

SPECIAL FINANCE COMMITTEE
(BUDGET HEARINGS)

Special meeting of the Finance Committee was held on Tuesday, April 24, 2007 in the Council Chambers, City Hall, 869 Park Ave., Cranston, Rhode Island.

The meeting was called to order at 6:48 P.M. by the Chair.

Present: Councilman Terence Livingston, Chair
Council Vice-President Paula McFarland, Vice-Chair
Councilman Anthony J. Lupino
Councilman Emilio L. Navarro (appeared at 7:10 P.M.)
Councilman Jeffrey P. Barone
Council President Aram G. Garabedian

Also Present: Councilman Richard D. Santamaria, Jr.
Councilman John E. Lanni, Jr.
Council Member Maria A. Bucci
Ernest Carlucci, Director of Administration
Frank Migliorelli, Deputy Director of Administration
Vito Sciolto, City Solicitor
Corsino Delgado, Director of Finance
Mike Igoe, City Controller
Donald Gray, City Treasurer
Steve Woerner, City Council Internal Auditor
Maria Medeiros Wall, City Clerk
Rosalba Zanni, Assistant City Clerk/Clerk of Committees

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Paula Rocha, Director of Economic Development, appeared to speak. Council Vice-President McFarland asked Ms. Rocha what some of the Tax Incentives are that this department will be giving out in the next year. Ms. Rocha stated that Kamco Supply had applied for a five year Tax Incentive and Oaklawn Realty/Washington Trust recently has filed for a Tax Incentive. Council Vice-President McFarland questioned if Dave Maher, former Director, is still working in this department. Ms. Rocha stated that as of April 9, 2007, Mr. Maher was transferred to the Building Inspector's Office.

Councilman Lanni stated that he read in today's newspaper regarding Mulligan's Island closing and a new development being proposed for that site. He asked how much revenue they generate. Ms. Rocha stated that she does not have any specifics to this plan. The City Planner, who is present this evening, may have some information regarding this proposal.

Peter LaPolla, City Planner, appeared to speak and stated that the owner of the property has applied for a Master Plan permit. They will be filing for a Comprehensive Plan and Zone Change, which will come before the Council. They are proposing a 350,000 sq. ft. retail development. As far as taxes, they will either submit or they will be requested to submit a fiscal impact report.

Councilman Barone questioned why the 30% increase in "Federal Grants". Ms. Rocha stated that there is a grant for \$200,000 awarded by EPA in September, 2005. Councilman Barone questioned the \$1,000 increase in "Travel". Ms. Rocha stated that this is for conference in the fall in the Philadelphia area. Councilman Barone questioned what "Programs Activities" is. Ms. Rocha stated that this would be for items such as a meeting with Johnson and Wales on May 8, 2007, and also for small business workshops and roundtable.

Council Vice-President McFarland asked what this department has done since she has been Director. Ms. Rocha stated that this department has sent out 400 pieces of mail to all the business in the Enterprise Zone, including information in our Revolving Loan Fund.

Council President Garabedian asked what kind of database this department has of the different segments of businesses in the City. Ms. Rocha stated that, currently, to her knowledge, one does not exist.

Public Speakers:

Robert Clarkin appeared to speak and asked for update on the Park Cinema. Ms. Rocha stated that at the last site visit, contractors were working and were concentrating on the staging area and were on track with the timeline.

Steve Stycos, 37 Ferncrest Ave., appeared to speak and asked how much the Tax Incentives mentioned earlier by Ms. Rocha, are going to cost the City per year. Ms. Rocha stated that she does not have this information at this time, but will forward them to the Clerk.

PUBLIC WORKS

Chair asked what the status is regarding the hiring of a Public Works Director. Mr. Carlucci stated that we are in the process of advertising for this position. We have checked with the people that had applied previously for this position and they all asked for a four year contract with more money. We have two people who would be willing to come in as a temporary position.

Councilman Lupino questioned if the Administration has considered approaching a retired person, who would be willing to take this position, since there is only approximately one and a half year left in this Administration's term. Mr. Carlucci stated that they have contacted engineering firms to see if they can recommend anyone they might know, but we have not had any success as of yet.

Council President Garabedian asked if the City has an engineer on staff, and if there is, has the Administration approached him to take on these duties in the interim. Mr. Carlucci stated that the City does have a registered engineer on staff and he has spoken to that person and he is not really interested in taking this position. He thinks he will step to the forefront for us if we really need to have someone fill that position soon.

Council President Garabedian stated that the former Director of Public Works told the Council that before he left the City, he would provide the Council with a summary of projects that were ongoing, he asked if this was done. Mr. Carlucci stated that the former Director did provide a list to him and has offered to meet with him, if necessary. Chair asked if the Council can be provided with a copy of all the projects Public Works plans on working on this coming year. Mr. Carlucci stated, yes.

Council Vice-President McFarland asked what the City is doing regarding replacement of lighting. Mr. Carlucci stated that this is being handled through the Mayor's Office.

SEWER

Shariar Alam, City's Environmental Engineer, appeared to speak. Council Vice-President McFarland asked what the potential increase is to the taxpayers. Mr. Alam stated 3.68%. Council Vice-President McFarland asked who makes the determination of responsibility regarding sewer claims. Mr. Alam stated the Sewer Claims Committee, but he does not know who serves on this Committee. Council Vice-President McFarland asked that she would like to see the Ordinance that gives this authority. Council Vice-President McFarland asked if we have come to a conclusion of how much the Pastore Complex is going to pay. Mr. Alam stated that last year, an Ordinance was passed, but we have not resolved this issue for this year.

Chair asked where the 1.6% increase is from, as to the contract with Veolia Water. Mr. Alam stated that he uses a spreadsheet to determine this number.

Council President Garabedian asked if we are getting a settlement from RI Resource Recovery. Mr. Alam stated that we did receive some money and once the project is done in Johnston, we will be receiving another payment. Mr. Carlucci stated that the settlement was for approximately \$1.8 million. We received approximately \$600,000 of this money. It was structured over three separate payment with another payment arriving sometime in August and another in 2008. Councilman Barone stated that of the \$1.8 million, he asked if that is part of the \$17,997 requested. Mr. Carlucci stated that a portion of it is. It should show up in the Revenue side.

Councilman Lupino asked how much of this budget is going to be dedicated to maintenance of the new lines being placed in Western Cranston. Mr. Carlucci stated that he would have to check into this.

Council President Garabedian asked if there has been a Performance Audit done of the contract the City has with Veolia Water. He stated that he would like the Administration to get an estimate of what it would cost to do this audit. Council President Garabedian asked what the total amount for sewer would be for all the schools. Mr. Alam stated that he does not have this information, but he will provide this information to the Council.

HIGHWAY

Ernest DePari, Highway Superintendent, appeared to speak. Chair asked when the sewer camera will be placed in operation. Mr. DePari stated that they are negotiating to get a van to use for this. Councilman Barone questioned why the fire rescue that was donated by the Fire Department can't be used. Mr. DePari stated that after speaking with Gerard Scotti, of Vehicle Maintenance, the van is old and there would be a \$4,000 to \$5,000 cost per year for maintenance, plus the lights would need to be removed and other parts from the van. Mr. Carlucci stated that we are not just looking at a van, we are looking at the rescue and also at a trailer, which would be able to be attached to any truck.

Councilman Navarro questioned where the City will be negotiating for a truck for the camera. Mr. DePari stated that he is negotiating with Mr. Carlucci as to whether to get a van, trailer or truck. He is not negotiating with a dealership. Councilman Navarro stated that we should have a few options available and we should still consider the rescue. He also questioned if there is someone who is trained to use this camera within the Public Works Department. Mr. DePari stated that Labor Equipment Operators are all capable of running the camera. The City had a person come from Wisconsin and train the General Foreman and the General Foreman will train the seven Equipment Operators.

Council President Garabedian stated he would like to see the Charter followed and it is time to end all the Special Funds. There is only one Fund and that is the General Fund.

Councilman Barone suggested to Mr. Carlucci, as an option, to get a trailer that can equip this camera. If the truck breaks down, the camera can just be placed on the trailer and still be used.

Councilman Lupino asked if road repairs come out of the Public Works or Highway Budget. Mr. DePari stated that this would be in the Capital Budget.

Chair asked that the Council be provided with a copy of the streets and sidewalks, by Ward, to be paved. He asked that this information be provided to the City Clerk to be distributed to the Council.

BUILDING MAINTENANCE

George David, Building Maintenance Supervisor, appeared to speak. Chair asked what the cost for utilities would be for the new Police Station. Mr. David stated approximately \$40,000 plus a year for electric, same for heating; Equipment in the amount of \$68,000. Line item #54300 "Maintenance Contracts" will be amended to add approximately \$35,000.

Council Vice-President McFarland asked the following question on behalf of Council President Garabedian: the Youth Center has -0- allocated to it. She questioned if CDBG money can be used. Mr. David stated that CDBG money will take care of very very little. Council Vice-President McFarland asked what would be the allocation if we had to make additional line item. Mr. David stated approximately \$8,000 for repairs and upgrades to the bathrooms, ceiling tiles and there are other items that need to be addressed.

Council President Garabedian asked Administration to look at the Teen Center in regards to some new policies, use of the building and the possibility of limiting it to the citizens of Cranston. Council Vice-President McFarland stated that we can't limit it to the City residents because when this Center was established, it was established to be open to anyone who meets requirements because of CDBG money.

ENGINEERING

Nick Capezza, Chief Engineer, appeared to speak. Councilman Barone asked how many employees are in this Division. Mr. Capezza stated, eight total.

Council President Garabedian asked Mr. Capezza what some of this duties are. Mr. Capezza stated that he is Chief Engineer, responsible for all duties in this Division, overseeing all Capital Projects in the City and reviewing and monitoring developments.

CARE OF TREES

Nick Capezza, Chief Engineer, appeared to speak. Council Vice-President McFarland asked what trees are being maintained as far as “Spraying of Trees”, under this budget. Mr. Capezza stated that the City tries to spray trees once a year, it does not happen every year, depending on what is left in the budget. This year we have a little left from now until the end of June. Council Vice-President McFarland asked who makes the requests. Mr. Capezza stated that the Tree Warden comes to him asking for a specific area to be addressed, as to spraying of the trees or maintaining them. Mr. Capezza stated that last year there was a request of approximately \$100,000 and it never got out of the Mayor’s Office at that amount and the Council appropriated more money than was asked for, but that is a bare bones amount. We do what we can afford to do.

FLEET MAINTENANCE

Gerard Scotti, Fleet Manager, appeared to speak. Chair questioned the vacant Mechanic position that is funded and asked if this position is needed. Mr. Scotti stated that it is funded. His Division cannot do without this position. Right now, they are already behind in preventive maintenance.

Councilman Navarro asked Mr. Scotti how he came up with the \$4,000 to \$5,000 a year for maintenance of the donated rescue vehicle to be used for the sewer camera. Mr. Scotti stated that this would be to outfit it. It would cost approximately \$1,500 to \$2,000 to keep this vehicle on the road. He asked that the Council keep in mind that this is an old vehicle. Councilman Navarro questioned “Automotive Equipment and Parts” and asked Mr. Scotti if the expenses are separated by vehicle as to how much each vehicle is costing or is it just a total amount or cost for the entire fleet per year. Mr. Scotti stated that right now, he does it for the whole year for the whole fleet. They are looking at some software that would be able to break this down per vehicle and how much is spent on each part.

TRAFFIC SAFETY

Dave Ferguson, Public Safety Engineer, appeared to speak. Council Vice-President McFarland thanked Mr. Ferguson on behalf of the Council and the Administration for the CUAVA and for working very diligently to get the signs out, although only \$3,000 was allocated for the signs for “Cranston United Against Violence & Abuse” that will be going up in all of our public parks and recreational facilities letting people know that Cranston is a safety community. She wants to make sure that \$17,000 replacement signs is a lower number than the \$20,000 that has been allocated before. She questioned if we need to allocate a few thousand dollars more for replacement in that \$17,000 that has been reduced from \$20,000 to \$17,000. Mr. Ferguson gave an update on the status of meeting with Atlantic Highway. He will be doing that tomorrow to go over the documents that were put together, specifically to come up with a sign for these areas. The reduction from \$20,000 to \$17,000 came around the fact that when former Mayor Laffey was in Office a few years ago, he put extra money in his budget to buy a substantial amount of stop signs that were to be used as part of the cleanup of the neighborhoods and he still has a good number of them in inventories. This is why he decided to reduce the overall cost of sign requirements by amount of additional stop signs he has. We really don't know what we are going to be charged for these signs until we sit down with Atlantic Highway tomorrow. Mr. Ferguson also stated that he will advise the Council via e-mail on the outcome of this meeting prior to the Budget Adoption.

Councilman Lanni stated that former Mayor Laffey implemented the speed bumps throughout the City. He does not see them in use. He asked if this Division plans to use them in the future or are they obsolete. Mr. Ferguson stated that the material itself, is not obsolete, the program appears to be because he has asked for additional funds in the past while former Mayor Laffey was still in Office, to make this a fully functioning program to acquire some additional speed tables to try in other areas in the City where there actively is a substantial need. It was to be a two-phase program and the first phase was to install it, make sure that prior to installation the requirement was there and once we installed them, do a post installation to see whether or not they did the job and if they did, then come in with permanent tables. Councilman Lanni stated that due to this, we really don't anticipate using this program. Mr. Ferguson stated that there is not a program at this point. It is a very labor intensive program. His department was severally understaffed to do a maintenance on the existing as well as to install and remove them. Councilman Lanni stated that if this is not going to be used, he asked if there is a market for this type of program. Mr. Ferguson stated that he had thought of the possibility of installing them somewhat permanently in some of our school areas, where we really need to concentrate on safety. He suggested that his department work with the Police Department, School Department and the Statewide Planning Department and Federal Highway Administration to try to get additional funds to do a safe routes to school program and if in fact we can get additional funds from them, they would be integral to that safe routes to school.

Council President Garabedian questioned the process of street signs being installed. Mr. Ferguson stated that the Federal Highway Administration and several other organizations put certain mandates on cities and towns throughout the country to update their infrastructures with respect to informational signage like our street signs. Because of 911 responses and part of that was to come up with a different material. They wanted something more of a retro reflectivity so that both in low light and under the light steel beam from a vehicle, they could be spotted very easily. The City of Cranston has invested over the last two years, under the mandate by the Federal Highway Program, whereby under the Capital Budget, we were given approximately \$65,000 per year to purchase materials and equipment to make the signs, which we make ourselves now. We are behind in the program in the sense that he anticipated. He did indicate that under the Capital Budget this year, he did request the \$65,000, because we have additional materials still in place. We have two additional programs that are labor intensive that suffer some way or another. Striping program effects City-Wide Sign Making Program because the laborers that are painting every day are not there making signs every day or installing them and he has always been one person short. He wishes the Administration and the Council take a look at that aspect and at some point, a technician be hired to help in our program. We are losing ground because of lack of personnel and this is not fair to the citizens of the City.

REFUSE REMOVAL

Steve Iacobucci, Rodent Control Coordinator, appeared to speak. Council President Garabedian asked if the City will meet the 20% for recycling level this year. Mr. Iacobucci stated, not this year. Council President Garabedian asked what has to be done to do that. Mr. Iacobucci stated that a person was hired two months ago to handle the Recycling Program and he has been going street to street to monitor this. Council President Garabedian questioned the 6% increase in hauling fees. Mr. Iacobucci stated that this would be Waste Management and the problem with that was when it was funded last year, it was the incorrect amount. It was supposed to be \$3,150,000, but only \$3,105,000 was funded. He does not know if this was a typo or not.

Councilman Barone spoke regarding removal of yard waste bags and stated that the Board of Contract and Purchase discussed this issue. He does not think the bid that came in was \$67,000. He asked if the City purchases these bags. Mr. Iacobucci stated that the City does purchase the bags in bulk and sells them to local retailers and they sell them to the residents. Councilman Barone stated that the Board of Contract and Purchase had a big discussion in reference to the City purchasing the bags and selling them to the retailers so people can purchase them. He questions if we need all these bags. We are not in the bag business. Mr. Iacobucci stated that when the Yard Waste Program started, the City purchased the bags in bulk to keep the price low to the residents and that continued on. Councilman Barone asked if there is a larger percentage of residents that use barrels marked "Yard Waste" as opposed to the bags. Mr. Iacobucci stated that he believes that there are more people using the bags.

Council President Garabedian asked if there is a savings to the City in using the bags. Mr. Iacobucci stated that right now, yard waste gets dumped at the State facility at no charge.

Chair questioned what the penalty is if we do not meet the 20%. Mr. Iacobucci stated that the State has a grant program of approximately \$300,000 for cities who meet the 20% recycling level and they get a portion of that grant money.

Councilman Lanni questioned the big trash containers used in Warwick and Providence. He asked if Cranston has any plans to have this program in the near future. Mr. Iacobucci stated that we had this in our current contract. It was supposed to start approximately four years ago, but it was never followed through because there is an initial cost of approximately \$3 million for purchasing the bins, so no one wanted to take action on this.

Councilman Lupino asked if the 20% recycling level is determined by weight or volume or a combination of the two. Mr. Iacobucci stated that it is by weight, it is what we take up as solid waste and what we recycle, it is a fraction of that. Councilman Lupino asked if municipal waste get factored into the percentage. Mr. Iacobucci stated, yes, the schools, libraries and municipal buildings are all factored into that.

Public Speakers:

Robert Clarkin appeared to speak regarding the “Building Maintenance” budget and stated that former Mayor Laffey was not responsible for zeroing out the budget for the Youth Center. He asked what the year to date is for white goods program. Mr. Igoe stated that through March, the City has spent \$82,705. Mr. Clarkin spoke regarding “Highway” line item #54016 “Uniforms” and questioned why that amount is higher than last year. Mr. DePari stated that the Teamsters have contractual uniforms and the Laborers do not have uniforms, they have clothing allowance.

Steve Stycos, 37 Ferncrest Ave., appeared to speak and stated that since the Mayor is proposing level funding the schools, we need to look at the following to free up some money for the schools:

- We need to work on increasing recycling. One way to do that would be a pay as you throw system;
- Include a flyer with the tax bills enforcing recycling to make taxpayers more aware of the recycling program;

- Server fees for the schools is \$117,000 and the School Committee endorsed a proposal to be presented to the Council and the Mayor whereby, right now there are two workers in the Parks and Recreation Department who drive to Rhodes School, Edgewood Highlands and other schools throughout the City and empty trash barrels from various locations every day. What the School Department endorsed was that the School Department would have their custodians go out to Rhodes School and other schools in the City and pick up the trash and throw it in the dumpster, in exchange if the City would pay their sewer fees;
- Look at reducing street lighting;
- Look at tax breaks in Economic Development.

PARKS AND RECREATION

Anthony Liberatore, Director of Parks and Recreation, appeared to speak. Council President Garabedian stated that there is an Ordinance on the books requiring that we have to have a lottery for summer employment. He asked if this lottery is going to be advertised. Mr. Liberatore stated that the lottery will be held in the Council Chambers on May 22, 2007 at 11:00 A.M. and the Mayor will be pulling the first name. This lottery will be advertised in the newspaper.

Councilman Lanni stated that he spoke to Mr. Liberatore regarding the proposal to place synthetic turf at the Stadium and he asked Mr. Liberate for an update. Mr. Liberatore stated that this did go through the Planning Commission and was placed in the Capital Budget with the help of Council Vice-President McFarland, who serves on the Planning Commission. Councilman Lanni asked what would happen if graffiti were to be sprayed over this turf. Mr. Liberatore stated that he was guaranteed by the company that installs the turf that there is solution to remove it.

Councilman Lupino asked what positions would not be open to the lottery. Mr. Liberatore stated any supervisory positions and lifeguards.

Councilman Barone asked how much it would cost for the turf. Mr. Liberatore stated \$750,000. Councilman Barone questioned if the turf is needed. The Mayor is planning to raise taxes and level fund the schools and by spending \$750,000 on synthetic turf is ridiculous. Mr. Liberatore stated that the City will be putting out money, but the City will be taking in money. The field would be used not just for football games, but soccer and lacrosse and would be able to host championship games.

Councilman Lupino asked if CLCF paid to have the tubing placed on the fence at Brayton Ave. field. Mr. Liberatore stated that CLCF paid \$2,300 in full for the tubing. They did obtain a permit from the City to place it on the fence.

Mr. Liberatore addressed the statement made earlier by Mr. Stycos in reference to the suggestion that the School employees would pick up trash at the schools. He stated that his staff lines the fields, cut the grass, among other duties, for no fee to the School Department and it comes out of his budget.

INSPECTIONS AND ZONING

Gary Stepalavich, Plan Review/Zoning Inspector, appeared to speak. Councilman Barone stated that the biggest complaints about this department that he has received since he has been on the Council is the length of time it takes to get a permit. He asked if this budget addresses that situation. Mr. Stepalavich stated that his office is bare bones and doing the best they can. They really do need another Plan Review or Permit Technician position. Councilman Barone asked how many calls the Inspections Office receives for Code Enforcement. Mr. Stepalavich stated approximately 20 a day. Councilman Barone asked what the collection ratio on violations is. Mr. Stepalavich stated very little. They do not have the manpower to actively fine people.

Council Vice-President McFarland asked if there is any need to use differential account. Mr. Stepalavich stated that a Senior Clerk position would be upgraded to a Principle Clerk and this is the differential. Council Vice-President McFarland questioned what step this would be at. She also stated that the Council in the past would receive monthly reports regarding minimum housing issues and asked if this has stopped, since she has not received any reports in months. Mr. Stepalavich stated that he does not know, but he can check with the Acting Building Inspector, Steve Rioles. Council Vice-President McFarland stated that it would be a cost saving to send these reports to the Clerk's Office either monthly or quarterly or e-mail them to the Council.

Councilman Navarro asked how the City of Cranston is in comparison with other municipalities in regards to permitting fees. Mr. Stepalavich stated that we are told we are the highest in the State, besides Providence.

Chair asked Mr. Stepalavich is he is comfortable with the Revenue Budget. Mr. Stepalavich stated, yes.

Councilman Lanni asked if we are still using the fast track process for issuing permits. Mr. Stepalavich stated, not now. The Administration is not comfortable in this process being used. This process was in the Code at one time and then it was taken out.

Mr. Carlucci stated that the Mayor has formed a Commission in regards to this department to see what their needs are. That Commission has recommended increasing the staff. Due to financial restraints, the Administration did not increase staff in this department.

Council Vice-President McFarland questioned if the Data Entry Clerk position is vacant. Mr. Carlucci stated, yes. Council Vice-President McFarland asked if this position is really needed or if it is possible to upgrade this position to possibly a Permit Technician. Mr. Stepalavich stated that he feels this position is needed. He indicated that there are piles of paperwork that needs to be entered into the computer and there is no one to do it.

PLANNING

Peter LaPolla, City Planner, appeared to speak. Chair asked what the status of the Update to the Comprehensive Plan is. Mr. LaPolla stated that the draft is being revised and a public hearing will be held. Chair questioned the status of the Harbor Management Plan. Mr. LaPolla stated that one has not been done yet that he knows of. Councilman Lanni stated that prior to the previous Planning Director leaving the City, he told the Council that they would be provided with a copy of the draft of the Comprehensive Plan. One was never received and he stated that he will not vote on a final document without viewing a draft of it first. Chair asked that the Council be provided with a copy of this draft.

CAPITAL BUDGET

Councilman Barone asked if the City will be impacted of the freeze that was announced last week, as far as the school projects. Mr. Carlucci stated, no, because we have not applied for any new bonding and there are no plans to do that.

Councilman Barone asked how much bonding authority we have for the proposed budget. Mr. Carlucci stated none for this budget. Mr. Woerner stated that we have \$14 million in actual cash as of March 31 and we have authority to borrow \$24 million, plus there might be other authority.

Councilman Barone asked the Finance Director what the percentage is of debt service now and at what point would the red flag start going up with the bond rating agencies.

Council President Garabedian stated that he has a big concern in regarding the \$750,000 budgeted to house a fire truck. He is asking the Administration to look into a better way to house this ladder truck. Mr. Carlucci stated this truck is too large to fit into Station 3 and because that Station is beyond repairs, this allocation would be to make the Station larger in order for the ladder truck to fit.

Council President Garabedian asked what the \$521,000 for fiber optic installation is for. Council Vice-President McFarland stated that this is for communications and GIS and Internet.

Council President Garabedian asked if there is a list of the playgrounds and site upgrades available and if there is, he would like the Council to receive copies of these lists along with any infrastructure, sidewalk and highway repairs. Chair asked that these lists be provided to the Council.

Councilman Lanni addressed the ladder truck that won't fit in Station 3 and asked if it will fit into any other station in the City. Mr. Carlucci stated that he is not sure.

Chair indicated that the Parks and Recreation Director did submit via e-mail to the Council the lists of playgrounds with the questionnaire.

Councilman Lupino asked if the Fire Department proposed adding an additional rescue in Western Cranston. Mr. Carlucci stated that he does not believe so. Council Vice-President McFarland indicated that looking at the Capital Budget, there is a new Fire Department Headquarters listed there for 2010-2012 for approximately \$8 million for a 5-year Capital plan, so they are planning a new headquarters in the future somewhere in Western Cranston.

Councilman Lupino stated that the amount listed in the School Capital Budget for roof project at Knollwood seems low and he questioned why. **Joel Zisseron**, Director of Plant Operations for the School Department, appeared to speak and stated that it is a small area, it is not a large roof.

Councilman Navarro asked if all the project listed in the 2006-2007 Capital Budget have been completed. Mr. LaPolla stated, to his understanding, money has been budgeted, but a large number of the projects have not been started.

Public Speakers:

Robert Clarkin appeared to speak and stated that he thinks this is not the time to install synthetic turf at the Stadium. If you can show that it is going to generate income, then it could be considered. He also spoke regarding the lottery for summer employment and stated that the Council should change the lottery process, whereby once a person is chosen through the lottery, they should be allowed to stay the following year and not have to go through the lottery again. He asked if the Finance Director has any concerns on how the rating agency would look at the City by not fully funding the pension fund and spending money on a synthetic turf. Council Vice-President McFarland stated that the Capital Budget is just a wish list. Mr. Clarkin asked Solicitor if there is a public document available showing any line item in the budget explaining the increase or decrease in the budget. Mr. Garganese stated that he would have to look into that. Mr. Carlucci stated to Mr. Clarkin that if there is a line item he would like this information for, it can be provided to him.

Steve Stycos appeared to speak regarding the synthetic turf and stated that this is a bad idea. The cost of \$750,000 is not just \$750,000, it is plus interest. This is tough time and we do not need to spend City money on things like this.

The meeting adjourned at 10:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosalba Zanni
Assistant City Clerk/Clerk of Committees