City of White Plains, New York
Budget & Management Advisory Committee
Hon. Beth N. Smayda, Chair
City Staff Liaison: Michael A. Genito

Wednesday, March 19, 2014, 7:30 PM, Mayor’s Conference Room

AGENDA
1. Call to order
2. Introduction of guests and visitors
3. Approval of February 10, 2014 meeting notes
4. Subcommittee Updates
   a. OPEB Subcommittee–Michael Schwartz & Adam Bergonzi
   b. Multi-Year Forecast—Edie Alfenas & Dick Hecht
   c. Cable TV – Beth Smayda
5. New business
6. Next meeting date
7. Adjournment
City of White Plains, New York
Budget & Management Advisory Committee

Hon. Beth N. Smayda, Chair
Edie Alfenas – Adam T. Bergonzi – Richard Hecht – Steven H. Hochman
City Staff Liaison: Michael A. Genito

Monday, February 10, 2014, 7:30 PM, Mayor’s Conference Room
(January 21, 2014 meeting canceled due to snowstorm)

MEETING NOTES

Present: Hon. Beth Smayda, Edie Alfenas, Adam Bergonzi, Richard Hecht, Steven Hochman,
Hon. Milagros Lecuona, Donna McLaughlin, Michael Schwartz and Michael Genito
Absent: Timothy Sheehan
Guests: Hon. Nadine Hunt-Robinson, Councilmember and John Callahan, Chief of Staff

Call to Order

Chairwoman Beth Smayda called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM. She introduced Donna
McLaughlin, a new member of the Committee; Hon. Nadine Hunt-Robinson, our guest and
newest member to our Common Council, and recognized John Callahan, Chief of Staff as a
guest.

Approval of Meeting Notes

The meeting notes of June 26, 2013 were approved.

Governor’s 2014 Tax Relief Proposals

Commissioner Genito presented a summary of Governor Andrew Cuomo’s tax relief proposals.
The Governor proposes a two year “freeze” on property taxes for taxpayers living in
communities that remain within the real property tax levy cap. Essentially, in the first year those
taxpayers would receive a rebate from the State equal to the increase in their property taxes. The
taxpayers would receive another rebate in the second year if the community developed and
implemented consolidation and/or cost saving strategies that met certain State requirements and
stayed within the tax levy cap. Another proposal made by the Governor would be a property tax
“circuit breaker,” wherein the State would provide a rebate to property taxpayers below a certain
income threshold where the ratio of property taxes paid to income is considered too expensive.
Other programs being proposed by the Governor include a renter’s tax credit, estate tax reforms,
reductions and credits to businesses and manufacturers, and tax simplification. Critics of the
proposal question how $2 billion of funding will be generated when the State recently reported a
$10 billion deficit. A copy of the Governor’s proposals is attached to these meeting notes.
In response to questions concerning whether or not the City would receive credit for the various consolidation and cost-sharing measures undertaken since 2010, Commissioner Genito noted that the New York Conference of Mayors is gathering such information from communities across the State, so that it can be presented to the Governor with a request that credit be granted for such recent efforts.


Commissioner Genito distributed the rating report from Moody’s that was released earlier that day (February 10, 2014), in which Moody’s assigned an Aa1 rating with stable outlook to the City’s $22.8 million general obligation bonds that are expected to be sold on February 13, 2014 and to the $133 million general obligation debt outstanding after the sale of these bonds.

Affordable Care Act (ACA)

Commissioner Genito reported that there have been delays and extensions on various components of the ACA and that most of the requirements will go into effect in 2015. He noted that the City currently provides to all of its full-time employees health care plans that meet or exceed current ACA requirements. Chairwoman Smayda noted that we can revisit the ACA when the requirements go into effect.

Other Post Employment Benefits (OPEB)

Chairwoman Smayda noted that an OPEB Subcommittee, consisting of herself, Adam Bergonzi and Michael Schwartz would be reviewing current and potential future OPEB requirements. She noted that we may wish to consider changing actuaries, given that the current one is a member of a law firm and charges additional fees when asked to provide information that is available but not presented in the standard annual actuarial report. Commissioner Genito will speak with the actuary to see what might be arranged in terms of providing such information as part of the annual service. The Committee agreed that a more expanded discussion with auditors, actuaries and others concerning OPEB and how it is being addressed by other municipalities is warranted.

Multi-Year Forecast

Edie Alfenas and Chairwoman Smayda presented the key assumptions being used in the multi-year forecasting model and noted that some of the assumptions are still being vetted. Discussion ensued as to how detailed (“granular”) the model should be, and the Committee agreed that certain information should be reviewed, such as the varying cost annually of snow removal, but that the model should retain a high level of summary other than those items that may materially affect a major object of expenditure (such as materials and supplies).

Projects for Consideration

Chairwoman Smayda noted that there were many areas of study that the Committee and its subcommittees are already working on, and that the only other project to add at this time would be a Subcommittee to study cable television finances and operations. She noted that she and Mayor
Roach will soon be visiting the Chappaqua Library, where the cable TV station for that community is situated. Chairwoman Smayda advised that Chappaqua’s Cable TV arrangements can be seen on [www.newcastlenow.org](http://www.newcastlenow.org). The current plans for White Plains are to move the cable TV station to the White Plains Library. The subcommittee will study a number of areas, such as facility usage, technology employed, organizational structure, programming, franchise fees and other pertinent areas. Councilwoman Lecuona noted that the Mamaroneck Cable TV operates out of a theater in Mamaroneck. The subcommittee should also review whether or not a consolidation of cable TV and Library services would qualify as a consolidation/shared service under the Governor’s two year property tax “freeze” proposal.

**Other Business**

Chairwoman Smayda reported that the Office of State Comptroller had recently published a very positive “Municipal Profile” on the City of White Plains, and asked Commissioner Genito to forward a copy of the profile to the Committee.

**Next Meeting Date**

The next meeting date is scheduled for Wednesday, March 19, 2014, 7:30 PM, Mayor’s Conference Room, City Hall.

**Adjournment**

Having no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 9:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael A. Genito