

**BOARD OF ALDERMEN
BUDGET DELIBERATIONS
APRIL 9, 2008**

The Board of Aldermen of the City of Milford held a Budget Deliberations Session for the FY 2008-2009 on Wednesday, April 9, 2007 in the aldermanic chambers of City Hall. Chairman Blake called the meeting to order at 7:11 p.m. and welcomed everyone to the first night of budget deliberations to discuss the budget with our department heads. He asked everyone present to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

1. Roll Call

Board Members Present

J. Blacketter
B. Blake
V. Ditchkus
A. Giannattasio
M. Hardiman
B. Lambert
S. Manning
R. Nunno
J. Patterson
J. Toohey
N. Veccharelli
P. Vetro
R. Vitali
S. Willey

Also Present

Mayor J. Richetelli, Jr.
J. O'Connell, Mayor's Admin. Asst
A. Jepson, City Clerk
M. Lipton, City Attorney
J. Doneiko, Finance Director

Excused

B. Bier

Chairman Blake informed the Board that Community Development & Economics has been moved to April 23, 2008 per the request of Bob Gregory. He also reported the Fire Department has been moved to April 23, 2008 from April 16, 2008 at the request of the Chief.

Ald. Ditchkus raised a point of order stating the Board had not come out of recess.

Chairman Blake stated he would entertain a motion to come out of recess.

Ald. Ditchkus and Ald. Hardiman made and seconded a motion to come out of recess at 7:13 p.m.

Ald. Vitali commented he wished to thank the secretary for preparing the worksheet showing the pages for all the departments.

4111 – Board of Aldermen – Mayor Richetelli explained this is the Board's account and not the Mayor's. He reported line item #4168 – Secretarial fees would be short this year. He stated the current balance in that account is \$1,915. He read the letter received from the secretary. Mayor Richetelli reiterated there would be a deficit this year. He stated the amount budgeted was based on last year's figure. He stated he wished to make the Board aware of this.

Ald. Lambert asked about line item 4977 0190 Computer and asked if that is together or the aldermen's office.

Mayor Richetelli explained the life span of the computer and that it is for the secretary for the Board of Aldermen who also acts as the receptionist for the Law Department. He went on to explain the position.

4112 – Elections

Ald. Nunno asked about the \$2,500 increase and asked if it was due to the presidential primary.

Mr. Jepson read the explanation and explained the process involving the election and the laws dealing with the optical scan style machine as compared to what they previously used.

4115 – Registrar of Voters – Rosemary Scarpa and Antoinette Carey

Mrs. Scarpa spoke as to the elections account and the Registrar of Voters and how they are intertwined in everything they do. She also pointed out the budget is based on fiscal year and also spoke as to last year's audit.

Mrs. Carey added this is the last election they will get reimbursement and went on to explain the increases in this account.

Mr. Jepson addressed the reimbursement as a "feel good" from the State. She also spoke as to Secretary of State mandates, i.e. moderator books.

Mrs. Carey stated they would like to request \$500 be put back into the postage account which was cut this year. She explained the number of letters that would have to be sent out due to the new registrants and also a mailing regarding voter posts that have changed. She stated they felt they could live within the bare bones of this budget.

Mrs. Scarpa addressed line item 4718 0000 Travel & Conferences and explained there are two conferences this year that are within the same fiscal year and also the classes that they are required to attend. She also explained the reimbursements the department receives.

Mrs. Carey stated the bottom line is with this budget they would not be reimbursed for attending these conferences.

Mrs. Scarpa added they try all year to cut costs and get by each day.

Mr. Jepson spoke regarding the word audit that was a mandated audit. He also addressed the conferences and pointed out they are not exercises in fun times, but they are learning so as to stay up to date regarding elections and City Clerk laws.

Ald. Veccharelli commented he finds himself without a BOF budget book, which makes it difficult to make comments without the right book in front of him.

Mayor Richetelli stated he personally distributed those books at Monday night's BOA meeting.

Mr. Jepson interjected stating he witnesses that being done. (current books were made available to those who did not have them).

Ald. Veccharelli asked if there was any area in their budget they would like to request additional funds.

Mrs. Carey responded yes, as she previously explained they are looking for funding in the postage account and would like to see \$500 put back. She reiterated her earlier explanation.

Ald. Ditchkus commented this is one of the lowest increases he has seen in ages and thanked the women for that. He asked about the decrease and what it was attributed to.

Mrs. Carey spoke regarding the canvas and also regarding elections. She also explained some of the things the department has done.

Ald. Nunno asked how a presidential election year differs from a regular election.

Mrs. Carey explained percentages for ordering for ballots explaining that you did not want to get caught short.

Mrs. Scarpa also explained the role of the moderator and structure of voting with the new machines.

#4121 – Mayor’s Account – Mayor Richetelli stated he would be happy to answer any questions the Board had. He stated outside of wages granted by this Board at 2.5% to this department and all city employees, all other accounts have gone down.

Ald. Lambert asked about line item 4718 0000 Travel & Conferences from \$1,500 to \$50 and if that number is correct.

Mayor Richetelli replied yes. He explained last year he went to Washington, DC to accept Milford’s 100 Best Communities Award. He stated the \$50 would be used for parking, etc.

Ald. Lambert asked about fuel-efficient vehicles and if there is a list of those vehicles and also the year of those vehicles. She also asked if some of those vehicles are ready to be retired that may be gas-guzzlers.

Mayor Richetelli responded there is a list and also who the vehicle is assigned to. He stated they also keep track of mileage.

Ald. Lambert asked about the cars that are “gas-guzzlers” and replacing them with more fuel efficient vehicles.

Mayor Richetelli explained most of the vehicles have been converted to Dodge Stratus.

Ald. Nunno asked if the Mayor would provide the Board with a list of those vehicles and also which vehicles are allowed to be taken home.

Mayor Richetelli responded he would.

Ald. Nunno requested a 5-minute recess. The Board recessed at 7:47 p.m.

Chairman Blake reconvened the Board in public session at 7:51 p.m.

Ald. Toohey asked about line item 4776 0001 asking if this was an upgrade as it seems to have jumped.

Mayor Richetelli explained this was the number given to them by MIS based on numbers generated by the providers.

Ald. Veccharelli asked about line item 4776 0001 – Cell Phones asking who is getting them and who has them.

Mayor Richetelli responded the Mayor, Finance Director, City Attorney and HRD/Department of Human Services, which are a number of cell phones used for safety reasons.

Ald. Manning asked who the contractor is and the expiration date of the contract.

Mayor Richetelli replied this particular offices uses Nextel, but that each department is different depending on their particular needs.

Ald. Manning asked when the contract expires.

Mayor Richetelli responded he did not have that information with him.

Ald. Manning asked if he could get that information.

Ald. Patterson asked about line item 4702 0000 – Budget & Reports and asked if the Board could get the budget on the web, which might save a few trees.

Mayor Richetelli replied they do that, but there are people from the public that expect a hard copy and that is why they are printed.

Ald. Blacketter asked if there is any reason not to do both.

Mayor Richetelli replied they could do both.

Ald. Blacketter asked what drives the increase in seasonal temporary each year.

Mayor Richetelli explained that is one person who is the receptionist in Parsons. He explained when a person is out of their office for whatever reason, the main city numbers ring at that desk.

Ald. Veccharelli asked if there is a policy for all phones. He suggested dealing with just one or two vendors, noting the Board of Education gets a good deal and possibly the City could get the same deal or a better deal if they were to consolidate with one or two vendors. He also asked when the contracts expire and stated he did not wish to beat the cell phone issue to death, but reiterated there could be a better deal.

Mayor Richetelli explained they put as many as they can together. He also commented with regard to the Board of Education that is a special rate reserved for education agencies.

Ald. Veccharelli continued that combining vendors was a better idea and that he understood the various needs of each department.

#4123 – Community Development – reiterated they would be heard on April 16, 2008.

Chairman Blake noted the Judge of Probate was waiting and asked the Board if they would allow that agency to be moved up as she had her two young children with her.

Ald. Ditkus asked if the speakers could announce who they are for the benefit of the new members of the Board.

#4133 – Probate Court – Judge Beverly Streit-Kafalas was present for questions/comments. She stated her budget is a zero increase from the current year and that they will continue and continue to reduce. She also commented they recycle wherever they can. Judge Streit-Kafalas spoke of the importance of the Board being aware of the conservative measures in the Parsons Complex. She addressed the postage account, which she stated is mandated and expressed her hope the amount in that account would be sufficient. She stated her department has increased the use of faxing notice to attorneys when they can; however, they also needed to be aware of confidentiality issues. She spoke of the hope of going to microfilming. She they also would be implementing in the coming year a laser fiche system. She stated her budget is straightforward and conservative.

Ald. Lambert thanked Judge Streit-Kafalas for being conservative and that her efforts were greatly appreciated.

Ald. Willey asked where the salary explanations were in the budget.

Judge Streit-Kafalas explained they are funded through the State Probate System and that the Probate Court System pays for all salaries, computers, etc.

#4129 – City Clerk – Mr. Jepson, City Clerk was present for questions/comments.

Chairman Blake noted there is a memo forthcoming.

Mr. Jepson stated his budget is either less or the same as last year and that there is one change in his budget which is the elimination of a secretary and the addition of an Assistant City Clerk. He read the memo regarding that change.

Ald. Vitali asked for clarification regarding the secretary/clerk position.

Mr. Jepson replied they are eliminating the secretary position and adding an additional Assistant City Clerk.

Ald. Veccharelli asked about line item #4150 0000 – Professional Services. He asked for an explanation of that account.

Mr. Jepson explained that is for a mandatory audit of the land records that is required by law.

Ald. Blacktter asked about line item #4771 0000 Advertising.

Mr. Jepson explained most of that account is for this honorable Board. He stated it is the notices for this Board that have to appear in the newspaper.

Ald. Giannattasio asked about line item #4778 0000 Indexing/Recording.

Mr. Jepson explained every item put on the land records involves a cost. He explained the use of funds related to the aspects of recording.

#4131 – Law Department – City Attorney Marilyn Lipton was present for questions/comments.

Attorney Lipton addressed line item #4117 0000 – Seasonal Temporary. She explained last year it was \$18,000 and as the Board may recall she had a major staff change and it was thought that money would be needed to help out in the office and assist with training. She stated she was fortunate enough to get someone who had extensive legal experience and training, therefore very little was expended from that account and that this year she is only asking for \$5,000. Attorney Lipton also stated that last year she lost \$5,000 in cuts for books/publications which is much needed for providing technical support as well as legal and drafting support services to the 20 departments in this City. She stated in addition, she deals with at least 15 Boards and Commissions including but not limited to those such as Transit, Planning and Zoning Board of Appeals, Zoning Board of Appeals, Historic District as well as the ad hoc Tax Relief Committee, Sewer, Ethics and Board of Aldermen noting this Board is very familiar with the work of her office. She stated as a result of last year's cuts they had to reconfigure electronic services and they were forced to go from Lexis to Westlaw, which has slowed their ability to do work. She explained the difference between Lexis and Westlaw. She also spoke as to the Fair Labor Standard Handbook which is an almost necessity for her department. Attorney Lipton continued her presentation explaining the variety of books she brought along with her.

Ald. Toohey asked about line item 4122 0000 Other Legal Fees and questioned if that is for the tax issue last year.

Attorney Lipton explained the bulk of that money is for expert witnesses, appraisals, etc. She noted of the 99 cases they had settled 21 by the end of May and that they would be before this Board shortly with a number of additional settlements.

Ald. Toohey asked about line item 4977 0190 Computer and 4990 0501 Furniture, Fixtures & Equipment.

Attorney Lipton explained the computer recommendations are from the MIS department and that one of the computers is due to be replaced.

Ald. Toohey asked about line item 4990 0501.

Attorney Lipton responded the computer furniture in her office has never been replaced. She stated her computer sits on an old elementary school desk.

Ald. Willey commented he sympathized with having to switch from Lexis to Westlaw and that this company recently had to do the same. He asked what line item that is.

Attorney Lipton responded 4772 0000.

Ald. Willey asked about line item 4189 0000 Misc. Professional Fees & Svs.

Attorney Lipton explained they are now in pension negotiations and those monies are needed for actuarial expenses, certain appraisals, etc.

Ald. Willey asked why it is so low right now.

Attorney Lipton explained some of the bills just have not come in. She commented they service all of the Board and Commissions she listed with just 2.5 people which includes, lengthy briefs, etc.

Ald. Nunno asked about line item 4713 0000 Membership.

Attorney Lipton replied she is a member of the Connecticut Bar Association, International Municipal Lawyer, and Connecticut Occupational Lawyer, which fee is for two full time attorneys. Also Planning and Zoning Law, Municipal Law just to name a few.

Ald. Vitali asked if she could live with a \$500 cut in Membership.

Attorney Lipton responded of course they would like it back, but could live with the amount given.

Ald. Lambert asked the places these conferences are held and if they are mandated.

Attorney Lipton responded this year some of the conferences will be held in Connecticut and that the annual Labor Conference is in Connecticut. She also spoke as to the number of in-service trainings throughout the year. She stated there would be a major revision of AIA documents and all of the City contracts emanate from the AIA. Attorney Lipton stated she attended a recent conference in Tallahassee, Florida regarding some of these major changes and that the annual International Lawyers Conference this year is in Arkansas. She also spoke of the updates regarding municipal law issues. She also stated she sends her paralegal for real estate training as well as the Assistant City Attorney.

Ald. Ditchkus thanked Attorney Lipton for coming under budget. He stated the law books were a point last year and you were asked to do more with less. He added she did a great job defending the City through all this and extended his hope she would continue to update the law books this year.

#4131 – Ethics – Jim Perrotti, Chairman was available for comments/questions.

Ald. Blacketter asked why line item 4189 0000 had gone up.

Attorney Perrotti explained the increase in that line was costs of outside counsel. He stated in his term they have had only one complaint that went to a hearing and that often they would seek outside counsel.

Ald. Lambert asked about line item 4712 0000 Training Expenses and if some of those are mandatory.

Mr. Perrotti explained part of the charge of this Commission is to provide training to city employees. He stated those funds would help with speakers, materials, etc.

#4740 Claims and Refunds

Chairman Blake asked if it would be the Finance Director who would answer questions.

Ms. Doneiko stated it is the City Attorney as well as the Finance Director.

Chairman Blake asked the total amount for outside attorney fees last year.

Attorney Lipton responded that falls under the legal department. She stated the bulk of attorney fees were for one particular case, which amounted to approximately \$45,000.

Chairman Blake asked about heart and hypertension.

Attorney Lipton responded they recently prevailed in one. She also explained there are two potential new ones and that they are on the second day of trial on another.

#4141 – Board of Finance

Chairman Blake stated this account would be moved to April 23, 2008 when the Finance Department is heard.

#4142 – Planning and Zoning – David Sulkis, City Planner was present for questions. He stated he would be happy to answer any questions of the Board.

Chairman Blake asked what challenges the department could foresee for next year.

Mr. Sulkis responded his department would have a staff change, as the Assistant City Planner would be retiring at the end of the fiscal year. He stated they would have to get someone for that position as well as training that individual. He stated they also had a change in the majority of Planning and Zoning which required a lot of time in training those new members. He spoke briefly as to the general development and that it was a slight down time in the economy so there has been a slight decrease in permits. He stated they still had a number of larger projects ongoing.

Ald. Willey asked about recruitment for the new Assistant City Planner and if there is a fee.

Mr. Sulkis responded the Personnel Department would be advertising for that position and explained that process. He also pointed out it is a civil service position.

Ald. Giannattasion asked if that person would be paid at a lower pay scale.

Mr. Sulkis responded he would assume yes.

Ald. Vetro asked about line item 4112 0000 – Overtime.

Mr. Sulkis responded that account services two boards, Planning and Zoning and Zoning Board of Appeals and that staff members are required to attend those meetings. He explained they are paid to attend those meeting and any other meetings that occur in the evening.

Ald. Nunno asked about line item 4713 0000 – Membership.

Mr. Sulkis explained there are two organizations in which he is a member, CASIO and the American Planning Association.

Ald. Manning asked about line item 4117 0000 – Seasonal/Temporary and asked what that account is for.

Mr. Sulkis responded every year he has asked for a second zoning enforcement officer. He explained this is a mid-sized City with one zoning enforcement officer and although the current zoning enforcement officer does a good job they could benefit by having another person. He went on to explain the zoning staff and the changes since the 1970's. He also spoke as to information that is scanned/digitalized and the need to continually do that. He also stated there is the possibility of having the Assistant City Attorney come back to train the new Assistant City Attorney and step in until one is hired.

Ald. Nunno asked about line item 4797 0000 and an explanation of that account.

Mr. Sulkis explained it is enforcement action required in their regulations, which is based on State statute, and they keep that account open in case they have to tow a vehicle.

Ald. Nunno asked if it is recouped to the homeowner through taxes.

Mr. Sulkis explained some of the variables such as fixed rate, value of the vehicle, etc. He stated they are not necessarily looking to recoup fees but removal of the vehicle.

Ald. Lambert asked about the line item for Travel & Conferences and if that is mandatory.

Mr. Sulkis replied he and the Assistant City Planner are members of the American Institute of Certified City Planners and explained they are required to maintain a certain number of continuing education hours. He stated the Zoning Enforcement Officer is also required to maintain a certain number of continuing education hours.

Ald. Manning asked about cell phones, number of phone and the contractor.

Mr. Sulkis responded they have Nextel and have no time constraints.

Ald. Vetro thanked Mr. Sulkis and his department for the excellent job they do.

Ald. Ditchkus asked how many cell phones they have.

Mr. Sulkis responded 3.

Ald. Blacketter asked about line items #4783 0000 and #4784 0000 and that they seemed similar and redundant.

Mr. Sulkis explained the changes to regulations and forms and that it is difficult to forecast. He stated when this happens they have to print new books and/or forms.

Ald. Veccharelli asked if there is enough money to hire the new assistant city planner and with a seamless transition.

Mr. Sulkis replied they should be able to cover a two-week salary.

Chairman Blake commented with the retirement in the office it would mean a new person coming in at a different step. He asked what the difference would be.

Mr. Sulkis replied it would have to be discussed with the Personnel Director. He also commented, for better or worse, the City of Milford pays less in salary compared to our counterparts.

Ald. Blacketter asked if the Board could get that information in a month.

Mr. Sulkis explained the hiring process and they the interview process may not even be completed in that time.

Ald. Vitali asked if there is a contract in place and if there are steps in that contract and if there is flexibility to offer within those steps.

Mr. Sulkis replied yes.

Ald. Giannattasio asked about the sedan, mid-sized car.

Mr. Sulkis explained that was for a proposed new zoning enforcement office, but it has been removed from the budget.

#4144 – Zoning Board of Appeals – David Sulkis, City Planner was present for questions.

Ald. Giannattasio asked how meetings would be worked if in the future there was a new zoning enforcement officer.

Mr. Sulkis responded he really has never had the luxury to think that far ahead, but yes in all likelihood they would split meetings.

#4145 – Pension Board

Ms. Doneiko stated it would be the Personnel Director who would answer questions regarding this account.

#4146 – Flood and Erosion Board

Ald. Manning asked if this Board meets on a regular basis and commented one would think secretarial fees would be higher.

Mayor Richetelli explained they meet as needed. He stated there has been talk of dredging the ponds at Eisenhower Park and if that were to occur, then this Board would meet.

#4147 – Tree Commission – no one was present. No questions asked.

#4153 – Park, Beach and Recreation Commission – Dan Worroll, Chairman was present for questions.

Mr. Worroll stated there are only secretarial fees for the Commission and that there are no cell phones. He spoke as to the great working relationship between the Commission and the Recreation Department as well as the Public Works Department. He also explained some of the new programs in place by the Recreation Department and recently the boundless playground and dedication benches, which he credited the Vice Chairman for her hard work.

#4620 – Recreation Department – William McCarthy, Director was present for questions.

Ald. Toohey asked about line item 4117 0000 Seasonal/Temporary.

Director McCarthy introduced himself and the Chairman of Park, Beach & Recreation Commission, Dan Worroll. He explained the money is for the seasonal/temporary summer playground program, Camp Happiness, lifeguards and building supervisors. He also pointed out they are paid minimum wage.

Ald. Veccharelli thanked Director McCarthy for a fine Recreation Department and all the wonderful things they do. He also commented he was pleased to hear how well the Recreation Department and Public Works Department work together. He commented regarding line item 4708 9671 Skatepark noting over the last few years a nominal fee has been charged, he asked if it would be possible to go without charging.

Director McCarthy thanked Ald. Veccharelli for his kind words. He explained they have a lease agreement with the YMCA in which they are responsible for maintenance. He also went on to explain the fee structure adding the park is open seasonally from April through October. He stated Milford is one of a few in the State that have a supervised skatepark. He commented he would like to see a Web cam installed in the future at the park.

Mayor Richetelli added that several years ago it was the consensus of the Board of Aldermen to have a supervised park so there would not be any undue liability on the part of the City. He explained the agreement with YMCA. He stated if the Board wants to go to an unsupervised park that assumes the risk of liability they would no longer need the YMCA. He also pointed out the location of the park is inside Washington Field and there could be the potential of the field being damaged without supervision being in that park. He stated these are policy decisions this Board would need to make.

Ald. Nunno asked how often the park is used and commented he too would like to see it free.

Director McCarthy responded it would be hard to identify attendance because they are not responsible. He also commented he it would be a losing proposition for the YMCA monetarily. He spoke as to allowing a pedestrian walkway.

Ald. Manning as a point of information spoke as to the United Way. She also asked about line item 4783 Other Supplies & Expenses.

Director McCarthy explained that is equipment and supplies to run the summer playground programs, recreation programs, etc.

Ald. Veccharelli stated supervision is not a bad idea, but his concern was that they be allowed to skate free.

Mayor Richetelli stated as Ald. Manning had pointed out that they don't kick anyone out because they can't pay. He stated any child that wants to skate can do so. He stated the YMCA has costs associated with liability as well as having someone there. He stated if the Board wished to add more money and pay the YMCA for liability and supervision they could do that.

Ald. Hardiman asked what the charge is.

Director McCarthy explained the three-tiered structure.

Ald. Hardiman asked about line item 4112 0000 Overtime.

Director McCarthy explained that account is for weekends or late activities. He stated they pay a supervisor to open a building i.e. Walnut Beach, Tri Beach, Fanny Beach, etc.

Ald. Hardiman commented the department is very efficient.

Ald. Vitali asked about line item 4708 9969 Stipends to Leagues & Clubs. He commented perception is reality. He also spoke as to the skate park in West Haven. He stated the park should be open with gate accessibility to just that park which would lessen any encouragement to go onto the ball fields.

Director McCarthy responded that seems to be the observation by many people. With regard to that line item he explained that account is a spin-off of their paid officials. He explained how officials are paid and how they split the account. He stated the current amount is \$6.08 per child. He commented they have talked about phasing that out because it is no longer a fee that goes directly to the umpire but goes to the league treasury.

Ald. Vetro commented regarding the Overtime Account and the earlier explanation that a supervisor goes to that building to open it up. He asked if they charge a fee for those meetings.

Director McCarthy responded yes.

Ald. Vetro asked why it is budgeted if it is compensated.

Director McCarthy explained there are times when they may run a track meet or similar, a supervisor is needed. He stated these are events when they are not compensated.

Ald. Vetro asked if they are anticipating using twice as much as last year.

Mayor Richetelli clarified on overtime accounts that some of the overtime accounts that are Recreation are not reimbursed. He pointed out there is a corresponding account for revenue.

Ald. Manning asked about line item 4776 0001 Cell Phones. She asked how many they have, the contractor and the expiration date.

Director McCarthy responded they have 6 yearly contractors, 5 supervisors and himself as well as 6 phones for the summer playground program. He stated they use Nextel and that he believes that contract expires June 16, 2008. He stated they prefer Nextel because it allows them to interact with various City agencies. He also stated they looked at their account last year and have saved about 25% over last year.

Ald. Toohey thanked Director McCarthy for all he has done especially for special needs individuals and stated that department is a leader in special needs efforts.

Ald. Giannattasio stated he wished to elaborate on what Ald. Toohey said. He asked if there are opportunities to develop a program for children with special needs.

Director McCarthy referred to two parents in town currently promoting a boundless playground. He stated it is a great undertaking, expensive and would probably take a few years.

Ald. Willey asked about the fee paid officials and asked what programs.

Director McCarthy responded it is an account for girls and boys' basketball leagues and some adult leagues. He stated it also pays for a scorekeeper.

Ald. Willey asked if the fees paid by the participants pay for these fees.

Director McCarthy explained they are put into a general fund.

Ald. Willey asked about moving basketball to the level of baseball where the parents run the leagues.

Director McCarthy stated this department is one of a few that run a basketball league. He stated there are some programs such as the Devon Knights, but they have never formally discussed a fully self-sufficient league.

Ald. Willey asked if they have always had 7 employees.

Director McCarthy responded they have had that number since 1971 which includes 5 supervisors, secretary and director.

Ald. Blacketter stated she serves as the Board's liaison and that it has been a pleasure working with him.

Ald. Ditchkus spoke as to cell phones and commented they spend less than most. He thanked them for having cell phones, which he stated saves a lot of time in the City.

Chairman Blake asked about line item 4977 0102 Computer monitor.

Director McCarthy explained that is for 7 monitors and that it would save a considerable amount of money and will save in the long run.

#4156 – Conservation Commission – no one was present. No questions asked.

#4158 – Inland Wetlands Agency – Mary Rose Palumbo, Compliance Officer was present for questions.

Chairman Blake asked what hurdles her department may see for next year.

Mrs. Palumbo responded it is a slower year this year with the completion of the three malls they are seeing smaller permits.

Ald. Veccharelli asked about line item 4977 0190 Computer.

Mrs. Palumbo explained that is for a CPU replacement. She stated it is out of warranty and they have been advised to replace it. She stated they also will need a new license.

Ald. Manning asked about the software. She stated MIS has a certain number of licenses in that budget. She also asked about cell phones and the number they have, contractor and when it expires.

Mrs. Palumbo responded they have Verizon with a two-year contract. She stated it is a government contract and they have one phone.

Ald. Nunno commented most departments use Nextel and it would be adequate for this department.

Mrs. Palumbo responded when they purchased their phone they received a better price. She stated it also has be do with reception.

Ald. Vetro asked about line item 4112 0000 Overtime.

Mrs. Palumbo explained she is required to attend meetings as well as conducting site walks outside the regular day.

Ald. Vetro asked about line item 4977 0149 Copier Rental and the contract.

Mrs. Palumbo explained it is a government contract so they receive a lower rate.

Ald. Vetro asked if it is a one-year lease.

Mrs. Palumbo replied she believed it is 5 years.

Ald. Blacketter noted the increase in the entire operations account and asked if the department could try to level it to last year.

Mrs. Palumbo explained each of those account.

#4159 – Fowler Memorial Commission – no one was present from that Commission. No questions asked.

#4193 – Public Library – Mrs. Jean Tsang was present for questions.

Mrs. Tsang commented in these times of poor economy is when libraries are busy. She explained some of the renovations that included a door counter. She also spoke as to the increased use of the library noting they are much busier than they have been in a long time.

Ald. Vetro commented on the fantastic job they did with the passport office.

Chairman Blake asked how much revenue the library brings in.

Mrs. Tsang responded enough to pay off the loan. She stated the unallocated contingency fund is about \$5,000 and \$10,000-11,000 in the other account. She explained the Library Commission has approved all expenditures.

Ald. Vitali thanked Mrs. Tsang for a great job and making the library a vibrant place.

Ald. Lambert asked if they still have a good support system.

Mrs. Tsang responded they still have support from Friends of the Library. She also spoke as to the clubs that have purchased the vision lens. She stated their children's data base purchase was by the Jr. Women's Club and that Friends has their ongoing book sale.

Ald. Nunno asked if the library has y fi service.

Mrs. Tsang responded yes.

Ald. Manning asked about line item 4117 0000 Seasonal/Temporary.

Mrs. Tsang explained the library is open late 3 nights and also on Saturday and they need extra people to cover those hours.

Ald. Veccharelli stated it was his understanding the Saturday hours were at no cost.

Mrs. Tsang explained there still are back ups for those days.

Ald. Veccharelli asked if it costs money to keep the library open on Saturdays.

Mrs. Tsang responded yes. She explained there is a need for more volunteers, staff, lights, and custodians.

Ald. Veccharelli stated it was his understanding there was no charge.

Mrs. Tsang explained they use the Seasonal/Temporary account on Saturdays.

Ald. Nunno asked if they realized an energy savings due to the recent window replacement.

Mrs. Tsang responded that goes through Public Works.

#4310 – Police Department – Chief K. Mello and Deputy Chief S. Fournier were present for questions.

Chairman Blake stated he has asked most departments if they wish to make any opening remarks.

Chief Mello stated it has been 4 years since he was appointed Chief of Police. He stated it has been made clear to him to keep costs at a minimum through those years and this year is no different. He spoke as to things not in his budget. He addressed computers, vehicles, boats, etc. He also stated his department would be purchasing a new motorcycle from other sources not in the budget, i.e. from the sale of seized items.

Ald. Veccharelli asked how many video cameras are in the police cruisers, if that number was 6.

Chief Mello explained they were able to secure a grant through the help of Senator Slossberg to obtain those.

Ald. Veccharelli asked about line item 4796 0000 and if that account would be impacted if the proposed bonding went through.

Chief Mello replied the impact would be about \$30,000.

Ald. Veccharelli asked if that \$61,816 could be reduced if the bonding went through.

Chief Mello commented these prices reflect as system they have had since the 1980's.

Ald. Veccharelli asked about line item 4977 0142 Computer Software. He asked if that item could also be reduced if the bonding went through.

Chief Mello explained that software is for traffic, which is in great need of replacement.

Chairman Blake asked about line item 4796 0000 Software & Maintenance and if that line item would be reduced.

Chief Mello explained that line item is for the drive simulator, maintenance agreement and changes for the IBM service.

Ald. Veccharelli asked why IBM was not in the budget before.

Chief Mello replied this was an increase in multidata software.

Ald. Toohey asked about line item 4117 0000 Seasonal/Temporary and if they receive any reimbursement.

Chief Mello responded no, that this is for employees of the police department.

Ald. Willey stated there are two new officers in the budget, which would bring the total to 129. He asked if the Chief could provide the history of the number of police officers and why the need for additional.

Chief Mello explained in 1989 there were 110 officers and prior to July 1 of last year they had 109 police officers. He spoke as to the demands on the department as well as increased operational and training. He stated training mandates have increased which costs money as well as time away from calls. He also pointed out Milford has grown and cited commercial growth at the Connecticut Post Mall and also the new Milford Marketplace, Milford Crossing and downtown Milford Center which has all impacted calls to the department. He explained a formula his department did to see how many officers they need to maintain services. He also stated they have tried to improve their services and improve quality of life. He stated last year they requested 2 officers and got 1 and that this year they were looking for that additional officer.

Ald. Willey asked how they measure service and quality.

Chief Mello responded it is based on their solving rates, i.e. case clearance and how they respond to demand. He stated they use a number of different benchmarks and also stated they have increased their traffic unit. He stated it is his hope to put a new officer in the traffic unit for traffic enforcement.

Chairman Blake asked if there were any anticipated retirements.

Chief Mello replied they have had a few as well as two officers who left to go to other towns and two who left for the private sector. He added it is becoming more frequent when an officer reaches the 20-year mark they opt for a private sector job.

Chairman Blake asked how much of a savings they could expect from the officers that do retire.

Chief Mello responded it is not a significant savings.

Ald. Nunno asked about line item 4718 0000 Travel & Conferences.

Chief Mello explained that account is used to fund the Chief and Inspector, now called the Deputy Chief to attend IPCA and explained the value of attending. He pointed out this account has been reduced every year so this year the Deputy Chief will not be able to attend because there just isn't enough money. He stated they try to find creative ways to fund their officers for training and seminars.

Ald. Nunno asked about line item 4775 0000 Office Equipment Upkeep and why there was such a big increase.

Chief Mello explained that reflects maintenance costs for various equipment i.e. AFIS System, Closed Circuit Camera monitoring, etc.

Ald. Nunno asked about line item 4790 0001 Records Destruction.

Chief Mello responded records have to be retained for a certain amount of time and then there is a protocol for destroying them.

Ald. Nunno asked about line item 4792 0000 Marine Patrol Expenses and what that is used for.

Chief Mello stated that is for repairs to the boat, engine parts, oil changes and the slip cost.

Ald. Nunno asked if it was possible to use a City owned slip.

Chief Mello responded yes, but it is not his decision.

Mayor Richetelli explained the need for the police boat to be able to get as quickly as possible in the event of an emergency. He explained the location of the slip, expenditures at the landing, etc.

Ald. Lambert asked about line item 4114 9949 Oyster Festival.

Chief Mello explained 64 officers work at the Oyster Festival and the cost goes up each year. He stated he asked for that account as a way to reflect in the budget how much they spend each year. He also stated they have asked the Oyster Festival each year to contribute towards those costs.

Mayor Richetelli stated the Oyster Festival is the official festival of the City and that is why the dollars are paid.

Chairman Blake asked if the Ordinance addresses overtime.

Mayor Richetelli responded he would have to look at it.

Ald. Blacketter asked if other cities pay for use of our academy.

Mayor Richetelli responded not, that they cannot be charged.

Chairman Blake asked why Milford would take on that burden and also why we do not send our officers to a regional training academy.

Chief Mello responded there is nothing else in this area. He stated Stamford, New Haven and Bridgeport have their own facility. He also stated they do not run an academy unless they have a certain number of officers to train.

Ald. Lambert asked about line item 4117 0000 Seasonal/Temporary.

Chief Mello explained they have had a number of part time employees.

Ald. Lambert asked if the department is reimbursed for major responses, such as a chemical spill.

Chief Mello responded no. He explained there is no reimbursement, but there are some situations where a private sector may hire a police office and pay them.

Chairman Blake asked if that is the same for false alarms.

Chief Mello explained the alarm reduction program and that they have reduced false alarms significantly.

Ald. Willey asked what strategies the department has in place to keep officers on the job.

Chief Mello stated he believes they have been effective to create a healthy work environment and create opportunities. He also spoke as to the hours of a police officer, i.e. weekends, nights, and holidays.

Ald. Vetro asked about line item 4977 0198 Scanner.

Chief Mello explained they have two scanners, one digital and a machine to scan and email.

Ald. Vetro asked about line item 4991 0530 Traffic counter.

Chief Mello explained this they have two rubber boxes that takes a count and gives data.

Ald. Vetro asked about line item 4944 0225 and how many they have.

Chief Mello stated they would like to purchase 4 more. He stated when used properly it is a very effective tool that can reduce injuries to an officer.

Ald. Vetro asked about training for them.

Chief Mello responded the downside to anything new is training. He stated they have a yearly recertification program.

Ald. Vetro asked about line item 4944 0300 K9 Expense and why there is no funding in this account.

Chief Mello explained they receive donations for their dogs as well as vests for the dogs.

Ald. Giannattasio asked about line item 4944 0205 noting the recommendation is less than the request. He asked how much a vest costs and how often they are purchased.

Chief Mello stated they have a 5-year warranty and that they buy them for the entire department at a cost of \$700 each. He stated he is asking for a 3 level vest, which costs about \$3,000 each, and that they are asking for 3 this year. He also stated they would get a 50% reimbursement from a grant each year.

Ald. Manning asked about line item 4728 0000 and asked if that is to maintain the equipment. She also asked about line item 4942 0751 is for large expenditures and that they also buy cell phones from that account.

Chief Mello stated they have 8 cell phones and also phones for the 21 narcotics officers. He stated cell phones are effective and efficient. He also explained two of their phones have data alerts they receive from the State, for press releases, etc. He also explained they have secured e-mail (received from a Homeland Security grant). He stated they use the Verizon system and have a competitive price program and that Nextel does not provide the coverage they need.

Ald. Veccharelli commented as to an Ordinance regarding burglar alarms noting it brought in over \$50,000.

Chairman Blake asked about line item 4971 0294 and asked how many actual cars they have and also how many are Dodge Chargers and Crown Victorias.

Chief Mello stated they have 3 Dodge Chargers. He also stated they will be staying with the Crown Victoria for a while and that they are used in the detective's bureau and are mostly leftovers. He also stated they have a Dodge Intrepid.

Chairman Blake asked how many cars in total in this line item.

Chief Mello stated this would fund 9.1 cars.

Chairman Blake asked if they could do with fewer vehicles.

Chief Mello explained the replacement program and that you might save money now, but it would cost more money down the road. He also stated the Board needed to keep in mind a potential personnel increase if the Board were to grant that.

Chairman Blake asked what the difference would be if they were to go down.

Chief Mello responded the cars cost about \$24,000.

Ald. Ditchkus spoke as to the Software maintenance and the possibility of that Ordinance coming up again. He asked if it were true there would not be an instant savings and that it could take months to see a real savings.

Chief Mello stated they have not negotiated any costs, RFP, etc. at this time.

Ald. Ditchkus asked if it were true any savings would not be realized until next year.

Chief Mello responded yes.

Chairman Blake asked if he had to identify one place or more where they could cut and not affect services, where that would be.

Chief Mello responded he has gone through this budget and just does not see where. He also pointed out most of this budget is contractual or mandated by law. He stated he just couldn't find anywhere to cut.

Chairman Blake asked if he could hypothetically say what line item he would recommend.

Chief Mello responded he just could not do that.

Ald. Ditchkus made a motion to recess.

Chairman Blake stated he would entertain a motion to adjourn.

Ald. Ditchkus raised a point of order explaining these are ongoing budget hearings and it should be a motion to recess and that has been the past practice.

Chairman Blake reiterated he would entertain a motion to adjourn.

Ald. Vetro and Ald. Toohey made and seconded a motion to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously.

The Board adjourned at 11:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen K. Huber
Recording Secretary