

DEPARTMENT OF CITY CLERK

CITY HALL

MAY 9, 1989

The Committee on Finance meets this day at 4:30 o'clock P.M. in Committee Room "A".

Present: Chairwoman Brassil and Councilmen Dillon, Glavin, Farmer and Councilwoman Fagnoli.

Merlin A. DeConti, Director of Inspection and Standards, B. James Suzman, Director of Public Works, Steven Woerner, Internal Auditor, Joseph Chiodo of the Controller's Office, John Simmons, Director of Administration, Council President Easton, Councilman Lopes and Alex Prignano of the Finance Department are also present. (Michael R. Clement, Assistant Clerk).

RELATIVE TO DISCUSSION OF BUDGET SUBMITTED BY
MR. MERLIN A. DECONTI, DIRECTOR OF INSPECTION AND STANDARDS

Chairwoman Brassil informs that there is an increase in Rental of Building and Mr. DeConti informs that his lease runs out at the end of July and went out for bids for new space but they were unsatisfactory and informs that now he is paying \$122,000.00 for the space which also includes the Law Department and further informs that the increase is based upon the tax increase and may be renewed.

Chairwoman Brassil informs that this seems to be the biggest change in the Budget and one salary account in Structures and Zoning that the members review.

Mr. DeConti informs last year he had an extra Code Enforcement Inspector and instead of hiring the Code Enforcement Inspector he hired an additional Building Inspector and there should be a drop in the Code Enforcement account over the last year.

Chairwoman Brassil informs that it is a minor change from \$359 to \$362.

Mr. DeConti informs that he also has Workmen's Comp cases, there being 3 in Code Enforcement, 1 will retire in July and 1 in Building Inspection.

MAY 9, 1989

Mr. DeConti further informs that all positions are filled.

Councilwoman Fagnoli questions as to the backlog of Court Cases involving abandoned and vacant structures and Mr. DeConti informs that they are looking into the possibility of having an extra judge for that reason and also to allow our people to ^{do} the job that they were hired to do and not be tied up in Court all day.

Council President Easton approves with this idea of the additional judge.

Mr. DeConti informs that he now has filled 29 positions since October of 1987 and now has 5 Building Inspectors each having three Wards equally distributed around the City and two floaters who just do complaints all day and that is enough to keep the Court busy.

Council President Easton questions employee training and whether or not this budget will cover that.

Mr. DeConti states that he is looking into the preparation of a Manual so that people who come into the office will understand how to get building permits, etc. and informs that he will be discussing same with Mr. Simmons as to funding for same which will be about \$1,900.00 and then the printing. He would like to have something for the ordinary person to come in and be able to get the answers to any questions that they might have.

Discussion ensues on the re-structuring of the Department and what has since happened and how everything as a whole is much more approved.

Mr. Deconti is excused at this time.

B. JAMES SUZMAN - DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS.

Chairwoman Brassil and the Committee review the Budget of the Department of Public Works and Engineering.

MAY 9, 1989

Chairwoman Brassil questions one job and Mr. Suzman states they had an early retirement and refunded the fellow who retired but put the person where he was supposed to be on the payroll.

The Committee questions Mr. Suxman on the savings of the cost of snow removal for the year and informs it was about \$250,000 which included private vendors, equipment purchases and their own overtime inhouse with quite a bit of saving.

The members continue to review the budget and Councilwoman Fagnoli questions street sweeping and how many more are scheduled and Mr. Suzman informs that under this schedule which is pretty much the same, the neighborhoods will be swept monthly, the downtown nightly and the main arteries weekly which means 32 weeks of street sweeping season, nine round trips through the City, so its almost once a month, nine neighborhoods totally swept in 32 weeks.

He continues to inform the members that this year their department is ahead of the game in that area due to infrequent use of sale and sand due to the light winter conditions.

Chairwoman Brassil questions the highway department, there being a decrease in trucks and tractorsout of \$685,000 it is down to \$516,000.

Mr. Simmons informs that this is a lease payment which goes up or down each year.

Councilman Glavin informs that the private contractors are talking about a \$400,000 increase in street sweeping and DPIA projects and requests more details.

Mr. Simmons informs that the street sweeping cost in the past has been toward every other month in most of the neighborhoods, and some of the mains and the downtown area was done on a less frequent basis - that is, additional cost. He further informs that they went out to bid recently and the bidder was a little higher than previous cost, so you have an enhanced service with enhanced cost and mentions that with DPIA there is a program that they will match services in the downtown area and Mr. Suzman informs that this is especially for sidewalks and alleys.

MAY 9, 1989

Councilman Glavin questions as to how much the City's portion of the money is and Mr. Simmons states roughly \$100,000.

Mr. Simmons further informs that out of the \$400,000 increase \$300,000 is regulated to just street sweeping.

Councilman Glavin questions as to exactly what that means and Mr. Simmons informs of the times and how often and what vehicles are involved to clean the streets, sidewalks and alleys, etc.

Mr. Simmons informs that we want a more frequent schedule for the downtown area and for the neighborhoods.

Chairwoman Brassil informs that they are also concerned with the cleaning of the residential neighborhoods and Mr. Suzman informs that for the most part they have a schedule which basically is Ward by Ward and each Ward has routes and the foreman is the one that would divide the sweepers and run them east or west or whatever the case might be. He informs that they require 10 sweepers nightly but are down to 7 or 8 a night the others being in the shop for repairs. Mr. Suzman further informs that they pick the Wards in chronological order, and he further states that he should say geographical order, counterclockwise around the City, starting at the office at Ernest Street and Allens Avenue, cross Point Street Bridge and then around the City counterclockwise.

Councilman Glavin states that it seems that his Ward is always the last done and suggests a change in schedule.

Council President Easton, Councilman Dillon and Councilman Lopes are also dissatisfied with the schedule for sidewalk repairs and street repaving and suggest that their Wards be done earlier than scheduled they being in terrible disrepair.

Councilman Dillon further states that in the previous administration his Ward was left out in the cold and is of the opinion the West End is still out in the cold.

Chairwoman Brassil questions as to paving and digging up of the roadways due to main breaks etc. and that the repaving is poorly done and questions as to what can be done to stop this.

Mr. Suzman informs that we have 4 inspectors Citywide (there used to be 10) and permits are given out each year,

MAY 9, 1989

several hundred a year, to all the gas, electric and all the contractors working for the water board, etc...once they have completed their patch for a sewer lateral or gas main it is out of control with all this new duplex and single family dwelling....that we were just talking about with Mr. DeConti everyone has to have patches for water, sewer and gas and then we would require them to come back in and within so many days to put in a temporary patch is because of the natural fill after its tamped has to settle, if it is in the winter, the hot asphalt plants are closed until the spring... but even in the summer it is a 60 days grace period and then we would require the contractor to come back in^{and} make the permanent patch.

Chairwoman Brassil complains of Hope Street which was resurfaced, dug up and now its not the same, and they ruined a brand new street, and is of the opinion that it should not have happened.

Further discussion ensues on the time limit, etc of the patching of streets.

Councilwoman Fagnoli informs of a Resolution that she sponsored and questions as to whether or not they are looking into the feasibility of Curbing in her Ward and her constituents are complaining that they have to use the streets because there is no curbing on the sidewalk and suggests a sidewalk survey.

Mr. Suzman states "last year of the 550 sidewalks they did they must have received 549 applications new, and informs that they try to restrict to just the damaged area but have done whole sidewalks if the damage is that bad."

Councilman Lopes as well as Councilman Dillon inform that the sidewalks in their Wards have been neglected for many years.

Mr. Suzman informs that his Department is trying to get the list down to the point where a year from now there won't be a back log and they can start on new requests.

MAY 9, 1989

Accordingly, after further discussion it is voted
on motion of Councilman Glavin, seconded by Councilwoman
Fagnoli to adjourn at 5:50 o'clock P.M.

COPIED

A.G.V.

Michael R. Clement
ASSISTANT CLERK