

**BOARD OF ALDERMEN
SPECIAL MEETING
MAY 21, 2007**

The Board of Aldermen of the City of Milford held a Special Leadership Meeting on Monday, May 21, 2007 in City Hall. Chairman T. Beirne called the special meeting of the leadership to order at 5:40 p.m.

The following Board members participated in the Special Leadership Meeting regarding the budget for FY 2007-2008:

T. Beirne (BOA Chairman), B. Blake (Minority Leader), Mayor J. Richetelli. Also present J. O'Connell, Mayor's Administrative Assistant.

Ald. Blake, Minority Leader stated Ald. K. Rowland would be participating in this meeting.

Absent: B. Genovese (Majority leader)

Chairman Beirne read the Special Notice for tonight's meeting. He explained they have identified 31 common areas where both sides of decided there should be a cut. He also stated there were some areas where they were off somewhat. Chairman Beirne referred to p. 45 Acct. 4112 9947

Ald. Blake stated he has not had a chance to discuss this with the other members of the Democratic Party. He stated he believe he could make a recommendation and find out if they are on board with this.

Ald. Rowland asked for clarification as to what they were trying to do this evening. She spoke as to talk of meeting somewhere in the middle. She suggested perhaps they could find a new amount and they will then bring it to their caucus.

Chairman Beirne explained a decision was made to have the leadership of both parties meet to make decision to incorporate areas where they are in common and could then vote on one motion. He continued this meeting was being held to have a solid agreement on these items so that when the full Board meets on May 29, 2007 they would not have to go over all these line items again.

Ald. Blake stated he only met with the aldermen from the 4th and 5th Districts. He asked if the other districts would get a voice. He stated he felt they could have some tentative agreements and bring it back to the caucus and then make the entire decision.

Chairman Beirne stated they are not forming a final decision. He reiterated the leadership would agree there are commonalities that they have found in the budget. If aldermen wish to make changes on May 29, 2007 they can do so. He stated tonight they would look at those commonalities, then what is proposed they will bring back to their respective caucuses.

Mayor Richetelli added the intent tonight was to get together to talk with one another between the two sides. He stated there are many areas of agreement that could speed things up on the 29th. He also explained if they are able to set a mill rate on May 29, 2007 the tax bills will go out on time and they will not incur any additional

fees. He stated it is not their goal to rush things through, but reiterated if they are able to come up with a mill rate on May 29, 2007 they would not incur any other fees, especially since there some common areas.

Ald. Rowland asked if this was a “gentlemen’s agreement” here, and if so, would be happy to go with that. She agreed they should go forward and try to hammer things out.

Chairman Beirne reiterated there are 31 items where they both came up with the same cut. Chairman Beirne referred to Acct. 4112 9944 and asked if they could come to an agreement at \$11,000.

Ald. Rowland asked what other accounts and changes.

Chairman Beirne stated Accts. #4112 9947, 4419, 4798, and 4971.

Ald. Rowland commented regarding Acct. #4971 0214 she would be comfortable with \$185,000.

Ald. Blake added that is the average and that he had confirmed with the Chief that he would be comfortable with this figure.

Chairman Beirne agreed to \$185,000.

Ald. Rowland suggested they not necessarily meet in the middle but look at each cut. She stated she strongly felt they could do better than the numbers they initially provided.

Chairman Beirne asked if she was offering more cuts than originally suggested.

Ald. Rowland replied yes.

Chairman Beirne asked they look at Acct. 4112 9947.

Ald. Rowland suggested they cut it to \$5,000.

Chairman Beirne stated the majority had proposed \$12,000.

Chief K. Mello explained the account was proposed to patrol open space, which includes the Salomon property. He stated even at \$14,000 that is only 6-7 weeks of patrol. He stated by cutting it to \$5,000 he would be maybe 5-6 weeks. He stated it is a difficult time for staffing.

Mayor Richetelli added it is the folks that have been up there that are the most vocal about the ATV’s in the park and have asked for greater patrols and by cutting this how could they patrol.

Ald. Blake stated he is hearing the Chief is saying it is not productive so they need to find a different way to achieve the means and he would defer to the Chief for that.

Chief Mello noted when people know they are present they move on. He also commented with one ATV it is hard to find staffing and that does not prove productive. He stated he has sent a letter out to the area neighbors. He stated with having to reduce dollars he would rather it be in this account than others.

Ald. Rowland asked if what he is saying is that when the word gets out they are they're patrolling then they move out.

Chief Mello replied yes. He stated they have been out there in random, sometimes it just does not prove productive.

Ald. Blake stated he would agree to the \$5,000.

Chairman Beirne stated the majority would make the following recommendations:

Acct. 4419	\$3,000
Acct. 4798	\$3,100

Chairman Beirne asked what the minority would recommend with regard to account 4977 0100

Ald. Blake stated they would agree to \$3,100.

Chairman Beirne turned to page 61, Acct. 0010 4340 and noted the Republicans recommended \$32,000 and the Democrats recommended \$32,000.

Ald. Blake stated they would agree and recommend.

Chairman Beirne referred to Acct. 4471 and stated the Republicans recommended \$8,000 and the Democrats recommended \$6,000.

Ald. Rowland suggested they go with the \$6,000. Chairman Beirne stated they would agree to that.

Chairman Beirne referred to Acct. 4718 0000 Travel & Conferences and stated the Republicans were at \$1,100 and the Democrats at \$500.

Ald. Blake stated they believed he heard the Animal Control Officer state there is one conference that is mandatory.

Chairman Beirne asked if the minority would be willing to go to \$750.

Ald. Rowland asked for any insight from the Mayor.

Mayor Richetelli explained there is one they all go to and there is also a regional conference that the Chief Animal Control Officer goes to. He stated he would recommend somewhere in the middle.

Ald. Rowland asked what they wanted to raise it to.

Chairman Beirne stated \$750.

Chairman Beirne referred to page 62 Acct 4798 0000 and asked if the parties could agree to reduce this to \$5,000.

Chairman Beirne moved onto the Building Department, Acct. 4783 and asked if they could agree to reduce to \$1,500.

Ald. Blake referred to Acct. 4784 and asked if they could agree to \$6,000.

Chairman Beirne replied yes.

Chairman Beirne referred to Acct. 4977 0124 and stated the Board of Finance recommended \$1,500. He stated the Republicans are at \$1,000 and the Democrats at \$0.

Mayor Richetelli stated this would be needed if they were going to put on another Inspector – Inspector B as opposed to Deputy Inspector.

Ald. Rowland stated it was her understanding it was \$0 for a Deputy Inspector and asked if he was saying that a new position would need a desk. With regard to the Deputy Chief it is \$0. She stated as to the rest she would recommend leaving it for the full Board since they did not have the information.

Chairman Beirne referred to Acct. 4977 0121 and suggested they leave it for the full Board to discuss. He referred to Acct 4990 0501 and stated the Republicans are at \$500 and the Democrats at \$0.

Ald. Blake stated this is a year of sacrifices and if they had to hold off a year it would be appropriate.

Mayor Richetelli stated he understood however if they are going to the full Board as to whether or not there is going to be another inspection, other items go with that position.

Chairman Beirne referred to Acct. 0010 4420 Public Works and line item 4112 0000.

Ald. Rowland stated they would agree to cut \$3,500.

Chairman Beirne asked if in the spirit of compromise they would be willing to go to \$3,550.

Ald. Blake stated while they could recommend that why not just go with \$3,500.

Chairman Beirne stated they are setting the budget for the City and that he didn't want to be in a position that departments run out of money before the fiscal year ends.

Both parties agreed to the \$3,550.

Chairman Beirne stated both parties were at \$0 for the Clerk A position.

Chairman Beirne referred to page 78, Acct. 4335 and stated the Board of Finance is at \$250,000, the Republicans at \$245,000 and Democrats at \$240,000.

Ald. Blake stated the \$240,000 was the figure budgeted last year and expected to remain the same. He also stated they are faced with a Mayor's increase of \$7,000. He stated they needed to ask department heads to work on this.

Chairman Beirne stated they would agree to the \$240,000.

Chairman Beirne referred to page 85 Acct. 4718 0000 and stated the Board of Finance recommended \$3,000.

Ald. Rowland stated the Republicans were at \$2,750 and the Democrats at \$500.

Mayor Richetelli stated with regard to Travel & Conference that he has tried to keep it as equal as possible for all departments. He spoke of the benefits of attending these conferences that then benefit the City. He stated the idea that Travel & Conference is a vacation is just not true. He stated the department heads and their employees have come back with very useful information, i.e. computer software, etc. He also stated our department heads are looked upon in the State as leaders in their field and cited as an example, Dr. McBride. He stated to lower that line item to \$500 would do a disservice to the department and to the City of Milford.

Dr. McBride spoke as to the challenges in the field of Public Health. He stated they are confronted with issues and problems never thought of. He spoke of a recent mosquito problem and the problems with West Nile. He stated the only way for a department to keep up with these things is to attend these conferences. He stated they have also been able to bring in grants because of some of the concepts they have brought back to this City, which benefits everyone. He spoke of global warming as another issue. He stated he heads up a workforce nationally and that they inter-face with their peers and leaders in these fields. He also spoke of the opportunities to interface with peers and affect changes on a national level. He also commented he is very proud to be your local health director. He stressed the need for opportunities for myself and other members in this department.

Ald. Blake commented to Dr. McBride he is the "wizard" at getting grants. He stated he is not looking to reduce this to \$0, but reduce it a bit. He asked if Dr. McBride could live with the \$500.

Chairman Beirne asked if it would prevent him and the members of his department from attending conferences.

Dr. McBride stated it might restrict them.

Chairman Beirne pointed out in FY 05-06 \$3,816 was used in this account and in FY 06-07 \$750; and as of January the year to date in that account is \$2,546. He stated it concerns him that \$500 would be sufficient as it would seem they would miss some conferences.

Dr. McBride replied yes.

Ald. Blake thanked Dr. McBride for being candid. He stated it has been stated previously that this is a year of sacrifices.

Chairman Beirne stated he would like to stay at \$2,750 to make sure the doctor is able to attend conferences that benefit our citizens. He stated they would leave this as an open item for the full Board.

Mayor Richetelli added that any monies that were grants are not reflected here.

Chairman Beirne referred to Acct. 4772 and stated the Republicans were at \$900 and the Democrats at \$500. He stated he would recommend \$700. Chairman Beirne referred to Acct. 4977 and stated he would recommend \$600. Chairman Beirne referred to page 90 Acct. 4221 9919. He stated the Republicans were at \$10,127,382 and the Democrats at \$10,471,272.

Mayor Richetelli explained these items are actually compiled based on expenses so far and that this figure was the recommendation of the actuary.

Ald. Blake stated he looked over the reports and audits and that they would be willing to go to \$10,127,382.

Chairman Beirne referred to page 93 Acct. 0010 4801, line 4701. He stated the Republicans are at \$1,353,000 and the Democrats are at \$1,320,000.

Ald. Blake stated the same amount was expended last year. He also noted part of Council on Aging they are requesting a vehicle and they recently received a private donation.

Mayor Richetelli asked if they checked with the Council on Aging to see whether they need a vehicle. He explained they actually received two. He stated there fleet is lagging and questioned whether those two would be sufficient.

Ald. Blake stated he believed during their presentation it would be sufficient.

Chairman Beirne referred to Acct. 0010 4803. He stated the Board of Finance recommended \$75,000 and that the Republicans were at \$72,500 and the Democrats at \$70,000.

Ald. Rowland stated their proposal is what they were able to do last year and stated she was comfortable with that amount.

Mayor Richetelli stated he understands Ald. Rowland is comfortable with that amount but that the Fine Arts Council testified during their presentation there are a number of capital expenditures they needed to take care of. He also stated they are taking on new adventures and noted they run extremely lean with the director and one secretary. He also commented they are leaders in our State and have been asked to take the lead in Orange.

Chairman Beirne stated it was agreed the figure be \$71,250.

Chairman Beirne referred to Acct. 0010 4811 and stated the Republicans are at \$183,000 and the Democrats at \$146,430.

Ald. Blake stated their figure is based on the recommendation of the Burgess of the Borough. He explained what he heard regarding the Borough's operational budget.

Chairman Beirne stated they would agree to \$146,430.

Chairman Beirne referred to page 95 Acct. 0010 4812 Transit with the Democrats recommending \$340,000.

Mayor Richetelli stated the next two grant agencies are two of the hardest hit. He stated Transit was hit the hardest compared to their counterparts funded by DOT. He stated are delegates are trying to rectify this. He spoke of the non-profits that stand to suffer this year. He also commented although the taxpayers should not have to flip the bill there are a number of people that use the services of the Transit Authority and Bridges. He suggested they split the difference of the two and that it would be a shame that these two agencies that help so many people are short-changed.

Chairman Beirne asked if they could agree on \$343,375 for Acct. 4708-Transit and \$360,000 Acct. 4708-Bridges.

Ald. Blake stated they wished to save Bridges for the full Board.

Ald. Rowland added they would recommend that figure to their caucus.

Chairman Beirne referred to Acct. 0010 4817 HRD. He stated the Board of Finance recommended \$198,316 and the Republicans were at \$197,272 and the Democrats at \$195,000.

Mayor Richetelli stated whatever cuts they make would affect the department as a whole. He stated anything we cut will cut their grants and that even making a small cut would hurt the people in the long run. He also pointed out the Board of Finance's numbers are the same as he recommended. He stated Mr. Baldwin pointed out this is a grant agency and they then get matching grants.

Ald. Rowland stated the cut proposed is still an increase over last year and that it is a \$5,000 increase. She stated they just wished to keep control on things.

Mayor Richetelli stated the increase would do nothing more than pay for salary and benefits in the office.

Ald. Rowland asked how that affected the Republicans cuts.

Mayor Richetelli explained it is a 5-person office and would do with less part time employees.

Ald. Blake suggested they split the difference.

Chairman Beirne stated the difference would be \$196,044.

Ald. Blake stated they would recommend that.

Chairman Beirne referred to Acct. 4710 0000.

Mayor Richetelli stated the Republicans are at \$218,009 and the Democrats at \$215,574.

Chairman Beirne stated they could agree with \$215,574.

Chairman Beirne referred to page 98 Acct. 0010 4825 line 4708. He stated the Board of Finance recommended \$65,000 and the Republicans were at \$50,000 and the Democrats at \$60,000.

Mayor Richetelli stated he believed very strong in the shelter/CPAC and commented they have re-organized and they are on the upswing. He stated he recommended the \$65,000 and understands both parties wish to make reductions.

Ald. Rowland stated she would recommend \$60,000 or go to the full Board.

Chairman Beirne stated he would agree with \$60,000.

Chairman Beirne referred to page 100, Acct. 0010 4997 and stated the Board of Finance recommended \$15,615,793 and the Republicans were at \$15,377,257 and the Democrats at \$15,255,793.

Ald. Blake stated he looked at the actuary's figures.

Mayor Richetelli stated the number he received from the Finance Director was \$15,377,257 and that came from a report from the actuary.

Ald. Blake suggested they wait until the Finance Director is available.

Chairman Beirne referred to Page 101, Acct. 0010 4998 line 4117. He stated the Republicans were recommending \$24,000 and the Democrats \$22,000. He stated they would recommend \$23,000. With regard to line 4718 Travel, he stated the Board of Finance was recommending \$2,000 and the Republicans \$1,750 and the Democrats \$500.

Mayor Richetelli explained there are 23 public health nurses and each go to one training opportunity per year. He stated they do not go out of state and that there training is here in State.

Ald. Rowland stated the split would be \$76.00.

Mayor Richetelli explained there is usually a \$50.00 fee to get into the training class and also lunch.

Ald. Rowland stated she would be comfortable with \$1,150.

Chairman Beirne stated he would agree with \$1,150.

Chairman Beirne referred to Acct 4977 Computer and stated the Republicans were at \$1,000 and the Democrats were at \$500. He stated they would recommend \$500.

Chairman Beirne stated with regard to Educational Operations they did not have a figure to recommend.

Ald. Blake stated they should reserve it for the full Board. He asked if the Republicans had a cut or a range.

Chairman Beirne replied it was an on-going debate and they had not yet come up with a consensus.

Mayor Richetelli commented it is important to be as expedient as possible, but deliberative. He asked if it is possible for the two leaderships to let him know that these changes are agreeable as the Finance Director will need to plug in those numbers and those that have been agreed on there will not be any debate.

Chairman Beirne stated they would go back to their caucus with this information.

Ald. Blake agreed they would bring this back to their caucus.

The meeting concluded at 7:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen K. Huber
Board Secretary