

A regular meeting of the Council of the City of Norwich was held May 5, 2008, at 7:35 PM in Council Chambers. Present: Aldermen Bettencourt, Coutu, Desaulniers, Jacaruso, Nash and Zarnetske. Absent: Mayor Lathrop. City Manager Bergren and Corporation Counsel Driscoll were also in attendance. President Pro Tem Jacaruso presided.

Ald. Nash read the opening prayer and Ald. Coutu led the members in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Alderman Zarnetske read a proclamation recognizing May 7, 2008 as World Aids Orphans Day.

Ald. Nash presented a plaque to City Clerk Brennan recognizing the week of May 4 through May 10 as Municipal Clerks Week.

Upon motion of Ald. Nash, seconded by Ald. Coutu, it was unanimously voted to adopt the minutes of April 7, 14 & 21, 2008 Council meetings.

President Pro Tem Jacaruso called for citizen comment.

Pamela Aubin, 30 Wightman Avenue, Superintendent of Schools, spoke in favor of the City Manager's proposed budget. She said it would provide the foundation in a fiscally responsible way to continue the growth needed by all of the departments.

David Crabb, 47 Prospect St., said spending is out of control and he questioned where the revenue from the billboards could be found in the budget.

Keith Ripley, Meadow Lane, said he was in favor of the resolution concerning the local match for the Yantic Fire Engine Company Grant. Mr. Ripley also said he opposed forwarding the City Manager's budget without any changes.

William Dickerson, 288 Central Ave., said he is opening a small business and he recently found out each one of his employees has to pay a \$200.00 vendor application fee to sell hot dogs. Mr. Dickerson asked the Council to amend this so that small businesses can prosper.

Andy Depta, 105 Vergason Ave., said the voting procedure by the Council is done incorrectly. He said according to the Charter, the voting must be done by a roll call vote. Mr. Depta said according to the State Statutes, there shall also be an annual Town Meeting.

Rodney Bowie, 62 Roosevelt Avenue, said the Council should take a hard look at the budget because the residents cannot afford any more increases in their tax bills.

John Blackburn, 15 Alice St., thanked the many police and fire personnel who responded to the Peachtree Apartments fire.

Coralee Boulware, 385 New London Tpke, Board of Education member, said the Norwich public schools are the showcase of the community and she felt everything should be done to protect it.

There being not further comments, President Pro Tem Jacaruso declared citizen comment period closed.

City Manager Bergren gave his report as follows:

DATE: May 2, 2008

TO: Mayor Benjamin P. Lathrop & Council Members

FROM: Alan H. Bergren, City Manager

SUBJECT: City Manager Report

Peachtree Apartments Fire

Our City endured a traumatic event in the early morning hours of Saturday April 26th with the devastation of an entire neighborhood known as the Peachtree Apartment Complex on Westledge Drive. The destruction of 120 housing units and the displacement of approximately 150 residents was in recent memory one of the worst fires to hit our residential areas. It was a miracle that no one lost their lives or suffered serious injuries. We can credit our police officers that arrived within seconds of the 911 call to evacuate the tenants from the burning structures along with all our fire departments, ambulance service, and our emergency management team to take charge of this unfolding event. With the continuing support of our social services department, health department and the Red Cross the full force of the City was brought to bear on this emergency. This event has demonstrated what a great city we have, and how proud we can be of all who came forward to respond to the initial call for help and the ongoing call for assistance, to help the residents get back on their feet. The outpourings of help and support from all sectors have been tremendous. In the coming weeks we will learn more of the steps being taken to return our fellow citizens displaced by the fire to normal everyday lives. We will also learn how the fire started and the steps currently underway to inspect other structures of similar design and construction as a precaution. In speaking with the Mayor and Council members of your interest in recognizing those who met the daunting challenges we faced with this emergency, plans will be formulated to honor those who rose to the occasion to save lives and help heal the wounds of this traumatic event, and we will move forward as a city that can be very proud of our response.

Brownfield’s Grant Update – 26 Shipping Street

The Assistant City Manager met on Friday May 2nd with EPA representatives at the EPA Boston area office in Chelmsford MA regarding the administration requirements for our \$200,000 Brownfield’s grant. All Brownfield’s grant recipients are required to have staff attend this meeting for filling out preliminary grant information and review of grant administration requirements.

Budget Workshops-Hearings Reminder

Please see the revised Budget workshops/hearings schedule. I added a workshop component for the Council following the 2nd public hearing on May 12th. I also added a third Public Hearing on the Budget on Tuesday May 27th to allow for public comments on any changes from May 19th. I believe this will allow citizens to comment on what is expected to be your final work product.

Charter Review Services

We received one proposal for a review of the city charter. A copy of that proposal was distributed. After some review I am re-advertising the proposal with some clarification to elicit additional responses, which I believe we will receive.

Upon motion of Ald. Nash, seconded by Ald. Bettencourt, it was unanimously voted to adopt the following resolution introduced by City Manager Bergren:

WHEREAS, the April 26, 2008 fire at the Peachtree Apartments destroyed 120 units and left over 160 individuals homeless; and

WHEREAS, Council of the City of Norwich wishes to encourage donations to help these individuals through this transition; and

WHEREAS, these donations shall be made payable to the City of Norwich and will be deposited into the City of Norwich Human Services Grants & Programs Fund account S3312-75000; and

WHEREAS, the donations and expenditures of those donations would be required to follow all of the laws, policies and procedures of the City of Norwich including, but not limited to accounting, purchasing, risk management, and cash handling; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORWICH, that the Human Services Department be authorized to expend those donations raised for the purpose of helping the individuals affected by the Peachtree Apartments fire from Human Services Grants & Programs Fund account S3312-80000; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, should the donations exceed the expenditures required to help the individuals affected by the Peachtree Apartments fire, any excess will remain in the City of Norwich Human Services Grants & Programs Fund to be used for any future Norwich disaster relief assistance.

Upon motion of Ald. Desaulniers, seconded by Ald. Nash, it was unanimously voted to consider the resolution relative to the adoption of the proposed preliminary budget for Fiscal Year 2008-2009 at the end of the rest of the resolutions.

Upon motion of Ald. Desaulniers, seconded by Ald. Zarnetske, it was unanimously voted to adopt the following resolution introduced by City Manager Bergren:

WHEREAS, the City of Norwich fire departments needed a solution for the lack of interoperability in their communications equipment at mutual-aid incidents and,

WHEREAS, the Yantic Fire Engine Company made a regional request and was awarded a 2007 Assistance to Firefighters Grant in the amount of \$225,760 to support the purchase of \$282,200 of on-scene communications interoperability equipment and,

WHEREAS, the Assistance to Firefighters Grant requires a 20% local match on regional requests.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that an amount not to exceed \$56,440 be and hereby is appropriated from Contingency Account 01090-80086 to fund the 20% local match on Yantic Fire Engine Company's 2007 Assistance to Firefighters Grant.

Upon motion of Ald. Coutu, seconded by Ald. Zarnetske, it was unanimously voted to adopt the following resolution introduced by Mayor Lathrop and Ald. Jacaruso:

BE IT RESOLVED, that Barry Ellison be appointed as the alternate member on the Southeastern Connecticut Regional Resource Recovery Authority to fill a vacancy created by the

retirement of William Mansfield with a term to expire on December 31, 2008, or until a successor is appointed.

Upon motion of Ald. Desaulniers, seconded by Ald. Nash, it was unanimously voted to adopt the following resolution introduced by Mayor Lathrop and Ald. Jacaruso:

BE IT RESOLVED, that Cort Murphy be reappointed as a regular member to the Historic District Commission for a term to expire on December 31, 2010, or until a successor is appointed.

Upon motion of Ald. Coutu, seconded by Ald. Desaulniers, it was unanimously voted to adopt the following resolution introduced by City Manager Bergren:

WHEREAS, the Recreation Department of the City of Norwich is in the process of developing a community boating program to utilize the Thames, Yantic and Shetucket Rivers; and

WHEREAS, the Norwich Recreation Department has determined that a successful boating program should involve youth organizations, educational institutions and local clubs; and

WHEREAS, the Norwich Recreation Department wishes to collaborate with such organizations in the development of a community boating program to make the opportunities of the community boating program available to the largest number of people; and

WHEREAS, such organizations are expected to use boats, watercraft, and vehicles and recreational and safety equipment owned by the City of Norwich as part of their involvement in the community boating program.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORWICH that City Manager Alan Bergren be and hereby is directed to negotiate and enter into on behalf of the City of Norwich leases, licenses or use of equipment agreements with those interested youth organizations, owned boats, vehicles and watercraft and recreational and safety equipment in accordance with the rules and regulations established by the Norwich Recreation Department for the use of city-owned boats, vehicles and watercraft and related recreation and safety equipment as part of a community boating program.

Upon motion of Ald. Coutu, seconded by Ald. Desaulniers, it was unanimously voted to adopt the following resolution introduced by City Manager Bergren:

WHEREAS, the Council of the City of Norwich supports the development of a community boating program and finds it consistent with the Council's goal of promoting greater use of our marina and waterways; and

WHEREAS, a successful community boating program will require boat storage areas, program space and direct access to the water.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORWICH that City Manager Alan Bergren and Recreation Director Luis DePina be and are hereby authorized to request proposals to lease space to the City of Norwich Community Boating Programs and to negotiate lease terms with interested parties for boat storage and program space and to report on said negotiations to the City Council of the City of Norwich.

Upon motion of Ald. Coutu, seconded by Ald. Desaulniers, it was unanimously voted to adopt the following resolution introduced by Mayor Benjamin P. Lathrop:

WHEREAS, the Greater Norwich Area Chamber of Commerce will hold River Fest 2008 on June 7, 2008 at Howard Brown Park; and

WHEREAS, the Council of the City of Norwich supports River Fest 2008 and wishes to assist the same through a payment to defray the costs of street banners, signage and marketing materials anticipated as this will become an annual event of note.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORWICH that the sum of Five Thousand dollars (\$5,000) be and hereby is appropriated from the Norwich Now Account (Account Number 01065-810077) to be used in support of River Fest 2008.

Ald. Zarnetske made a motion, seconded by Ald. Coutu for adoption of the following resolution introduced by Mayor Benjamin P. Lathrop:

RESOLVED, that the proposed preliminary budget for Fiscal Year 2008-2009 be tentatively adopted, with a public hearing scheduled for May 12, 2008 at 7:00 PM in the Council Chambers of Norwich City Hall.

See schedules A & B

Schedule A
AN ORDINANCE CONCERNING THE TAX LEVY ON THE
LIST OF OCTOBER 1, 2007

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORWICH:

Section 1. On the City Assessment list of 2007 a tax of twenty-nine and sixty-five hundredths (29.65) mills on the dollar is hereby granted to be levied upon the ratable estate within the City of

Norwich of the inhabitants of said City and all others liable to pay taxes therein, and forty-two hundredths (0.42) mills is hereby granted to be levied upon the ratable estate within the Town Consolidated District.

Section 2. On the City Assessment list of 2007, a tax of four and eighty-six hundredths (4.86) mills on the dollar, is hereby granted to be levied for fire services upon the ratable estate within the City Consolidated District of the inhabitants of said District and of all others in said district liable to pay taxes therein.

Section 3. Real Estate, Personal Property and Refuse taxes, shall become due on July 1, 2008, and payable on said date in whole or in equal installments from that date, namely on July 1, 2008 and January 1, 2009 except that any tax of less than one hundred dollars shall be due and payable on July 1, 2008. If the first installment is not paid on or before August 1, 2008 or if the second installment is not paid on or before February 1, 2009, interest will be charged on any such delinquent payment at the rate of one and one-half (1 %) per cent per month from the due date or \$2.00 whichever is greater, as provided for in the general statutes. Any person may pay the total amount of such tax for which he is liable at the time when the first installment shall be

Section 4. Motor Vehicle taxes shall become due and payable in whole on July 1, 2008. If the payment is not paid on or before August 1, 2008 interest will be charged on the delinquent payment at the rate of one and one-half (1%%) per cent per month from due date or \$2.00 whichever is greater, as provided for in the general statutes.

Schedule B

AN ORDINANCE RELATIVE TO THE APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE CITY OF NORWICH AND THE CITY CONSOLIDATED DISTRICT OF SAID CITY FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2009-2009.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORWICH, the following appropriations hereby are made to meet the expense of the City of Norwich and City Consolidated District of the City of Norwich for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2008 and ending June 30, 2009 to wit:

	2006-07 REVISED BUDGET	2007-08 REVISED BUDGET	2008-09 PROPOSED BUDGET
City Manager	319,068	339,424	369,674
Finance	1,282,239	1,469,407	1,429,319
City Treasurer	201,230	208,851	202,697
Assessment	336,692	770,799	475,806
Human Resources	384,455	427,504	413,383
Law	418,000	426,400	435,000
City Clerk	356,061	406,091	423,207
City Council	147,797	157,720	216,566
Police	9,368,470	9,663,075	9,962,388
Fire - Central	1,134,949	1,512,549	1,691,193
Fire - East Great Plain	149,554	149,254	172,175
Fire - Laurel Hill	56,897	70,750	70,930
Fire - Occum	76,983	76,037	75,747
Fire - Taftville	150,138	146,038	146,190
Fire - Yantic	129,950	140,756	170,562
Recreation	833,135	863,197	818,926
Human Services	1,325,700	1,411,961	1,574,531
Public Works	9,092,269	7,286,218	7,497,004
Election	135,808	142,322	146,928
Planning & Development	1,064,965	1,136,448	1,122,841
Economic Development	254,528	428,500	394,000
Debt Service - Principal	4,341,000	4,303,000	3,410,000
Debt Service - Interest	1,463,250	1,284,544	1,223,885
Miscellaneous	6,920,117	7,203,967	7,659,532
Emergency Management	63,716	62,261	64,132
Education	60,339,134	64,223,238	67,691,000
Fire - Special Service	4,366,052	4,610,242	5,003,272
Refuse & Trash - Special Service	1,526,250	-	-
Landfill & Refuse Fund	-	2,657,609	2,491,309
Volunteer Fire Relief Fund	340,000	392,896	476,162
TOTALS	106,578,407	111,971,058	115,828,359
General Operations	32,428,382	32,708,529	33,745,822
Debt Service	5,804,250	5,587,544	4,633,885
Capital Improvements	1,774,339	1,791,000	1,786,909
Education	60,339,134	64,223,238	67,691,000
Fire - Special Service	4,366,052	4,610,242	5,003,272
Refuse & Trash - Special Service	1,526,250	-	-
Landfill & Refuse Fund	-	2,657,609	2,491,309
Volunteer Fire Relief Fund	340,000	392,896	476,162
TOTALS	106,578,407	111,971,058	115,828,359

Ald. Zarnetske made a motion, seconded by Ald. Coutu, to amend the above resolution by striking Schedule A and imposing a 1% decrease to the funding of all departments with the exception of fire, police, emergency services and human services in the wake of the April 26th Peachtree Apartments fire. This would include a decrease of nearly \$1.2 million from the Board of Education.

Ald. Zarnetske said this amendment was responsible budgeting.

President Pro Tem Jacaruso, Aldermen Bettencourt and Nash felt a reduction across the board would cripple some departments and result in requests for additional funding when emergencies arise.

The amendment failed on a roll call vote of 5 to 1; Ald. Zarnetske voting in favor.

Ald. Jacaruso made a motion, seconded by Ald. Zarnetske, to amend the resolution by decreasing the Board of Education budget by \$500,000 and decreasing all other general fund departments by a total of \$150,000 with specific reductions to be determined by the City Manager.

Ald. Zarnetske made a motion, seconded by Ald. Bettencourt, to amend the above amendment by stating that the \$150,000 decrease be made with respect to the City Council Budget to be reappropriated following further consultation with the City Manager.

The above amendment was then approved unanimously.

The amendment to Ald. Zarnetske's proposed amendment was approved unanimously.

The proposed amendment to the motion, as amended, was approved unanimously.

The motion to adopt the following amended resolution, was then approved unanimously:

RESOLVED, that the proposed preliminary budget for fiscal year 2008-2009 be amended by decreasing the Board of Education Budget by \$500,000 and by decreasing the City Council Budget by \$150,000 with further consultation with the city manager with respect to reappropriating the \$150,000 decrease in the City Council Budget and by setting the proposed tax levy and appropriations as shown on revised schedules A & B, attached hereto, which revised budget schedules are hereby tentatively adopted with a public hearing on the same to be held May 12, 2008, at 7:00 PM in City Council Chambers, City Hall.

Schedule A

AN ORDINANCE CONCERNING THE TAX LEVY ON THE LIST OF OCTOBER 1, 2007

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORWICH:

Section 1. On the City Assessment list of 2007 a tax of twenty-nine and twenty-eight hundredths (29.28) mills on the dollar is hereby granted to be levied upon the ratable estate within the City of Norwich of the inhabitants of said City and all others liable to pay taxes therein, and forty-two hundredths (0.42) mills is hereby granted to be levied upon the ratable estate within the Town Consolidated District.

Section 2. On the City Assessment list of 2007, a tax of four and eighty-six hundredths (4.86) mills on the dollar, is hereby granted to be levied for fire services upon the ratable estate within the City Consolidated District of the inhabitants of said District and of all others in said district liable to pay taxes therein.

Section 3. Real Estate, Personal Property and Refuse taxes, shall become due on July 1, 2008, and payable on said date in whole or in equal installments from that date, namely on July 1, 2008 and January 1, 2009 except that any tax of less than one hundred dollars shall be due and payable on July 1, 2008. If the first installment is not paid on or before August 1, 2008 or if the second installment is not paid on or before February 1, 2009, interest will be charged on any such delinquent payment at the rate of one and one-half (1½%) per cent per month from the due date or \$2.00 whichever is greater, as provided for in the general statutes. Any person may pay the total amount of such tax for which he is liable at the time when the first installment shall be payable.

Section 4. Motor Vehicle taxes shall become due and payable in whole on July 1, 2008. If the payment is not paid on or before August 1, 2008 interest will be charged on the delinquent payment at the rate of one and one-half (1½%) per cent per month from due date or \$2.00 whichever is greater, as provided for in the general statutes.

AN ORDINANCE RELATIVE TO THE APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE CITY OF NORWICH AND THE CITY CONSOLIDATED DISTRICT OF SAID CITY FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2009-2009.

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City Treasurer	201,230	208,851	202,697	202,697
Assessment	336,692	770,799	475,806	475,806
Human Resources	384,455	427,504	413,383	413,383
Law	418,000	426,400	435,000	435,000
City Clerk	356,061	406,091	423,207	423,207
City Council	147,797	157,720	216,566	66,566
Police	9,368,470	9,663,075	9,962,388	9,962,388
Fire - Central	1,134,949	1,512,549	1,691,193	1,691,193
Fire - East Great Plain	149,554	149,254	172,175	172,175
Fire - Laurel Hill	56,897	70,750	70,930	70,930
Fire - Occum	76,983	76,037	75,747	75,747
Fire - Taftville	150,138	146,038	146,190	146,190
Fire - Yantic	129,950	140,756	170,562	170,562
Recreation	833,135	863,197	818,926	818,926
Human Services	1,325,700	1,411,961	1,574,531	1,574,531
Public Works	9,092,269	7,286,218	7,497,004	7,497,004
Election	135,808	142,322	146,928	146,928
Planning & Development	1,064,965	1,136,448	1,122,841	1,122,841
Economic Development	254,528	428,500	394,000	394,000
Debt Service - Principal	4,341,000	4,303,000	3,410,000	3,410,000
Debt Service - Interest	1,463,250	1,284,544	1,223,885	1,223,885
Miscellaneous	6,920,117	7,203,967	7,659,532	7,659,532
Emergency Management	63,716	62,261	64,132	64,132
Education	60,339,134	64,223,238	67,691,000	67,191,000
Fire - Special Service	4,366,052	4,610,242	5,003,272	5,003,272
Refuse & Trash - Special Service	1,526,250	-	-	-
Landfill & Refuse Fund	-	2,657,609	2,491,309	2,491,309
Volunteer Fire Relief Fund	340,000	392,896	476,162	476,162
TOTALS	106,578,407	111,971,058	115,828,359	115,178,359
General Operations	32,428,382	32,708,529	33,745,822	33,595,822
Debt Service	5,804,250	5,587,544	4,633,885	4,633,885
Capital Improvements	1,774,339	1,791,000	1,786,909	1,786,909
Education	60,339,134	64,223,238	67,691,000	67,191,000
Fire - Special Service	4,366,052	4,610,242	5,003,272	5,003,272
Refuse & Trash - Special Service	1,526,250	-	-	-
Landfill & Refuse Fund	-	2,657,609	2,491,309	2,491,309
Volunteer Fire Relief Fund	340,000	392,896	476,162	476,162
TOTALS	106,578,407	111,971,058	115,828,359	115,178,359

Upon motion of Ald. Bettencourt, seconded by Ald. Coutu, it was unanimously voted to introduce, refer to the Commission on the City Plan and set a public hearing for June 16, 2008, 7:00 PM on AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 8.3.1 (d)(6) OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF NORWICH TO INCREASE THE USABLE RECREATION AREA TO 450 SQUARE FEET PER DWELLING UNIT IN THE MULTIFAMILY DISTRICT.

Upon motion of Ald. Bettencourt, seconded by Ald. Nash, it was unanimously voted to introduce, refer to the Commission on the City Plan and set a public hearing for June 16, 2008, 7:00 PM on AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 7.6.4 (I) OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF NORWICH TO INCREASE THE AREA RESERVED FOR PASSIVE AND/OR ACTIVE RECREATION TO 450 SQUARE FEET PER DWELLING UNIT IN ACTIVE ADULT COMMUNITIES.

President Pro Tem Jacaruso then called for citizen comment.

Rodney Bowie, 62 Roosevelt Avenue, discussed the homeless situation in Norwich.

Yvette Jacaruso, 192 Wightman Avenue, said the Board of Education meets the same night, May 27, 2008, as the third public hearing on the budget, and she asked the Council to consider changing the public hearing date.

David Crabb, 47 Prospect Street, spoke on the Peachtree Apartments fire. He said nothing has been said about the coordination between the fire and police departments. Mr. Crabb also had questions concerning the process for obtaining the certificate of occupancy needed for Peachtree Apartments.

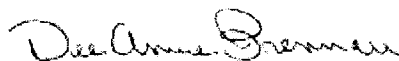
Keith Ripley, Meadow Lane, commended the Council for scheduling a workshop for May 12th. Mr. Ripley also spoke on the Sachem Fund, and what qualifies for funding from the account.

Jim Troeger, Norwich Building Official, 218 Case Street, said it is important that the Board of Review, Dangerous Buildings, be charged with a mission in regard to saving 26 Shipping Street.

There being no further comments, President Pro Tem Jacaruso declared the public hearing closed.

Upon motion of Ald. Nash, seconded by Ald. Coutu, it was unanimously voted to adjourn at 9:50 PM.

ATTEST:



CITY CLERK