

**BOARD OF ALDERMEN
BUDGET DELIBERATIONS SESSION
APRIL 13, 2009**

The Board of Aldermen resumed their budget deliberation session on Monday, April 13, 2009 in the aldermanic chambers of City Hall. Chairman Blake reconvened the meeting at 7:08 p.m. Chairman Blake recognized City Librarian Jean Tsang and asked her to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

1. Roll Call

Board Members Present

B. Bier
J. Blacketter
B. Blake
V. Ditchkus, Jr.
A. Giannattasio
S. Manning
R. Nunno
J. Patterson
J. Rosen
J. Toohey
N. Veccharelli
P. Vetro
R. Vitali
S. Willey

Also Present

Mayor J. Richetelli, Jr.
J. Doneiko, Finance Director
L. Bull DiLullo, Mayor's Admin. Asst.
A. Jepson, City Clerk

Excused

M. Hardiman

Chairman Blake stated the Board commenced their budget hearings on April 1, 2009 at which time he made some announcements concerning rescheduling of some departments. He stated he had spoken with Dr. McBride who had a previous obligation on April 20, 2009 and asked if his department could be heard tonight. Chairman Blake also announced that due to a scheduling conflict, Bridges would be heard on April 22, 2009. He also asked if each speaker tonight could announce their name for the record.

4610 Health Department – Dr. McBride, Health Director and School Medical Advisor along with Dr. Connie Young, Chairwoman of the Board of Health and Sonja Devitt, Housing Inspector were all present. Dr. McBride thanked the Board for being able to be heard this evening. He stated he first would like to address an issue that has been brought up concerning “Hoarding”. He stated several people have asked him what this. He distributed a handout entitled “Hoarding” and proceeded with his explanation. He stated he thought this was appropriate this evening because it does have significant budgetary considerations. Dr. McBride stated there is no specific program for hoarding and explained it is something that is driven by the City's first responders, usually fire, ambulance or police. He stated it also comes from complaints from neighbors. He stated it is a diverse complex problem which can include social isolation. He continued explaining the handout.

S. Devitt explained her role is to identify and mitigate troubled housing. She stated they also deal with abandoned, dilapidated housing. She stated they try to work with the person and that the goal is to enable persons to stay in their homes. She continued explaining the process in their approach. Ms. Devitt stated the

department is slated to host a Hoarding Conference on June 18, 2009. She stated they have had a lot of interest from fire, police, animal control personnel and other disciplines that are touched by this.

Ald. Vetro asked how much goes into that type of a program.

Ms. Devitt responded there really is no definitive answer as there is a process to follow.

Dr. McBride added they do what they would do if they receive a complaint. He stated there is no identified money for hoarding. He stated with regard to hoarding, it can be devastating and costly and impacts the community. In addition, he stated homeowners are sensitive to protecting their housing values.

Ald. Ditchkus commented he has been in those types of house which are labeled as “path houses” adding it is something that does need to be addressed. Ald. Ditchkus also asked about budget line item 4416 0000 Pest Control which has been brought up regarding the \$62,000. He asked for a brief history of that program and its affect.

Dr. McBride stated those monies are contractual and it relates to mosquito control. He stated it also ties in with the aspect of hoarding where they sometimes come across standing water which is a breeding ground for mosquitoes. He stated the history of the program goes back before his time and went on to explain the West Nile breakout which was an issued with the public in this State and in other parts of the country. Dr. McBride the program they have in place kills the larvascide of the mosquito before they mature, adding it has been quite effective.

Chairman Blake asked how many retirees the department generally has. He also asked how many employees they anticipate will retire this year. Regarding budget line item 4111 0000 Regular Wages, Chairman Blake asked how much the department generally transfers from this account to “Personal Services”.

Mayor Richetelli stated this is a smaller department and it is hard to come up with an average. He stated one year you could have one retiree and then not have another one for 5 years.

Dr. McBride stated in the last 5 years they have seen possibly 4 retirees, which included 2 sanitarians and 2 secretaries. He stated he just doesn’t ask.

Chairman Blake asked how much money was transferred administratively.

Dr. McBride stated he did not recall any transfers.

Ald. Manning asked about line item 4998 0019 Thermocouple and asked if this request was different from the one recently approved by this Board.

Dr. McBride explained during inspections involving food they are required to get food temperatures. He stated they give a thermocouple to each sanitarian and that it is part of the inspection tools.

Ald. Manning asked about line item 4189 0000 Misc. Professional Fees.

Dr. McBride responded most of that money goes for the Young Parenting Program. He stated they usually give them \$20,000 and the balance of the money is used for consultants, i.e. could be for mold, mildew, etc. He explained the situation a while back involving 180 Melba Street which they needed numerous consultants in that case.

Mayor Richetelli reiterated the bulk of that money goes to the Young Parent Program, which is the only program they have that deals specifically with that.

Ald. Manning suggested it be a separate line item in the budget.

Mayor Richetelli reiterated \$20,000 goes to that program and the balance is for other support services. He stated it could be broken down and stated when the final budget is put out it would be shown.

Dr. McBride also noted the handout he provided the Board which shows the grants the department applies for. He stated they anticipate they will be doing more.

4111 Board of Aldermen – no questions/comments.

4112 Elections – no questions/comments.

4115 Registrar of Voters - Mrs. Antoinette Carey and Mr. Sean Beirne were present. Mrs. Carey stated she sent along a letter to each Board member regarding a misconception in the newspaper. She stated what the Board is looking at is not really a true picture as to where their budget currently stands. She pointed out to the Board this budget was printed back in December. She stated in line item 4117 0000 Seasonal/Temporary they currently have a balance of \$1,300. Mrs. Carey stated over the years their budget has gone down and that they try to live within their budget. She pleaded that the Board not cut any further monies from their budget than the Board of Finance.

Ald. Blacketter asked why “Operational Expenses” was significantly more.

Mrs. Carey explained every year they get their calendar with a list of state Statute projects that are due. She stated those procedures/projects don’t change, but what does change is the application and how they handle it. She stated whether there are 2 people or 20 it still requires the same amount of people at the polls.

Mr. Beirne added it is all in accordance with unfunded State mandates.

Ald. Blacketter stated her question is why it is so much more.

Mrs. Carey responded postage is going up, she also pointed out they generate their own moderator book, which generates more paper. She stated these are some of the things the State used to do but has filtered to the local office. She also stated there continues to be more and more mandates from the Secretary of State.

Ald. Toohey asked about line item 4977 0529 Office Furniture.

Mrs. Carey stated it is a desk for her. She explained they have been using a recycled desk they found in the basement.

Ald. Vetro complimented the department on the wonderful job they did in the past presidential election.

Mrs. Carey told the Board if they had any additional questions during their deliberations to please call or email her.

4116 Milford Gov't Access TV – Phil Kearney, Mike Manente, Chairman and Bob Adams were present. Mr. Manente read from a prepared statement. He spoke as to the “shoe-string” budget they have operated with for some time adding that they are asking for only the bare minimum which may or may not be enough.

Ald. Vitali asked the cost to put on a production, such as a Board of Aldermen meeting.

Mr. Manente replied the camera person gets \$10 per hour. He stated there is also duplication time, set up, behind the scene work as well. He stated this year they figure about 1500 man hours.

Ald. Vitali asked the dollar cost of a Board of Aldermen meeting.

Mr. Manente replied it is 5-6 hours per meeting.

Mr. Kearney added last year they were at about 1500 hours. He explained a meeting doesn't take into consideration all of the prep work.

Mr. Manente commented volunteering is a practice they would like to stop.

Chairman Blake asked why.

Mr. Kearney spoke as to town specific programming. He stated the average budget in towns such as Woodbridge, Orange, East Haven is around \$40,000-70,000. He went on to explain the model for town specific programming and that it is to have someone reliable.

Mr. Manente added the Town of Orange has a budget of \$75,000 this year.

Mayor Richetelli commented this is the first official budget MGAT is presenting. He explained the background of this group going back about 7 years when there was no TV in Milford. He stated it was due to these volunteers of this group that got them where they are today and he wished to thank them. He also pointed out this group has worked tirelessly fighting at DPUC in addition to the meetings they cover. He stated his office received requests every day for city meetings and events. He explained the previous budget was under general expense. He also stated they have applied for grants and this year received over \$26,000 in grants for new equipment and also a small portion going towards personnel. Mayor Richetelli stated this is a wonderful way to bring good government into people's homes and reiterated his thanks to this group adding they do a great job for a small amount of money.

Ald. Nunno asked who decides the programming.

Mr. Manente responded they try to give equal time.

Mr. Kearney stated they are budgeted for Board of Aldermen, Board of Education and Planning and Zoning meetings, but they may have a shortfall.

Ald. Nunno asked who decides which meetings and special events.

Mr. Manente explained it technically takes three men to cover a meeting adding Dennis volunteers his time for many of the events they cover. He stated their committee is in the process of re-doing their policies and procedures and that they are looking to provide an equal amount of airing.

Ald. Nunno asked if a constituent could put in a request for a specific meeting.

Mr. Manente explained the meetings are available for viewing at the library. He stated they would be experimenting with something on-line.

Mr. Kearney explained how the meetings run in a cycle.

Mr. Manente added any citizen could sign out a meeting at the library.

Mr. Kearney stated once they have their policies and procedures in place it will help to alleviate any problems. He stated they are looking to be completely transparent and bipartisan.

Ald. Blacketter expressed her gratitude for the group's volunteerism, adding a lot of functions in the city are carried on through volunteerism and that she would rather encourage than discourage volunteerism.

Mr. Manente stated they are also in the process of getting their meetings to the City Clerk's office for the general public, but they are still working this out.

4121 Mayor's Office – Mayor Richetelli stated he was ready to answer any questions for the Board. He stated the only increase is in Capital Outlays for chairs and new computers. He explained the replacement rotation throughout the city regarding computers adding they try to stick with around every 4 years. With regard to the chairs, Mayor Richetelli stated the chairs are the original chairs in the building and are in need of repair or replacement.

Chairman Blake asked about line item 4977 0190 Computer and asked if it had come up on the replacement list.

Mayor Richetelli responded yes, adding they try to replace the computers every 4-5 years. He stated they have 2 computers that are due.

Chairman Blake asked if there was any one line item he would suggest reducing.

Mayor Richetelli responded it would be the chairs adding everything else is the same as last year.

4122 General Expenses

Chairman Blake asked what other costs are associated with CCM besides line item 4187 0000 and 4871 0000.

Mayor Richetelli responded these are the only two line items. He explained line item 4871 0000 is based on a per capita fee levied to all towns.

Chairman Blake asked what other services the town receives besides legislative services.

Mayor Richetelli replied CCM provides a multitude of information as well as programs throughout the year. He explained some of the training and seminars held throughout the year. He stated they also lobby for fair shares of state funding and sometimes federal. Mayor Richetelli stated CCM also keeps them apprised of bills before the legislature. He reiterated they get a multitude of information from CCM everyday adding it is a coordination and collaboration between the many cities and towns.

Ald. Manning asked about line item 4873 0000 South Central EMS Council.

Mayor Richetelli asked Ald. Manning to hold that question for Chief LaVecchia. He explained up until this year they were budgeted based on their levy, but the Chief could provide additional detailed information.

Ald. Ditchkus asked if there was any funding the City received, other than the fair share such as grants that CCM has helped with.

Mayor Richetelli stated CCM identified grant opportunities which they can or chose not to take advantage of.

Ald. Ditchkus asked if the Mayor could give an example as to how they have looked out for our best interests.

Mayor Richetelli responded one of the great values of CCM is that they are at the legislative offices every day. He spoke of a current bill before the legislature which would provide for benefits similar to heart and hypertension, i.e. cancer, disease, etc. He explained this is a huge, unfunded mandate if passed could cost towns and cities millions of dollars. He stated every day they also receive a bulletin regarding something that could be coming before the legislature.

Ald. Vetro asked about line item 4875 0000 Regional Planning Agency Dues. He asked what it was and what it is used for.

Mayor Richetelli explained there are two regional planning organizations; Council of Government (SCROG), which is a 15 member towns in the area. He explained the advantages in seeking federal funding. He stated the other item is the Regional Planning Agency, which is a group of elected officials of the 15 towns. He stated the City of New Haven had pulled out of the group, but has since come back. Mayor Richetelli stated both of the organizations are beneficial to the City.

Ald. Vetro asked if all 15 towns pay that amount of money.

Chairman Blake responded it is based on a per capita amount and that dues are based on population.

Ald. Patterson asked about line item 4702 0000 Budgets & Reports. He stated most towns have their budgets on-line, but Milford does not. He stated he has been asking about this for years and it seems to fall on deaf ears. He asked why we continue to print the budget when it simply could be viewed on-line.

Mayor Richetelli stated they print many less than they used to. He asked if it is the desire of the Board not to print any.

Ald. Patterson stated he did not wish to do away with them altogether, but would like to reduce some of the cost by putting these on-line and if someone desires a copy they could print it themselves.

Ald. Veccharelli followed on Ald. Patterson's comments and stated in this day and age, all people have computers at home and it is easier for them to view in their own home. He stated the Board needed to enact this and asked if they would have to increase another line item to accomplish this.

Mayor Richetelli stated he would research the question with the MIS Director and get the Board an answer.

4123 Community Development – Robert Gregory, Director was present. He stated is budget is status quo from last year and the year before. He stated he wished to note he just used CCM the other day for some research concerning the Regional Growth Partnership and it has benefited the City.

Ald. Toohey asked about line item 4714 0001 Mileage and Parking and noted it is zero. She asked if he was now taking these costs upon himself or just not going on any trips.

Mr. Gregory responded he has reduced trips out of town and if it becomes necessary he would do a transfer.

Ald. Toohey asked about line item 4748 0000 and asked about the increase.

Mr. Gregory responded it has always been budgeted at \$6,000 and that the number is the same as it has always been. He stated there are times when money has been transferred in to other accounts to cover shortfalls. He also spoke of the development of the Economic Development website.

Ald. Toohey asked about postage noting it had been reduced quite a bit and asked if it was because of the website.

Mr. Gregory responded a lot more work is being done by e-mail. He stated a lot of their postage costs were due to the Devon Revitalization work and the drainage issued and other projects.

4155 Economic Development Commission – Robert Gregory was present. Mr. Gregory commented the \$1 budget would be wisely spent. He stated this Commission has set forth an active agenda and will be doing a lot of volunteer work.

4129 City Clerk – Alan Jepson was present for questions/comments. Referencing the line item in the Mayor's budget, Mr. Jepson commented it was important for the Board to know that department heads do not get a copy of the Board of Finance budget book and that they only receive a copy of their own budget. Mr. Jepson went on to read a prepared statement concerning the reduction in line item 4117 0000 Seasonal/Temporary which was reduced from \$8,000 to \$6,000. He asked that figure be restored to its original amount and explained in his statement the monies are necessary in order to continue to provide the services they do to the City residents. He also commented they record over 1,000 documents a year and also issue 100's of licenses of all types as well as 100's of questions, both written and verbal. He stated this account has always been vital and an important factor in providing services to the general public. He stated he was respectfully requesting the Board restore

those monies. He also stated the Mayor and he agreed on this budget. Mr. Jepson stated this is a bare bones budget with no increase.

Ald. Vitali asked about line item 4977 0109 Typewriter.

Mr. Jepson explained it is part of their replacement process.

Ald. Vitali asked about line item 4977 0190 Computer and asked why the discrepancy in cost between this department and the Mayor's Office.

Mr. Jepson responded this is for two computers.

Mayor Richetelli added there are different types of equipment needed as part of the replacement, i.e. keyboard, monitor, etc. He stated they get the costs from MIS as to what is needed for each department.

Ald. Blacketter asked if there is a database of information on record and if there is any move toward making searches on line.

Mr. Jepson replied the land record indexes are on-line. He spoke as to deed of ownership stating there is a fee that is collected and their office is able to do that.

Ald. Blacketter commented some cities have an interface and you can order a copy on-line.

Mr. Jepson explained the historic document fee and that he has a grant request before the State Historian. He stated he is very reluctant to have the City give up that right to collect a fee.

Ald. Blacketter stated she was not suggesting not collecting the cost, but simply you could collect the fees on-line or come to the office to pay.

Mr. Jepson stated over the years they would prepare a document for someone and they would never come and pick up that document. He stated they don't prepare documents in advance for that reason. He reiterated the needed to protect the avenues of revenue for the city.

4131 Law Department – Winthrop S. Smith, III, City Attorney was present for questions. He stated he had a chance to work with and talk with most of the Board and in fact it has been quite an interesting learning experience for him. He stated from his first 3 months in the Office he is proud and impressed with the quality of professionals in the office adding they are well recruited and trained. He spoke of the opportunities of what he does in his own practice and how this office operates and also as to pay scales which are roughly the same as in the private sector. He stated in working with the various budgets in the City he noted over the years the Law Department's budget is decreasing. He stated there were a few adjustments he would like to suggest for the Board's consideration. Line item 4990 0501 Furniture, Fixtures & Equipment he stated is for the conference room where the chairs are wobbly. He stated he had heard if the Board doesn't replace them, they would be eliminated. He stated since it is also in the Mayor's budget, he stated he could live with the decision of the Board. Line item 4117 0000 Seasonal/Temporary – he stated the Board of Finance recommended \$3,000, but he would suggest it being reduced to \$1,000. Line item 4774 0000 Postage in the amount of \$1,500, he stated could be reduced to \$1,000. Attorney Smith also stated his office is tied to the municipal labor groups. He

stated with regard to the line item for Contractual Wage Adjustment he was unsure about the \$2,100. He stated he believed this went back to the wage adjustment process in 1992 where the municipal employees had a zero increase. He stated the productivity bonus is paid in the first payroll in December and goes to all unions and non-reps. He stated these would be his recommendations.

Chairman Blake asked about the Contractual Wage Adjustment. He stated he wished to clarify these employees are not part of any contract and that the \$2,100 could be deleted or increased.

Mayor Richetelli explained all non-rep employees are set by ordinance by this Board under the U-2 Ordinance. This was given many years ago. He stated historically after all the unions settle on contracts the non-rep employees receive the same compensation increase that the labor groups were given. He stated the Contractual Wage Adjustment goes back to 1991-1992 and former Mayor Lisman. He also pointed out the language is in the contracts.

Ald. Blacketter asked if these continued even when regular increases were put back.

Mayor Richetelli responded yes, that was his understanding.

Ald. Blacketter asked if that provision was removed in the new contracts.

Mayor Richetelli responded all provisions of the previous contracts were kept intact.

Ald. Manning asked about line item 4772 0000 Publications and 4977 0115 Law Books. She commented the department has traditionally run \$4,000-5,000 in previous years.

Attorney Smith explained with regard to Law Books it was reduced and increases have gone to West Law on-line. He pointed out the entire balance on law books has been exhausted. He stated the publications account still has about \$1,500 and that account will be exhausted as well.

Chairman Blake commented as to using Case Services which a free service.

Ald. Nunno asked Attorney Smith if they could foresee depending solely on West Law.

Attorney Smith responded it could be West Law or something else. He stated it could be electronic and over time it could be less.

Ald. Ditchkus spoke as to the shortfall in law books whether it is West Law or Lexis Nexis. He also commented it was his recollection that a few years ago this budget was cut significantly.

Ald. Blacketter asked if it was a higher initial subscription cost.

Attorney Smith responded it was an initial fee. He stated it runs about \$480-467 each month.

Ald. Ditchkus commented regarding a remark made earlier to using free services versus Nexis or West Law. It stated it was his understanding there are times you may not get the cases you are looking for. He recalled having these two was to keep up to date on laws coming forward.

4132 Ethics Commission – Jeffrey Forte, Chairman was present. Reading from a prepared statement, Chairman Forte provided an overview as to the role of this Commission.

Chairman Blake asked about line item 4189 0000 Misc. Professional Fees & Svc. He stated the Board of Finance reduced that account to \$2,500 and inquired if that would affect the Commission's operation.

Mr. Forte responded it would if the Commission received a complaint and they went to a probable cause hearing they would need outside counsel.

4740 Claims and Refunds – Ms. Doneiko explained the two budget line items. She stated the calculations of payments that have to be made to retired or non-retired that have been granted heart/hypertension claims. She stated if there are additional people that come up they would need to come back to the Board for additional money. She stated the amount for line item 4841 0000 Uninsured Claims: General comes from the City Attorney's Office.

Chairman Blake asked about line item 4840 0000 and if it was anticipated the money allocated would be used.

Ms. Doneiko reiterated these are amounts that already exist; however, if there are additional people approved they would come back to this Board for additional monies.

4133 Probate Court – Judge Beverly Streit-Kefalas was present. She addressed the net reduction in her budget. She also explained her largest account includes the purchase of a laser fiche. She also addressed comments earlier in the evening concerning on-line access and explained it is something the State wants to move towards but has not as yet. She stated the expenditure for the shredder is because of the many confidential documents in her office. She explained their current shredder is over 15 years older and they have been told is a potential fire hazard.

Chairman Blake asked if any of the revisions being contemplated would have any effect on this budget.

Judge Streit-Kefalas responded it is all speculations at this time. She stated they are fortunate because of their size that they are not in jeopardy, adding that push is to consolidate some of the smaller courts in nearby municipalities.

Ald. Blacketter asked about line item 4784 0000 Printing & Binding and why is higher.

Judge Streit-Kefalas explained that account is used to purchase envelopes, letterhead, etc. She stated the cost depends on the number of hearing notices they have to send out. She pointed out last year they were under budget but essentially the number is based on historical data of the office. Judge Streit-Kefalas stated she wished to point out they recycle everything possible in their office, including turning folders inside out.

4141 Board of Finance – no questions/comments

4142 Planning & Zoning – David Sulkis, City Planner was present for questions. He stated the Board had before them a status quo budget.

Chairman Blake asked if they expected or anticipated any retirees this year.

Mr. Sulkis responded no.

Chairman Blake asked Mr. Sulkis if there were one or two line items he thought could be reduced.

Mr. Sulkis responded no. He stated his budget is pretty much the same as last year. He stated the only change is in personal services which reflect a step increase. He stated there in the past they have given some back, but there are just some things that cannot be projected. He cited as an example, advertising.

Ald. Vetro asked about line item 4977 0149 Copier rental and asked why it went up.

Mr. Sulkis explained they would be replacing the copier. He stated the current contract is over and they have not replaced it, but they will be this year. He also pointed out their copier is a lease.

Ald. Vetro asked about line item 4797 0000 Junk Car Removal Service.

Mr. Sulkis responded they keep a minimal amount in that account. He pointed out currently there is an action taking place.

Ald. Vetro asked Mr. Sulkis if he could explain how this works.

Mr. Sulkis responded with an explanation as to the process with a violation involving a junk car.

Ald. Vetro stated the police department has a rotating service in place and asked if Planning and Zoning could do the same.

Mr. Sulkis stated the police department has different statutes. He explained in their instance they are talking about the removal of cars from private property.

Mayor Richetelli added when junk cars are removed they also need to be stored for a certain amount of time until they have obtained title and it is for that reason that many companies don't want to have anything to do with it.

Ald. Vetro stated his point is that there is a waiting list to get on the tow list at the police department.

Ald. Veccharelli echoed with the comments of Ald. Vetro. He stated perhaps they could get on the same list with the police department and call if there is a vehicle to be towed.

Ald. Ditchkus commented the reality is they are dealing with different statutes. He stated the Planning & Zoning Department deals with private property and the police department deals with public property. He also stated they are talking right now about one car they have.

Ald. Veccharelli stated the problem they have had in the past is not the money, but getting someone to take the tow job. He suggested anyone that is doing business with the City for towing should be told this is part of it. Its not just about the \$500.

Ald. Blacketter asked why the increase for the Assistant City Planner.

Mayor Richetelli responded it is a step increase.

4144 Zoning Board of Appeals – no questions.

4145 Pension Board – John O’Connell was present.

Ald. Blacketter asked about line item 4168 0000 Secretarial Fees and if the increase reflected more meetings being planned.

Mr. O’Connell explained they average 10 meetings per year, but nothing precludes them from meeting 12 months.

Ald. Blacketter commented there has been a lot of press regarding the Pension Board and that the pension lost \$158,000,000. She asked if he could address that.

Mr. O’Connell responded it would be difficult to give any specifics. He stated the Pension clerk works in this office, but that is the only thing they deal with.

Chairman Blake stated \$158,000,000 was one of the letters to the editor. He asked if that figure is more or less.

Mayor Richetelli interjected and stated the question was best suited for the Pension Board who does have a representative. He stated under the Charter it is the duty of that Board to invest and oversee how the money is managed.

Chairman Blake asked if that representative could be available as well as the outside auditor.

Mr. O’Connell stated the Pension Board gets a detailed inventory report. He stated the performance of the fund is not something they would discuss. He also noted the Pension Board has never been asked to appear as their budget is \$3,830 and that is what they are asked to speak to. He also pointed out the Board of Aldermen rightly appointed a liaison and could rightly be the conduit for any information.

Chairman Blake asked if there could be questions concerning the audit.

Mayor Richetelli responded yes, questions that are specific to audit fees. He stated the rest does not come out of the City budget.

Ald. Veccharelli asked about line item 4140 0000 Professional Svcs/Audit Fees and how often those services are rendered and also how the pension fund is doing.

Mr. O’Connell responded the external auditor gives them a fee for the entire city audit as part of their comprehensive report.

Chairman Blake asked how often they switch the internal auditor.

Ms. Doneiko responded every 5 years.

Chairman Blake asked how long they have had the current auditor.

Ms. Doneiko responded they are in the second year of a 5-year contract.

Chairman Blake spoke as to the importance of changing that 5-year rotation.

Ms. Doneiko pointed out the contract by charter is approved by the Board of Aldermen, so this board would have approved it. She gave a lengthy explanation as to how the auditor team works. She stated the only thing the auditor firm has to offer is its reputation and that it is in their best interest to stay independent and in accordance with the professional standards.

Ald. Ditchkus stated they are talking about auditing fees to be sure they are done correctly. He stated they are not here to say whether or not they invested money correctly or incorrectly or unwisely. He stated that is just not the call of this Board. He stated this is the Pension Board with two items to discuss, not the pension fund.

4146 Flood and Erosion Board – no questions.

4147 Tree Commission – no questions.

4153 Park, Beach and Recreation Commission – Dan Worroll, Chairman and Bill McCarthy, Recreation Department Director were present. Mr. Worroll commented their budget is simple; it is \$600 for secretarial fees for their meetings. He also pointed out they never know when there could be a public hearing. Mr. Worroll went on to speak about the reputation they have with regard to Director McCarthy and his department. He also thanked the two Board of Liaison representatives, Ald. Toohey and Ald. Blacketter. Mr. Worroll spoke regarding some of the new programs as well as adaptive programs which now include basketball, swimming, etc.

Director McCarthy thanked Chairman Worroll for his leadership with this Commission.

4620 Recreation Department – Bill McCarthy, Recreation Director and Dan Worroll. Mr. McCarthy stated overall there are no increases to the account, however he pointed out there is a State mandated minimum wage increase. He spoke as to other cuts the Board of Finance made and stated with further reductions to their budget they would do their best to modify their programs, but it is the citizens who use their services who will notice a reduction if this budget is cut any further.

Ald. Toohey thanked Director McCarthy for the phenomenal job they do, especially with special needs and the adaptive program. She asked about line item 4117 0000 Seasonal/Temporary and asked if that is a fixed cost, i.e. for lifeguards. She also pointed out the value they provide to our City and also that the seasonal temps also bring revenue to the City as well.

Mr. McCarthy thanked Ald. Toohey for her comments. He stated there is a revenue side to their budget and explained the great return they have had to the revenue side. He stated they also generate revenue from beach parking, but certainly it is not enough to offset any of the costs that go into the general revenue.

Ald. Veccharelli asked about line item 4117 0001 Natatorium Seas/Temp and asked about the State mandate he mentioned earlier and if that was for the minimum wage increase.

Mr. McCarthy responded yes.

Ald. Veccharelli stated his concern is that this department is a seasonal/temp agency and that they provide services for our children which he does not want to see cut, especially the summer programs. He asked how much the cuts from the Board of Finance effected them in light of the minimum wage increase.

Mr. McCarthy responded by his calculations it would be \$14.641.

Ald. Blacketter asked about program costs for the camp and if they are being adjusted.

Mr. McCarthy stated regular fees for the program have not increased. He stated it could be contingent on the number of registrants and could reduce payroll by 10 counselors. He also stated to keep costs down they have eliminated some busing costs.

4156 Conservation Commission – no questions.

4158 Inland Wetlands Agency – Phil Fulco, Chairman and Mary Rose Palumbo, Wetlands Enforcement Officer. Mr. Fulco commented he was glad to see some familiar faces. He stated they used their sharpest pencil and came up with a budget less than last year. He pointed out their bare bones budget was trimmed \$2,700 with further cuts. He stated whenever possible they will cancel a meeting which saves secretarial costs and overtime costs for the compliance officer. Mr. Fulco stated if they see an increase in applications they would see an increase in mandated areas such as advertising, etc. He added he hoped the Board might consider putting back a few bucks.

Ald. Vetro asked about line item 4977 0149 Copier Rental and asked if there is a reason this copier rental is more than another department.

Mrs. Palumbo explained they have 3-4 years left on their current contract adding it was a higher copier rental two years ago. Mrs. Palumbo also commented regarding their budget and expressed her concerns as to completing the fiscal year in budget. She stated some of the concerns were the number of site visits, public hearings, the secretarial budget cut and could be impacted depending on the type of year they have. She stated they discussed at their last meeting going to one meeting a month, but their meetings were then lasting until midnight or 1:00 a.m. She also pointed out it impacted a provision they holding the applicant to 14 days. She thanked the Board for hearing her.

4159 Fowler Memorial Commission – no questions.

4193 Public Library – Ms. Jean Tsang and Mary Tinti. Ms. Tsang introduced the newest member of the Library Board, Mrs. Tinti.

Mrs. Tinti noted the difficult budget year, but stated she was proud to advocate for the library. She also credited the citizens of Milford for their unwavering support, also the many groups that support them and provide

assistance as well. Mrs. Tinti stated she also wanted to thank the Renovation Committee for their hard work and also the Library Board's liaisons. She also spoke regarding the cuts made by the Board of Finance for their DVD's and Books on CD. She also acknowledged and thanked Ms. Tsang for her hard work on behalf of the library.

Ms. Tsang also thanked the Board and also noted they had some hard decisions to make. Ms. Tsang stated they have had a busy year since the down turn of the economy pointing out when times are tough people turn to the library. She stated the "goody bags" she distributed to the Board members were courtesy of the Friends of the Library which funding was secured by grants. She stated they have had a 9% increase in use of items. Ms. Tsang also reported circulation figures are up as well as the use of books on CD and noted cuts have been made to materials. She stated no one is retiring and that they have 16 full time employees. Ms. Tsang also stated they are open about 52 hours per week and that those hours are manned by seasonal temporary employees.

Ald. Blacketter asked about the budgeted positions (p. 38) and asked about grades/step and why so many positions are "X" and if those were open positions.

Mayor Richetelli explained the grade/step followed by the "X" denotes that person has reached maximum step.

Ald. Vitali commented he used to serve on the Library Board and thanked Ms. Tsang for the fantastic job. He asked about line item 4977 0099 Computer.

Ms. Tsang explained it is a computer peripheral. She stated their keyboards are used by City residents and tend to get beaten.

Ald. Blacketter asked why the Supervisor of Circulation position skipped a step to max.

Mayor Richetelli responded that position is only five steps so after four steps they would be at max.

Ald. Bier referred to line item 4980 0176 DVD's and expressed concern with the significant cut. He asked about the inventory.

Ms. Tsang replied they have a cross-section of items.

Ald. Bier asked if the cut would be adequate for next year.

Ms. Tsang replied she would like to see this Board bring it back up. She also spoke of the many passes the library issues out for local museums, etc. and noted they are seeing a lot more people use these programs.

Chairman Blake asked about the Friends of Library and how someone would go about donating if they were issued.

Ms. Tsang responded they have a web-site www.friendsofmilfordlibrary.com

Chairman Blake asked if citizens could donate in-kind items.

Mrs. Tinti responded yes, that citizens could donate CD's, books, etc. and noted Friends has a wish list.

Ald. Bier asked about the Passport Office.

Ms. Tsang explained that is enhancement money. She stated the money that has come in has gone for such items as an LCD screen which the passport office installed and other items as well.

Mrs. Tinti commented the Library Board went out and researched other libraries.

Ald. Ditchkus requested a 5-minute recess.

The Board recessed at 10:27 p.m. Chairman Blake reconvened the Board in public session at 10:36 p.m.

4310 Police Department – Chief Keith Mello and Deputy Chief Stephen Fournier were present. Chief Mello stated their budget is 90% contractual and 4.7% of their costs are fixed and 5.3% is discretionary. He stated he wished to start his presentation by telling the Board what was not in their budget. Chief Mello stated he is proud of the budget submitted and compared it to similar communities in our area and the Milford's budget is much lower. He continued with a lengthy explanation as to what is not in the budget citing such items as in-car video cameras, upgrading computer modems, tasers, the cost of creating a juvenile retention facility. He explained in January 2010 a new law goes into effect for 16-17 year olds and that they will need to be separated by sight and sound from adults. He stated they also need new fingerprinting equipment, so currently they are not prepared to meet that legal mandate. Chief Mello continued with the number of items not in the budget such as a new engine for their police boat, dive platform, radio communications for the SWAT team, outfitting of the SWAT van, patrol rifles, new radio system, which currently is obsolete. He stated his department has been creative in finding funding sources, but it is becoming more and more difficult. He also stated they have some shortages in accounts and two very important accounts are overtime.

Ald. Vetro asked about conventions and conferences.

Chief Mello explained it is difficult to recruit police officers. He spoke as to training requirements that other disciplines don't have, stating if they make mistakes or poor decisions it impacts safety. He stated they have also seen a reduction in their conference account over several years now. He stated there are many schools that are out of state such as a handgun class which is held in New Hampshire. Chief Mello also spoke of the importance of relying on formal education and spending money on that and the importance of meaningful training.

Ald. Rosen asked about line item 4792 0000 Marine Patrol Expenses and what these expenses are for.

Chief Mello responded they are for equipment, gas and docking fees for the boat.

Ald. Ditchkus asked about line item 4745 0000 Ordnance Supplies noting it is nearly a \$10,000 increase over last year.

Chief Melllo stated it is a change in cost.

Ald. Vetro stated the overtime account is unique and asked the Chief to explain it for the Board.

Chief Mello explained that account is used for vacancies, extra shifts, holidays, etc. He also stated they had two people on military duty, two on injury on duty, one of whom was out 6-7 months. He stated this account is also used for training reassignment and personal days off and also officers conducting investigations. He stated they average 15 vacancies a day. Chief Mello also commented their overtime allotment is 20% compared to other communities.

Ald. Manning asked about line item 4977 0142 Computer software asking the estimated price they were looking for and if the \$11,000 is negated.

Chief Mello explained it is for the traffic counter software they have asked for. He stated they have two counters and old software over 7 years old and that currently they only provide for traffic counter software. He stated they are also looking at warrant preparation software and that they were also looking for additional money for accident reconstruction software.

Ald. Blacketter asked about line item 4118 0000 Crossing Guards.

Chief Mello stated they are paid \$26.00 per day. He explained they have 26 crossing guards and budget for the entire school year. He stated if they don't come to work they have to provide an on-duty officer. He stated the increase in this account amounts to \$1.00 per day.

Ald. Blacketter asked about line item 4203 9938 Educational Supplement.

Chief Mello explained that is a bonus associated with an officer having an Associate's, Bachelor's, Master's Degree and/or AED certification. He stated officers are mandated to be certified in AED.

Ald. Blacketter asked about the multiple 4111 line items. She also asked how many retirements they anticipated next fiscal year and also in the last fiscal year how much was transferred from the 4111 0000 account to other line items accounts in *Personal Services*.

Chief Mello responded to the last part of the question and stated he believed it was \$70,000 into overtime. He explained those funds were available as the result of injuries on duty and pointed out that it different from worker's compensation.

Ms. Doneiko explained the breakdown is 1/3 regular salary and the remainder is workers compensation.

Chief Mello stated with regard to retirements he just did not know and that it depended on a lot of variables.

Chairman Blake asked if he anticipated over 5.

Chief Mello responded he still could not answer. He stated he could provide a guesstimate as to those eligible to retire.

Chairman Blake asked how many that was.

Chief Mello responded maybe 22.

Chairman Blake asked historically how many have retired.

Chief Mello responded it depended on a number of things. He stated people have left for other departments or other jobs. He also reminded the Board when someone leaves a position, contractually they have to promote and that vacancy is filled at 1 1/2. He also pointed out it is not appropriate to go below a certain number on shifts. Chief Mello also commented concerning these economic times pointing out when the economic times are down, their work goes up. He stated statistics have shown a 44% increase in crime as well as violence against police officers.

Chairman Blake asked about Federal money from the President and Justice Department JAG grant. He stated it was his understanding Milford would be available for two additional officers and asked when they anticipated receiving that money.

Chief Mello cautioned that the JAG Grant is separate which is due in mid May. He explained the COPS grant is for two officers and that grant is due Thursday. He stated he did not know when they would hear regarding the grants adding the grants are only a supplement not a surplus and explained what they can be used for.

Ald. Vetro thanked the Chief. He also acknowledged the recently graduated 2nd Police Academy Class which provides a good explanation and eye for what goes on in the department.

Ald. Nunno thanked the police department for their work. He stated last Wednesday the police department attended West Shore Middle School and give a program on internet safety. He expressed his hope that program would continue.

Ald. Blacketter asked about money this Board approved last year for improvements to the communications or computers and asked for an update on those systems.

Chief Mello stated they had selected a vendor and submitted a request for a proposal adding the bidders have been very competitive and that they are ready to move forward.

Chairman Blake thanked the men for their time.

Chairman Blake stated the Board would recess until April 20, 2009 at 7:00 p.m.

Ald. Ditchkus and Ald. Patterson made and seconded a motion to recess at 11:16 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen K. Huber
Recording Secretary