

**FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE MEETING
OCTOBER 19, 2021, 6:00 P.M.
MINUTES**

1. Call to Order

A. Meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Chairman Leon Davidoff.

B. Attendees – Chairman Leon Davidoff, Mayor Shari Cantor, Councilor Mary Fay, Councilor Lee Gold, Councilor Liam Sweeney, Town Manager Matt Hart, Finance Services Director Peter Privitera, Budgets and Grants Manager Patricia Lewis, Human Resources Executive Direct Rick Ledwith, and Chief Information Officer Jared Morin.

2. Business Items

A. Meeting Minutes of September 30, 2021 – Councilor Sweeney motioned to accept the minutes. Councilor Fay seconded. The motion was accepted and approved.

B. Recommendations for Use of American Rescue Plan Funding – Mr. Hart briefly went over the proposal figures from the last meeting including \$18.8M for projects to be funded through the Rescue Plan monies and \$6.6M for projects funded through Municipal Bonds. The \$18.8M included \$1M in assistance for Arts, Culture and Human Services related non-profit organizations as well as another \$1M in assistance to small businesses. Mr. Hart stated they are still developing an application for use in both of those sectors. Mr. Hart stated once the Committee is comfortable with the initial plan, it should be taken to the stakeholder groups from the small business and non-profit communities to share the concepts and ideas and receive their input and reactions. For the remaining \$16.8M in Municipal Projects, it was recommended the Committee focus its attention on those initiatives. A public engagement component would be helpful there, maybe one or more public information sessions with members of the community as opposed to surveys only to discuss the plans and solicit their ideas. At the last meeting, it was also discussed how the \$6.6M would be funded for projects scheduled for municipal bonding. Several projects have already been approved through the Capital Improvement Program, for example, the Eisenhower Pool Project, but they are some years out.

It was recommended to use more of the Rescue Plan monies for projects that are clearly reimbursable under that category, i.e. stormwater improvements, which would free up bond funding within the early years of the existing Capital Improvement Program and could be redirected to fund these projects at an earlier point in time. Mr. Privitera pointed out some of the proposed projects are straight-out purchases of equipment and would only require a simple appropriation. Some of the projects would require going out to bid because there are multiple components, especially in accessibility improvements and pond restorations. If the Capital Budget were to be amended by moving up some projects, deleting others and adding more money to some, the amendment process would be like adopting a new Capital Budget

because the process is the same as the budget adoption process for the Capital Plan because of the dollar value being discussed.

C. Special Assistant to Town Manager: Equity Officer Position – Mr. Hart presented the job description for the Equity Officer position, which was uploaded to BoardDocs. Mr. Ledwith stated this “Leader of Equity” would not only work with the Town Leadership Team and employees to promote equity and inclusion throughout the organization but will also be a resource to the community, and the various boards and committees who represent the Town of West Hartford. This person will engage the workforce and committees in dialogue around racial and social equity and what it means to West Hartford to be a welcoming organization and community. There is a strategy in place to recruit this person, which includes local and regional conferences and municipalities, ICMA, Indeed, etc. The educational network will be a resource in addition to the consultants who have access to a good candidate pool.

D. FY 2021/22 General Fund Projection as of September 30, 2021 – Mr. Privitera made his apologies. He stated the analysis was incomplete as some information needed additional review.

3. Communications

Nothing reported.

4. Staff Reports

A. Human Resources – Mr. Ledwith highlighted a couple of areas of his report, which had been uploaded to BoardDocs. Recruitment activity remained at a very high level with over a dozen open recruitments ongoing and several new hires over the last several weeks. There are three leadership recruitments in-process; two internal promotional opportunities in Public Safety (Assistant Police Chief and Assistant Fire Chief) and one opportunity for a Library Director. The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion training continues throughout the organization. The consultant provided training for the Public Works Department on October 7 and the remaining non-public safety full-term employees will be trained in December. Following that, they will meet with the Police Chief and Fire Chief to strategize on how best to train fire and police personnel.

B. Town Clerk’s Office – Chairman Davidoff stated the Town Clerk was unavailable but her report could be found on BoardDocs.

C. Information Technology – Mr. Morin called attention to the application for ECF funding portion of his report. The Emergency Connectivity Fund is designed to help schools and libraries close the homework gap, is still in the initial throes but is a significant contribution to West Hartford (\$810,000 yearly in round one) to support Chromebooks and hotspots.

5. Adjournment

A motion was made by Councilor Sweeney to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Councilor Fay. The meeting was adjourned at 6:46 p.m.

/axb