



Eddie A. Perez
Mayor

NEW APPROACH TO ADDRESS CRISIS BUDGET ISSUES

---NEWS AND COMMUNITY RELEASE---

(January 16, 2010)--- Even holding a meeting on a Saturday is an example of how Mayor Eddie A. Perez and City Council members want to find a new approach to address Hartford's budgetary issues for the next fiscal year that includes managing an approximate \$40 million budget gap.

A Committee of the Whole (COW) meeting was held in Council Chambers to begin a 90 day process to build a consensus budget to be presented at public hearings. This series of workshops will be facilitated by Ted Carroll of Leadership Greater Hartford (LGH).

Mayor Perez says, "Like other cities, Hartford faces fiscal challenges. Together, we need to maintain our momentum in areas like education, public safety, and economic development, meet the needs of our residents and taxpayer, and best position ourselves future job growth."

Council President Pedro Segarra welcomed the new approach. "We need a budget that provides basic services that directly impact our residents, complies with legal requirements, and also provides a future for our children."

The workshops can be seen on Government Cable Access TV Channel 96 and are an extension of the city's outreach to community groups and residents during the One City, One Plan (POCD 2020) future development meetings that will continue with neighborhood listening sessions. This process is also being facilitated by LGH.

Ted Carroll states, "I salute the creativity and courage it took to summon this new process. The business as usually approach won't cut it this time around. Big ideas are needed to grab the attention and expertise of the staff to present to city leaders to help you make better informed decisions."

Some "big ideas" that were mentioned: using technology to save money; charge fees to other communities for training sessions; merge divisions/services within the city or with the school system to avoid duplication; extend furloughs, rework union contracts to allow more volunteerism for services; better regulate utilities; sell some city property; bus stop ad space; regionalize education; work with state legislature to receive revenue from existing state taxes; property tax increase.

The end-goal is to present one clear message from the city to the School Board, the State Delegation and the Congressional Delegation. Here's the workshop schedule:

Revenue:	Thursday, January 28 th at 5: 30 PM
Expenditures:	Thursday, February 4 th at 5:30 PM
Hartford Public Schools:	Thursday, February 18 th at 5:30 PM
Budget Scenarios:	Thursday, March 4 th at 5:30 PM
Follow Up:	Thursday, March 18 th at 5:30 PM
Budget Due from Mayor to Council:	Monday, April 19 th at 5:30 PM