

BOF Budget Presentation  
For Law Department  
2014/2015 Fiscal Year

- **Review of Budget Request** (Provided in Budget Book)
  - Financial Request (2014-15 resource requests, bold in budget book)
    - Total funding requested **\$2,346,975**
    - Identify and describe increases/decrease Year Over Year:  
**Increase driven by Professional Consultants expenses and salary line items.**
    - Human Capital/ Personnel Change –
      - **Addition of part-time Assistant Corporation Counsel to concentrate on Freedom of Information issues, same position also functions as ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) Officer for City. This position was approved in the fall of 2013 and an attorney was hired for this position in November 2013.**
      - **Request to create Senior Paralegal position. This position would replace one of the two paralegal positions currently existing and be filled by one of the paralegals currently employed in the Law Department. Total hours worked per week would be increased from 35 to 40.**
      - **Request for Legal Secretary. The Law Department does not currently have a Legal Secretary. The Legal Secretary would handle general office duties such as filing, document preparation, copying, printing, preparing envelopes, preparation of letters, etc., which are currently handled by the existing 2 paralegals, the executive assistant and the attorneys themselves. Not having a secretary infringes on the time of and thereby reduces the skill-based productivity of the legal staff.**

- **Budget Management** (1 page)
  - Summary of any cost reductions taken in 13/14 – include amount and source: **N/A**
  - Cost managements actions to be taken 2014-15: **The Law Department has been successful in protecting the City’s interest and defending lawsuits filed against the City. Consequently, the City’s risk of exposure to monetary damages and other forms of relief in civil actions has been relatively low.**
  - **Every effort is made to manage and contain costs of the department, including a constant review of day-to-day costs. Most of the variable costs of this department involve costs associated with litigation and legal advice such as expert witness fees, outside counsel when necessary due to conflicts or the need for specific legal expertise, professional consultants and court costs.**

### **Cost Analysis and Spending Priorities (1-2 pages)**

- Breakdown of total department spending and resources by priority (high to low program/department priorities) Include supporting analysis and description of how analysis was done
  - **Salaries \$1,196,260.15 – Staff required to perform functions of Law Department. (1 Corporation Counsel, 1 Deputy Corp. Counsel, 5 full-time Assistant Corp. Counsels, 1 Executive Assistant and 2 paralegals)**
  - **Permanent Part-time Salaries \$77,692.00 – Permanent part-time Assistant Corporation Counsel**
  - **Social Security \$100,570– Federal mandated expense.**
  - **Medical & Life \$200,833 – To fund annual health insurance costs for active and retired employees. Number provided by OPM, cannot be reduced.**
  - **Overtime \$1,000 – Every effort is made to keep overtime to a minimum.**
  - **Professional Consultants \$350,000 – A variable cost, line item that fluctuates depending on the need for expert witnesses, professional consultants and outside counsel with expertise in particular areas of law. The department aims to operate within the limits of this budget but this amount can vary from year to year.**
  - **Office Supplies & Expenses \$30,000 – The bulk of this line item is dedicated to online legal research as well as legal books and publications that are important research tools for the attorneys in representing the City’s interest and defending the City against claims and lawsuits. A small percentage of this line item is for office supplies such as pens, paper, etc.**
  - **Dues & Fees \$2850 – We are required by the attorneys collective bargaining contract to pay bar association dues and fees for the attorneys in this office.**
  - **Software Maintenance - \$4,080 – Annual maintenance of specialized municipal legal software program.**
  - **Court & Sheriff Services \$8,000 – A variable cost line item which fluctuates depending on the need for marshal services and court filing fees.**
  - **Stenographic Services \$15,000 – Cost for stenographers at depositions, as well as cost for copies of transcripts of depositions, trials and hearings. Note: Attorneys are not allowed to request copies of transcripts from opposing counsel in order to save money, we are required to purchase our own copies from the court reporters.**
  - **Facility Rental - \$6,000 – Cost for off-site storage facility for legal files. Because we are required by state law to retain files for proscribed time periods, every effort is made to periodically review files being kept off site and destroy files that we are no longer required to store.**

- **Copying & Printing - \$12,500 – Cost for rental of photocopier, paper, printing of letterhead, legal paper, etc.**
- **Postage - \$3,000 – Cost for postage and overnight delivery service. Every effort is made to send documents via e-mail and/or regular U.S. Mail to the extent possible.**
- **Seasonal - \$5,000 – Cost for part-time clerical aid for copying, filing and general office duties.**
- **Travel - \$2,500 – Cost for parking and mileage reimbursement to attorneys for travel to Court (outside of Stamford).**
- **Car Allowance - \$5,000 – Contractual obligation for Deputy Corporation Counsel**

- Describe what drives program cost (Cost Drivers). Highlight controllable Cost Drivers **-Other than salaries, costs are driven by the Law Department's representation of its City clients and the defense of claims and lawsuits filed against the City. The nature of the cases and issues that arise are, to a great extent, unpredictable.**

Key operational changes planned to improve service level (2014-15) – **Implementation of Citylaw in FY 13/14, continue to input information into and improve efficiency by use of Citylaw.**

- Business case and justification for any increases in resources requested (1 page)
  - **Addition of part-time Assistant Corporation Counsel to concentrate on Freedom of Information issues, same position also functions as ADA Officer for City. This position was approved in the fall of 2013 and an attorney was hired for this position in November 2013. With the addition of the permanent part-time Assistant Corporation Counsel tasked with monitoring of Freedom of Information requests, time and money are saved by the affected City departments due to reduction of intra-City requests, reduction of overlapping requests, and less need for outside counsel to respond to Freedom of Information requests and formal complaints.**
  - **Request to create Senior Paralegal position. This position would replace one of the two paralegal positions currently existing and be filled by one of the paralegals currently employed in the Law Department. Total hours worked per week would be increased from 35 to 40. The total salary requested for this position is \$75,889. A comparable paralegal position at a large local law firm is \$105K plus bonus and at a local corporation is \$92K plus bonus. This position is vital to maintain the Law Department's collection rate on real estate & personal property taxes (2012/13 total \$2,711,705) as well as collection on damage to City property (2012/13 total \$59,931). See collections chart under Q&A, General Discussion.**

- **Request for Legal Secretary. The Law Department does not currently have a Legal Secretary. The Legal Secretary would handle general office duties such as filing, document preparation, copying, printing, preparing envelopes, preparation of letters, etc. These duties are currently handled by the existing 2 paralegals, the executive assistant and the attorneys themselves. Not having a secretary infringes on the time of and thereby reduces the skill-based productivity of the legal staff.**
- **A chart benchmarking the staff of Stamford Law Department v. other similar sized and neighboring towns in Connecticut follows:**

	Stamford (pop. 125K)	New Haven (pop. 130K)	Hartford (pop. 125K)	Bridgeport (pop. 146K)	Waterbury (pop. 110K)	Greenwich (pop. 61K)	Norwalk (pop. 87K)
Corp Counsel	1	1		1	1	1	1
Deputy Corp. Counsel	1	2		1	1		1
Ass't Corp. Counsel	5	6		10	8	4	3
P/T Ass't Corp. Counsel	1	1					1
Executive Assistant	1	1			1		
Paralegal	2	4		2	2	4	
Legal Secretary		1		2	2	3	3
Other Staff				2 (collection aides)		1 (office supervisor)	
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>23 full-time</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>9</b>
Budget for outside Professional legal services 13/14	\$325,000 (FY 13/14 to date)	\$375,000 (FY 12/13)		\$650,000 (FY 2013)	\$545,000 (FY 2013)	\$945,000 (FY 13/14)	\$161,793 (FY 13/14)

- Q&A, General Discussion (Be prepared to provide detail if asked)

**In addition to its responsibilities of providing legal advice and representation to the City, the Law Department is also responsible for collecting outstanding property damage claims the City has against third parties as well as both real and personal property taxes that are delinquent. This collection work is handled by a paralegal (requested senior paralegal position). The collections rate is as follows:**

**Personal Property Damage Collection:**

<b>2009/2010</b>	<b>\$ 58,391.71</b>
<b>2010/2011</b>	<b>\$209,151.81</b>
<b>2011/2012</b>	<b>\$105,469.83</b>
<b>2012/2013</b>	<b>\$ 59,931.16</b>

**Real & Personal Property Tax Collection:**

<b>2009/2010</b>	<b>\$1,104,568.68</b>
<b>2010/2011</b>	<b>\$1,738,886.67</b>
<b>2011/2012</b>	<b>\$2,408,517.08</b>
<b>2012/2013</b>	<b>\$2,711,705.77</b>