

A regular adjourned meeting of the Council of the City of Norwich was held April 14, 2008, at 7:05 PM in Council Chambers. Present: Aldermen Bettencourt, Coutu, Desaulniers, Jacaruso, Nash & Zarnetske. Corporation Counsel Driscoll and City Manager Bergren were also present. Absent: Mayor Lathrop. President Pro Tem Jacaruso presided.

Upon motion of Ald. Coutu, seconded by Ald. Zarnetske, it was unanimously voted to take a recess to acknowledge a ceremony celebrating the spirit of breast cancer victims, which was taking place in City Hall at the same time as the Public Hearing. The Council was in recess from 7:05 PM to 7:12 PM.

Public hearings were then held on (1) the proposed budget of the City Manager for the Fiscal Year 2008-2009/ (2) AN ORDINANCE RELATIVE TO THE APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE CITY OF NORWICH AND THE CITY CONSOLIDATED DISTRICT OF SAID CITY FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2008-2009 (3) AN ORDINANCE CONCERNING THE TAX LEVY ON THE LIST OF OCTOBER 1, 2007.

Speakers were as follows:

Andy Depta, 105 Vergason Avenue, said the Council should check line for line when reviewing individual department budgets. Mr. Depta said he wanted answers for his questions concerning pages 28, 40, 53, 55, 57 and 59. He also wanted to know what new positions were being requested by the Board of Education and what the breakdown was between the teachers' salaries and the salaries of the administration.

Keith Ripley, 9 Meadow Lane, spoke on Ord. 1577 relative to the conveyance tax. Mr. Ripley said a portion of the city's real estate conveyance tax was to go towards the local arts and cultural programs and he felt for the Norwich Community Development Corporation, Best Productions and Norwich Arts Council were good candidates for the Sachem Fund.

Mr. Ripley also asked how the Council was going to handle catch-up and what does it mean in the Pension Fund.

Joanne Philbrick, 10 Elm Avenue, said she was shocked by the economy, and as a person close to retirement, she didn't think she could afford to retire in Norwich. She was also concerned with residents having a fee imposed to repair sidewalks in front of their homes and paying a fee to join the Rose City Senior Center. Ms. Philbrick also said she was not comfortable with the Council having the final decision on the budget.

Rodney Bowie, 62 Roosevelt Avenue, said he was not in favor of bonding.

Ruth Isaacs, 70 Mechanic Street, said the Council should think about decreasing the tax rate and asked why some departments were asking for increases.

David Crabb, 47 Prospect St., questioned why \$150,000 was allocated to Norwich Community Development Corporation last year for a CEO search and a one year's salary. He said he hasn't read anything about a search being conducted.

Jerry Roberts, Emergency Dispatcher for the City of Norwich, said the workload has progressively increased over the past four years, and the department only has two dispatchers per shift. He requested the Council to restore the department's request for an additional dispatcher.

John Blackburn, 15 Alice Street, said it was unfair for City departments to have no increases in their budgets, except for the Board of Education. He felt money should be trimmed from their budget.

There being no further speakers, President Pro Tem Jacaruso declared the public hearings closed

Ald. Zarnetske asked the Comptroller what amount would have to be cut from the proposed budget in order to keep the mill rate the same. Comptroller Ruffo and City Manager Bergren said they would provide answers to the Council and the citizens concerning their budget questions.

Upon motion of Ald. Nash, seconded by Ald. Coutu, it was unanimously voted to adjourn at 8:20 PM.

ATTEST:



CITY CLERK