

ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
BUDGET COMMITTEE SPECIAL MEETING
Wednesday January 8, 2025 at 4:15pm
City Hall, 111 N. Main Street, Bristol, CT
Room 1-3 (Room 111), and on Zoom

ATTENDEES: Committee Chair, Howard Schmelder, Commissioner Hick, and Mayor Caggiano

ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Justin Malley, Executive Director, Dr. Dawn Leger, Grants Administrator;
Sharon Arsego, Sr. Admin. Assistant

GUESTS: None

1. Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:15pm. A quorum was present.

2. Approval of the Minutes of the Budget Committee meeting of January 10, 2024

The Chair called for a motion to approve the Minutes of the Budget Committee meeting on January 10, 2024. Commissioner Hick made the motion to approve. The motion was seconded by the Chair. All were in agreement and the Minutes were approved into the record.

3. Review of 2024-2025 ECD Budget request

Discussion followed about the various 2025-2026 ECD Budget requests. Justin Malley advised the Committee that Department Heads were directed to submit a level budget.

4101 – City Share

Justin Malley clarified the figures for the various line items within the 2026 Fiscal Year Budget Requests. Highlighted items included staff salary, other wages, advertising and marketing, travel reimbursement, and health insurance.

He also advised that departments were instructed to maintain existing Wage and Salary amounts from the previous year as union negotiations are in progress at this time. The expectation is that those line items will increase, at which time the Comptroller's Office will make the necessary edits. Justin also noted that the Comptroller's Office has advised of a 13% increase in the health insurance premiums.

Mayor Caggiano joined the meeting at 4:21pm.

4102–CDBG Rehab

This budget is for the Housing Rehabilitation Program, which is funded by HUD. It was noted that funds set aside in last year's budget for software to assist with application and project workload and workflow weren't used due to it being cost and set up prohibitive. This software is not included in the proposed budget for the new year, but the ECD staff will continue to look into other tools to assist the process.

The multi-family home line item was adjusted to \$15,000.00 to align with the HUD Grant totaling \$315,000.00. The grant program has transitioned to a no-interest loan program now, however,

those funds will take time to be recuperated. The loan process allows for the program to become more self-sustaining as the funds HUD provides continue to decrease each year, but the demand for the services increase.

4103 – CDBG Admin

This budget is used to pay specific salary percentages related to the administration of the CDBG Program. This includes compensation for the ECD Director, the Grants Administrator, and the Sr. Administrative Assistant.

Dr. Dawn Leger spoke to the Fair Housing line item at \$3,000.00 in the previous year's budget. It was identified as a duplicate entry. She will be requesting the funds for the Advertising and Marketing budget as additional legal notices will need to be posted for public hearings related to the 5-Year Consolidated Plan season.

Discussion followed regarding additional line items.

Mayor Caggiano noted that all cities in Connecticut are seeing a reduction in car taxes due to the change in how they're calculated. The change uses a car's MSRP value with a straight-line depreciation. This will affect the total grand list for motor vehicles. The taxes from new developments around the city will come to fruition in time.

The Commissioners were in agreement that the proposed budget, along with the required Department Budget Narrative, was acceptable. They thanked the ECD staff for their preparations and the reductions.

4. Take any action as necessary on above item

The Chair called for the motion to be read. Commissioner Hick read the proposed motion as follows:

Motion to approve the ECD FY 2025-2026 budget request as recommended by the Budget Committee on January 9, 2025 and to forward to the Economic and Community Development Board prior to submission to the Comptroller's Office for revisions if necessary.

The Chair seconded the motion. All were in favor, and the proposed budget was accepted.

5. Adjournment

A call was made to adjourn. The motion was made by Commissioner Hick and was seconded by Mayor Caggiano. The meeting adjourned at 4:35pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Arsego
Recording Secretary