approximately \$12-14 for taxpayers. He is very concerned with the plight of Stamford's taxpayers, but he cannot understand the rationale of laying off 18 teachers to save \$12 or \$14. He feels it would be a disservice to the teachers and more importantly a disservice to our students to lose the 18 teachers. Rep. Zelinsky asked his colleagues to support his effort.

Rep. Berns stated that our constituents, the taxpayers, don't need any extra tax burden, but for City government, education and public safety and health are critical services in the City of Stamford. We have a hard enough time in Stamford recruiting and retaining our teachers, and he is afraid that by this cut we will be cutting off our nose to spite our face. We will be savings money short-term, but it will cost us for generations to come. The additional cost per resident for this cut is about \$4.50. He will vote and asks his colleagues to vote to protect the education budget.

The motion FAILED by a vote of 3-30-0 (Reps. Berns, Neary and Zelinsky in favor; Reps. Cannady, Caterbone, Cerasoli, Coppola, Day, DeLuca, DePina, Diamond, Fedeli, Figueroa, Franzetti, Gabriele, Heaphy, Larobina, Layton, Lodato, Lombardo, Lyons, Mallozzi, Boccuzzi (voting from D. Martin's seat), McGarry, McNeil, Mirkin, Mitchell, Pia, Rauh, Skigen, Summerville, Wallace and Young opposed) (see [Vote Record 1010](#)).

Page 322	Board of Education (<i>approved 7-1-3 in committee on 5/11/09</i>)	\$1,082,000
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Chair Skigen reported that the Committee met again as a follow up to the deliberation meeting last Wednesday. There is an issue out there with a great deal of uncertainty and a fair amount of confusion. In essence, it is an accounting issue. In the past, ECS money has always flowed directly to the City. The City treats that as a revenue and uses it to offset a very small portion of its support for the Board of Education. Due to the State budget crisis, it was the Governor's original intent to reduce ECS funding this year. After the American Recovery & Reinvestment Act was passed, the Governor announced her intention to fund ECS dollars at a flat rate from last year. However, there have been indications that 14.3% of the ECS money that go directly to the Board of Education rather than the City. Because of that the City's revenue will be

potentially down by \$1,082,000 and the Board of Education grants may be up by that same amount. Therefore, the Committee voted tonight in order to try and make sure that both parties were made whole to reduce the Board of Education budget by another \$1,082,000 with the understanding that if the money flows directly to the City, the City is committed to immediately send down a supplemental appropriation to the boards in the full amount of the ECS differential that they receive so that the money can flow to the Board of Education. That would be subject to whatever rules are established for ECS and ARRA.

Chair Skigen reported that the vote was 7-1-3 this evening to approve an additional cut to the Board of Education Budget in the amount of \$1,082,000. Chair Skigen stated that the total cut to the Board of Education is \$1,582,000 even. President Martin stated that this would now be included in the rolling motion on the floor. It is his understanding that if the City receives the money, it is the intent of the Fiscal Committee to appropriate the grant funds to the Board of Education.

Chair Skigen stated that at the Committee's insistence, it asked that the Board of Education and the City try and work this out. The Board of Education made a good faith effort, presented the City with a letter of intent on Friday, and the City ran that letter of intent past the City auditor who made the strong recommendation that we take the steps we are taking tonight. Chair Skigen stated that part of the confusion is based on the fact that the State of CT Dept. of Education has not yet filed an application for use of these funds, and everyone should have received a copy of a letter by Senators Dodd & Lieberman to Governor Rell encouraging her to get this process underway. The Senators note in the letter that, "as many localities finalize their budgets for the next school year, guidance on how much money they will receive and when they will receive it, will ensure their ability to make informed decisions on budget issues related to staff and education funding. Chair Skigen stated he joins in them, and it would have been nice to have that guidance tonight and some more certainly around this issue. This is an attempt by the Fiscal Committee to address it with what limited information we do have. President Martin stated he will prepare a letter as president to the Governor's Office seeking to resolve this as soon as possible.

President Martin stated he will accept this amendment to the Fiscal Committee report as part of the report. Anyone who doesn't like the final bottom line to the Board of Education should vote against the budget resolution.

Rep. Berns stated he is as concerned about this cut as he was about the \$500,000 cut. This additional \$1,082,000 cut is supposed to be Federal money to the State, and the State has not yet requested the money, and the State of CT has not due to a lack of diligence on the part of the executive. We do not know if we are going to get the money, we do not know when, what strings are going to be attached, and he urges his colleagues to err on the side of safety. The

\$1,000,000 consists of approximately \$9 in additional taxes per resident, not that our constituents need the extra burden, but education is mission critical to Stamford and our future. He would second an amendment to not cut the education budget at all.

Capital Budget:

Chair Skigen reported that there are no recommended cuts to the capital budget by the Fiscal Committee.

President Martin noted Reps. White and Esposito have returned to the meeting.

Rep. White moved to cut \$3 million from the Urban Transitway Phase II project on Page 22 of the Capital Budget. Said motion was seconded. Rep. White stated that he was against Phase I, and he stands by the same arguments for Phase II. It is much too intensive a project, cutting right through the heart of an East Side neighborhood.

Rep. Berns stated that this project will basically ram a road project the size of Washington Boulevard right through that part of town, it is going to increase traffic speed, reduce the livability of that area and we will end up with the same troubles that Washington Boulevard has caused. He also will vote against it.

The motion FAILED by a vote of 2-33-0 (Reps. Berns and White in favor; Reps. Boccuzzi, Cannady, Caterbone, Coppola, Day, DeLuca, DePina, Diamond, Esposito, Fedeli, Figueroa, Franzetti, Gabriele, Heaphy, Larobina, Layton, Lodato, Lombardo, Lyons, Mallozzi, D. Martin, McGarry, McNeil, Mirkin, Mitchell, Neary, Pia, Rauh, Skigen, Summerville, Wallace, Young and Zelinsky opposed) (See [Vote Record No. 1011](#)).

Rep. White moved to cut on Page 28, Operations, Administration, Maintenance, Park & Field Improvements, he moves to cut the entire amount of \$3,350,000. There was no second.

RESOLUTIONS:

Chair Skigen moved approval of the Resolution approving the [Operating Budget](#) in the amount of \$194,666,225. Said motion was seconded and approved by a machine vote of 33-3-0 (Reps. Berns, Boccuzzi, Cannady, Caterbone, Cerasoli, Coppola, Day, DeLuca, DePina, Diamond, Esposito, Fedeli, Figueroa, Franzetti, Heaphy, Layton, Lodato, Lombardo, Lyons, Mallozzi, D. Martin, McGarry, McNeil, Mitchell, Neary, Pia, Rauh, Skigen, Summerville, Wallace, White, Young and Zelinsky in favor; Reps. Gabriele, Larobina and Mirkin opposed) (See [Vote Record No. 1012](#)).

Chair Skigen moved approval of the Resolution approving the [Board of Education Budget](#) in the amount of \$245,242,664. Said motion was seconded and

approved by a machine vote of 30-4-2 (Reps. Berns, Boccuzzi, Cannady, Caterbone, Cerasoli, Coppola, Day, DeLuca, DePina, Diamond, Fedeli, Figueroa, Franzetti, Heaphy, Layton, Lombardo, Lyons, Mallozzi, McGarry, McNeil, Mitchell, Neary, Pia, Rauh, Skigen, Summerville, Wallace, White, Young and Zelinsky in favor; Reps. Gabriele, Larobina, Lodato and Mirkin opposed; Reps. Esposito and D. Martin abstaining) (See [Vote Record No. 1013](#)).

Chair Skigen moved the approval of the [Funds Budget](#) in the following amounts: E.G. Brennan Fund - \$1,221,663; Grants Fund - \$8,892,340; Police Extra Duty Fund - \$5,491,200; Risk Management Fund - \$78,792,346; Marina Fund - \$417,515; WPCA Fund - \$22,349,451; Parking Fund - \$5,813,372. Said motion was seconded and approved by a machine vote of 34-0-1 (Reps. Berns, Boccuzzi, Cannady, Caterbone, Cerasoli, Coppola, Day, DeLuca, DePina, Diamond, Esposito, Fedeli, Figueroa, Gabriele, Heaphy, Larobina, Layton, Lodato, Lombardo, Lyons, Mallozzi, D. Martin, McGarry, McNeil, Mirkin, Mitchell, Neary, Rauh, Skigen, Summerville, Wallace, White, Young and Zelinsky in favor; Rep. Franzetti abstaining) (See [Vote Record No. 1014](#)).

Chair Skigen moved the approval of the [Capital Budget](#) in the amount of \$58,903,613. Said motion was seconded and approved by a vote of 31-5-0 (Reps. Berns, Boccuzzi, Cannady, Caterbone, Day, DeLuca, DePina, Diamond, Esposito, Fedeli, Figueroa, Franzetti, Heaphy, Layton, Lodato, Lombardo, Lyons, Mallozzi, D. Martin, McGarry, McNeill, Mitchell, Neary, Pia, Rauh, Skigen, Summerville, Wallace, White, Young and Zelinsky in favor; Reps. Cerasoli, Coppola, Gabriele, Larobina and Mirkin opposed) (See [Vote Record No. 1015](#)).

Chair Skigen moved the approval of the [WPCA Capital Budget](#) in the amount of \$2,387,273. Said motion was seconded and approved by a vote of 36-0-0 (Reps. Berns, Boccuzzi, Cannady, Caterbone, Cerasoli, Coppola, Day, DeLuca, DePina, Diamond, Esposito, Fedeli, Figueroa, Franzetti, Gabriele, Heaphy, Larobina, Layton, Lodato, Lombardo, Lyons, Mallozzi, D. Martin, McGarry, McNeil, Mirkin, Mitchell, Neary, Pia, Rauh, Skigen, Summerville, Wallace, White, Young and Zelinsky in favor) (See [Vote Record No. 1016](#)).

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 10:15 p.m.