

June 2, 2020

The Special Joint Meeting of the City Council and Board of Finance was held on May 26, 2020 and adjourned to June 2, 2020 in the City Hall Council Chambers, 111 North Main Street at 5:30 p.m. Present: Mayor Zoppo-Sassu; Council Members Barney, Fortier, Hahn, Kelley, Rosado, and Preleski; Commissioners LaMothe, Mace and Smith. Commissioners Burns, Calfe, Jones, O'Brien, and Thibeault were present by teleconference. Commissioner Mace was present by teleconference on May 26, 2020.

1. SPECIAL JOINT MEETING ADJOURNED TO JUNE 2, 2020.

On May 26, 2020 Mayor Zoppo-Sassu suggested adjourning the meeting for one week. She explained there were discussions with the unions that might result in additional cost savings in the budget.

A brief discussion was held by the Joint meeting members.

Ernesti Pitti, 65 Palmorr Place stated that the pandemic has negatively impacted residents and they are not in a position to absorb a tax increase.

Jeffrey Caggiano, 27 Cricket Hill Road suggested delaying the Memorial Boulevard School building project due to economic uncertainties.

On motion of Commissioner Smith and seconded by Council Member Preleski, it was unanimously voted at 6:34 p.m. on May 26, 2020: To adjourn the meeting until Tuesday, June 2, 2020 at 5:30 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers, Bristol, Connecticut.

(The Joint meeting resumed on June 2, 2020 at 5:30 p.m. beginning with the following agenda item.)

**2. ADOPTION OF CAPITAL BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020-2021
TOTALING \$5,397,000.**

Board of Finance approval presented.

Mayor Zoppo-Sassu stated that the grant funds for the Shrub Road project looked stable so it was removed from this budget as a capital project.

On motion of Commissioner Smith and seconded by Council Member Hahn, it was unanimously voted: To amend the Capital Budget for fiscal year 2020-2021 by reducing it \$690,000 for a total of \$5,397,000.

June 2, 2020

A roll call vote was taken.

	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>	<u>ABSTAIN</u>
Council Member Barney			
“ ” Fortier			
“ ” Hahn			
“ “ Kelley			
“ ” Preleski			
“ ” Rosado			
Commissioner Burns			
“ “ Calfe			
“ “ Jones			
“ ” LaMothe			
“ ” Mace			
“ ” O’Brien			
“ “ Smith			
“ ” Thibeault			
Mayor Zoppo-Sassu			

CAPITAL BUDGET AMENDED: *YES – 15; NO – 0; ABSTAIN – 0.*

On motion of Commissioner Smith and seconded by Council Member Hahn, it was unanimously voted: To adopt the Capital Budget, as amended, for fiscal year 2020-2021 totaling \$5,397,000.

A roll call vote was taken.

	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>	<u>ABSTAIN</u>
Council Member Barney			
“ ” Fortier			
“ ” Hahn			
“ “ Kelley			
“ ” Preleski			
“ ” Rosado			
Commissioner Burns			
“ “ Calfe			
“ “ Jones			
“ ” LaMothe			
“ ” Mace			
“ ” O’Brien			
“ “ Smith			
“ ” Thibeault			
Mayor Zoppo-Sassu			

CAPITAL BUDGET ADOPTED: *YES – 15; NO – 0; ABSTAIN – 0.*

June 2, 2020

3. ADOPTION OF BUDGET ESTIMATE FOR INTERNAL SERVICE FUND FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020-2021 TOTALING \$44,135,680; \$3,780,000 FOR NEW SELF-INSURED WORKERS' COMPENSATION FUND; AND \$40,355,680 FOR HEALTH BENEFITS FUND.

Board of Finance approval presented.

On motion of Commissioner Smith and seconded by Commissioner LaMothe, it was unanimously voted: To adopt the budget estimate for the Internal Service Fund for fiscal year 2020-2021 totaling \$44,135,680; \$3,780,000 for the New Self-Insured Workers' Compensation Fund; and \$40,355,680 for the Health Benefits Fund.

4. ADOPTION OF BUDGET ESTIMATE FOR BRISTOL WATER DEPARTMENT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020-2021 TOTALING \$8,742,051.

Board of Finance approval presented.

On motion of Commissioner Smith and seconded by Commissioner LaMothe, it was unanimously voted: To adopt the budget estimate for the Bristol Water Department for fiscal year 2020-2021 totaling \$8,742,051.

4. ADOPTION OF BUDGET ESTIMATE FOR SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL FUND FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020-2021 TOTALING \$1,500,000.

Board of Finance approval presented.

On motion of Commissioner Smith and seconded by Commissioner LaMothe, it was unanimously voted: To adopt the budget estimate for the Solid Waste Disposal Fund for fiscal year 2020-2021 totaling \$1,500,000.

5. ADOPTION OF BUDGET ESTIMATE FOR SEWER OPERATING AND ASSESSMENT FUND FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020-2021 TOTALING \$7,278,000.

Board of Finance approval presented.

On motion of Commissioner Smith and seconded by Commissioner LaMothe, it was unanimously voted: To adopt the budget estimate for the Sewer Operating and Assessment Fund for fiscal year 2020-2021 totaling \$7,278,000.

6. ADOPTION OF BUDGET ESTIMATE FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT FUND FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020-2021 TOTALING \$1,159,699: CONSISTING OF \$669,779 IN ENTITLEMENT FUNDS; \$41,000 IN REPROGRAMMED CDBG FUNDS; \$431,010 TRANSFERRED FROM GENERAL FUND; AND \$17,910 IN PROGRAM INCOME.

Board of Finance approval presented.

June 2, 2020

Justin Malley, Economic and Community Development Executive Director stated the \$17,000 difference in the CDBG budget was caused by a departmental oversight.

On motion of Commissioner Smith and seconded by Commissioner LaMothe, it was unanimously voted: To amend the budget estimate for the Community Development Block Grant Fund for fiscal year 2020-2021 by reducing it \$17,000 for a total of \$1,159,699: consisting of \$669,779 in Entitlement funds; \$41,000 in reprogrammed CDBG funds; \$431,010 transferred from the General Fund; and \$17,910 in Program Income.

On motion of Commissioner Smith and seconded by Commissioner Calfe (by teleconference), it was unanimously voted: To adopt the budget estimate for the Community Development Block Grant Fund, as amended, for fiscal year 2020-2021 totaling \$1,159,699: consisting of \$669,779 in Entitlement funds; \$41,000 in reprogrammed CDBG funds; \$431,010 transferred from the General Fund; and \$17,910 in Program Income.

7. ADOPTION OF BUDGET ESTIMATE FOR PINE LAKE CHALLENGE COURSE FUND FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020-2021 TOTALING \$115,000.

Board of Finance approval presented.

On motion of Commissioner Smith and seconded by Commissioner LaMothe, it was unanimously voted: To adopt the budget estimate for the Pine Lake Challenge Course Fund for fiscal year 2020-2021 totaling \$115,000.

8. ADOPTION OF BUDGET ESTIMATE FOR SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020-2021 TOTALING \$3,483,165.

Board of Finance approval presented.

On motion of Commissioner Smith and seconded by Commissioner LaMothe, it was unanimously voted: To adopt the budget estimate for the School Lunch Program for fiscal year 2020-2021 totaling \$3,483,165.

9. ADOPTION OF BUDGET ESTIMATE FOR TRANSFER STATION FUND FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020-2021 TOTALING \$747,545.

Board of Finance approval presented.

On motion of Commissioner Smith and seconded by Commissioner LaMothe, it was unanimously voted: To adopt the budget estimate for the Transfer Station Fund for fiscal year 2020-2021 totaling \$747,545.

10. ADOPTION OF GENERAL FUND BUDGET ESTIMATE FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020-2021 ENDING JUNE 30, 2021 TOTALING \$205,078,100.

Board of Finance approval presented.

June 2, 2020

Comptroller Diane Waldron presented additional reductions in the budget, including potential union savings and removal of the Shrub Road capital project. She also outlined the budget process and timeline.

A brief discussion was held by the Joint meeting members regarding the Board of Education furlough day and other potential union concessions.

Commissioner Smith stated that the fund balance was a resource to maintain the City's financial stability and not a vehicle to balance the budget. Use of the fund balance should be in response to emergencies, such as a lack of State funding or a local crises. He reminded the members the funds would have to be repaid at some point.

Board of Finance Chairperson John Smith presented the following budget message:

"To the Mayor, City Council, Citizens and Taxpayers of Bristol:

On behalf of the members of the Bristol Board of Finance, I present its recommended budget for the 2020-2021 fiscal year for adoption by the joint meeting of the City Council and Board of Finance as mandated by Section 25(l) of the Charter of the City of Bristol.

This budget represents a 2.49% increase above the City's 2019-2020 budget this that translates to an increase of 0.50 mills and equates to a 1.18% tax increase. Expenditure changes from 2019-2020 are as follows:

- *General City increased \$1.75 million or 2.38%.*
- *Debt Service and Capital Transfers decreased \$0.99 thousand or 8.29%*
- *Education increased \$4.23 million or 3.68%*

Revenue estimates remain relatively constant with 2019-2020 with the exception of Investment Income, which is estimated to be reduced by \$337,000. In light of current economic conditions resulting from the COVID 19 pandemic, interest rates have plummeted over the last few weeks and it is highly unlikely the City will be able to invest its cash balances at rates similar to the current and prior year. However estimated increases in building permit fees (\$150,000) and police special services (\$250,000) may partially mitigate the impact of that reduction. In addition the City's Grand List increase from \$3.945 billion to \$3.998 billion will generate an estimated \$2.03 million in new tax revenue at the current mill rate.

At June 30, 2019 the Joint Board set aside \$1 million in a Mill Rate Stabilization Fund primarily to be used to offset anticipated increases in future debt service costs as well as other expenses. Of this amount \$400,000 will be used to offset the increase in anticipated FY2021 health insurance expenses while \$600,000 will be used to help lessen the impact of the mill rate increase as well as \$1,000,000 that was segregated in Fund Balance for Economic Development. Additionally, in light of the economic issues resulting from the pandemic, the City extended the timeline for payment of all taxes to October 1, 2020 as allowed by the Governor's recent Executive Orders.

The budget process began well before there was any knowledge of a health crisis that would impact millions throughout the world. Department requests addressed both immediate and

June 2, 2020

future goals and objectives and in total represented an increase of \$11.1 million (5.53%) over the existing 2019-2020 budget:

- *General City, \$3.6 million or 5.38%*
- *Debt Service and Capital Transfers, \$385 thousand or 3.22%*
- *Education, \$6.76 million or 5.87%*

Additionally, capital requests totaled \$2.58 million and there was a projected 8% increase in health insurance.

As discussion at every level continued issues surrounding COVID-19 became more widespread. It was soon apparent that the virus was becoming a devastating factor not only to human life but also to the world economy. New health protocols were promulgated in most countries including the United States. Both the Federal and State Government issued health alerts and mandates led to a major shutdown of the economy. The impact on local businesses was severe. Consequently members of the Board of Finance, both individually and collectively, posed alternatives to reduce expenditures. The Mayor, Comptroller, along with their staff, and others reviewed various aspects of the City's operations as did the Superintendent of Schools and her Staff. With all parties working collaboratively, additional expenditure reductions were made resulting in a lower budget increase.

The economic impact of COVID-19 on State and Local governments is filled with conjecture. However, at the present time, Bristol is well prepared to deal with both operational and financial issues as they arise. We are strong financially and as a result are able to fund all municipal services albeit some are shuttered for health reasons. Additionally, Capital Projects such as the complete renovation of the Page Park Pool are continuing and we have policies in place to meet our financial obligations and maintain our favorable bond ratings from Fitch, Moody's and Standard and Poor's. Additionally, operational silos are beginning to disappear and with more shared services among Departments operational efficiencies are being achieved.

However, we do need to exercise caution as the financial picture for the immediate future is blurred. The Mayor's initiative to engage strategic planning is becoming a critical resource as the City is forced to deal with issues presently unknown.

Following department budget presentations the task of the Board of Finance was to consider all the information and develop a balanced budget for 2020-2021 that would continue to provide outstanding service to the residents and businesses located in Bristol. The Board believes the recommended 2020-2021 budget achieves that goal.

The 2020-2021 recommended budget totaling \$205,078,100 is a result of consultation, collaboration, and coordination among the operational and governance sections of the City. The future will mandate that all levels of public sector government function as a cohesive unit. It would appear that we, in Bristol, are working towards that process. With the Mayor's expansion of the role of the City's Capital Improvement Committee to include a strategic planning component the City will be better prepared to address short and long term goals not only from a financial perspective but also to recognize the elements necessary to pursue economic growth for the community.

June 2, 2020

The Board wishes to acknowledge those who played a significant role in the budgetary process beginning with City department heads and Board of Education Administrators who were asked to submit not only financial data for 2020-2021 but also department short term and long term goals and objectives.

To Diane Waldron, Comptroller, and her staff: Robin Manuele, Assistant Comptroller, Jodi McGrane, Assistant to the Comptroller, Skip Gillis, Senior Accountant and Sharon Chaika, Budget and Accounting Assistant --- Thank you for your leadership, for providing current information, for expressing notes of caution when necessary and for your sage advice and counsel throughout the process.

A personal thank you to the members of the Board of Finance who gave freely of their time and talents attending meetings, listening to and reviewing data, participating in discussions and making difficult decisions regarding the City’s 2020-2021 budget plan. Additionally the Mayor’s Capital and Strategic Planning Committee was involved reviewing major capital requests, financing alternatives, and presenting recommendations to be included in the capital budget.”

On motion of Council Member Preleski and seconded by Commissioner Smith, it was unanimously voted: To amend the General Fund Budget for fiscal year 2020-2021 by reducing it \$205,608,100 to a total of \$205,078,100.

A roll call vote was taken.

	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>	<u>ABSTAIN</u>
Council Member Barney			
“ ” Fortier			
“ ” Hahn			
“ “ Kelley			
“ ” Preleski			
“ ” Rosado			
Commissioner Burns			
“ “ Calfe			
“ “ Jones			
“ ” LaMothe			
“ ” Mace			
“ ” O’Brien			
“ “ Smith			
“ “ Thibeault			
Mayor Zoppo-Sassu			

GENERAL FUND BUDGET AMENDED: YES – 15; NO – 0; ABSTAIN – 0.

On motion of Council Member Preleski and seconded by Commissioner Smith, it was voted: To adopt the General Fund Budget, as amended, for fiscal year 2020-2021 totaling \$205,078,100.

June 2, 2020

A roll call vote was taken.

	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>	<u>ABSTAIN</u>
Council Member	Barney	Commissioner	Thibeault
“ ”	Fortier	“ ”	LaMothe
“ ”	Hahn		
“ ”	Kelley		
“ ”	Preleski		
“ ”	Rosado		
Commissioner	Burns		
“ ”	Calfe		
“ ”	Jones		
“ ”	Mace		
“ ”	O’Brien		
“ ”	Smith		
	Mayor Zoppo-Sassu		

GENERAL FUND BUDGET ADOPTED: YES – 13; NO – 2; ABSTAIN – 0.

The Mayor declared the budget adopted.

The following Proclamation was read by Mayor Zoppo-Sassu:

WHEREAS, Section 25(l) of the City Charter provides that upon completion of the budget by the Board of Finance, the same shall be submitted to a joint meeting of the City Council and the Board of Finance; and

WHEREAS, the budget as prepared and passed by the Board of Finance was presented to a joint meeting duly called; and

WHEREAS, revisions were made and approved to the budget at said joint meeting.

THEREFORE, the budget as prepared by the Board of Finance, as revised, is the budget of the City of Bristol for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2020 and ending June 30, 2021.

11. TAX RATE SET AT 38.35 MILLS FOR PERSONAL PROPERTY, REAL ESTATE, AND MOTOR VEHICLES AS RECOMMENDED BY BOARD OF FINANCE.

Board of Finance approval presented.

On motion of Council Member Fortier and seconded by Commissioner Smith, it was voted: To amend the tax rate from 38.50 to 38.35 mills.

June 2, 2020

A roll call vote was taken.

	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>	<u>ABSTAIN</u>
Council Member	Barney	Commissioner Thibeault	
“ ”	Fortier		
“ ”	Hahn		
“ ”	Kelley		
“ ”	Preleski		
“ ”	Rosado		
Commissioner	Burns		
“ ”	Calfe		
“ ”	Jones		
“ ”	LaMothe		
“ ”	Mace		
“ ”	O’Brien		
“ ”	Smith		
	Mayor Zoppo-Sassu		

TAX RATE AMENDED: YES – 14; NO – 1; ABSTAIN – 0.

On motion of Council Member Fortier and seconded by Commissioner Smith, it was voted: That a tax rate of 38.35 mills, as amended, for personal property, real estate, and motor vehicles be laid on the Grand List of 2019 for the General City to wit: \$205,078,100, as amended, grand list with the first payment due and collectible the 1st day of July, 2020 and the second payment to be due and collectible on the 1st day of January, 2021.

A roll call vote was taken.

	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>	<u>ABSTAIN</u>
Council Member	Barney	Commissioner Thibeault	
“ ”	Fortier		
“ ”	Hahn		
“ “	Kelley		
“ ”	Preleski		
“ ”	Rosado		
Commissioner	Burns		
“ “	Calfe		
“ “	Jones		
“ ”	LaMothe		
“ ”	Mace		
“ ”	O’Brien		
“ “	Smith		
	Mayor Zoppo-Sassu		

TAX RATE ADOPTED: YES – 14; NO – 1; ABSTAIN – 0.

June 2, 2020

12. MAYOR OR ACTING MAYOR AND CHAIRPERSON OF BOARD OF FINANCE AUTHORIZED TO SIGN NECESSARY RATE BOOKS.

Board of Finance approval presented.

On motion of Council Member Barney and seconded by Council Member Hahn, it was unanimously voted: That the Mayor or Acting Mayor and the Chairperson of the Board of Finance be authorized to sign the necessary rate books for the Tax Collector.

A roll call vote was taken.

	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>	<u>ABSTAIN</u>
Council Member Barney			
“ ” Fortier			
“ ” Hahn			
“ “ Kelley			
“ ” Preleski			
“ ” Rosado			
Commissioner Burns			
“ “ Calfe			
“ “ Jones			
“ ” LaMothe			
“ ” Mace			
“ ” O’Brien			
“ “ Smith			
“ ” Thibeault			
Mayor Zoppo-Sassu			

MOTION APPROVED: YES – 15; NO – 0; ABSTAIN – 0.

13. ADOPTION OF SINGLE INSTALLMENT TAX PAYMENT FOR PROPERTY TAX DUE IN AN AMOUNT OF \$100 OR LESS PAYABLE JULY 1, 2020 AND TWO INSTALLMENTS BASED ON PROPERTY TAX DUE IN AN AMOUNT GREATER THAN \$100 PAYABLE ON JULY 1, 2020 AND JANUARY 1, 2021.

Board of Finance approval presented.

Commissioner Thibeault suggested four installments for property taxes to help families and businesses impacted by the COVID pandemic this year.

Mayor Zoppo-Sassu noted that the tax collector indicated four tax installments would create additional administrative costs and processing for this year.

Commissioner O’Brien stated that as a Board of Finance member her responsibility was to make sure there was a smooth operation for revenues coming in, but the idea was worth future review.

June 2, 2020

On motion of Commissioner Thibeault (by teleconference) and seconded by Commissioner LaMothe, it was defeated: To amend the installment tax payment for property tax due in an amount greater than \$100 from two installments to four installments, payable on July 1, 2020, October 1, 2020, January 1, 2021, and April 1, 2021.

A roll call vote was taken.

<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>	<u>ABSTAIN</u>
Commissioner Burns	Council Member Barney	
“ “ Jones	“ ” Fortier	
“ ” LaMothe	“ ” Hahn	
“ ” Thibeault	“ “ Kelley	
	“ ” Preleski	
	“ ” Rosado	
	Commissioner Calfe	
	“ “ Mace	
	“ “ O’Brien	
	“ ” Smith	
	Mayor Zoppo-Sassu	

AMENDMENT DEFEATED: YES – 4; NO – 11; ABSTAIN – 0.

On motion of Commissioner Smith and seconded by Council Member Preleski, it was voted: To adopt a single installment tax payment for property tax due in an amount of \$100 or less payable on July 1, 2020 and two installments based on a property tax due in an amount greater than \$100 payable on July 1, 2020 and January 1, 2021.

(Commissioners Jones, LaMothe and Thibeault voted “No”.)

14. ADOPTION OF SINGLE INSTALLMENT TAX PAYMENT FOR MOTOR VEHICLES IN 2020-2021 FISCAL YEAR TO BE PAYABLE JULY 1, 2020.

Board of Finance approval presented.

On motion of Commissioner Smith and seconded by Commissioner LaMothe, it was unanimously voted: To adopt a single installment tax payment for motor vehicles in the 2020-2021 fiscal year to be payable July 1, 2020.

15. ADJOURNMENT.

At 6:51 p.m., on motion of Commissioner Smith and seconded, it was unanimously voted: To adjourn.

ATTEST: _____
Therese Pac
Town and City Clerk