



**Eddie A. Perez**  
**Mayor**

## **BENEFITS AND OVERTIME BUDGET WORKSHOP DISCUSSIONS CONTINUE**

### **---NEWS AND COMMUNITY RELEASE---**

(March 11, 2010)--- Overtime and employee benefits topped the discussion as Mayor Eddie A. Perez and the Court of Common Council continued their Committee of the Whole (COW) budget workshop sessions. The goal is to exchange ideas in order to close a projected \$30 million gap for the next fiscal year. Thursday night's cooperative effort was once again facilitated by Leadership Greater Hartford.

Overtime costs are beginning to creep up again. The Fire Department is facing attrition issues, expecting to lose 50 firefighters in the next two years. The Police Department will no longer receive the \$1.5 million in Federal JAG Stimulus Funding next year--- so overtime will have to be paid out of the City's general fund.

Benefits costs are also rising as part of a national trend. Wellness programs, disease management, and establishing retiree benefit deferral programs are ways the City is trying to mitigate these costs.

Mayor Eddie A. Perez said, "These workshops have brought us together in this process in these extremely difficult financial times. By continuing our ongoing dialogue, I firmly believe Council and I will be able to determine priorities and establish consensus."

Council members brought up the issue of overtime within the Department of Public Works in regards to sprucing up our City's parks. That was addressed during the Mayor's State of the City speech on Monday where he is calling for the creation of a Parks Trainee Program for City residents who are re-entering the workforce after paying their debt to society. This would be funded by both local and federal dollars.

The workshops air on Government Cable Access TV Channel 96 (streaming live on [www.hartford.gov](http://www.hartford.gov)). The next COW meeting is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, March 18<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 P.M. in City Council Chambers and will focus on potential budget scenarios.

Per the City Charter, the Mayor's budget is to be submitted April 19<sup>th</sup>.