

**BOARD OF ALDERMEN
BUDGET DELIBERATIONS SESSION
APRIL 22, 2009**

The Board of Aldermen resumed their budget deliberation session on Wednesday, April 22, 2009 in the aldermanic chambers of City Hall. Chairman Blake recognized Jean Lasczak and asked her to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

1. Roll Call

Board Members Present

B. Bier (7:06 p.m.)
J. Blacketter
B. Blake
V. Ditchkus, Jr.
A. Giannattasio (7:07 p.m.)
M. Hardiman
S. Manning
R. Nunno
J. Patterson
J. Rosen
J. Toohey
N. Veccharelli
P. Vetro
R. Vitali
S. Willey (7:05 p.m.)

Also Present

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

Ald. Vetro and Ald. Toohey made and seconded a motion to come out of recess at 7:05 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

4144 Board of Assessment Appeal

Ald. Ditchkus noted the budget is down from last year and asked if that was due to the reval.

Ms. Doneiko responded the reduction is in the other enumeration. She stated the other numbers are based on the number of meetings adding they only expected to have two meeting during the next fiscal year.

4210 Finance Department – Judy Doneiko, Finance Director was present for questions. Ms. Doneiko stated the increase in this department represents .92% which totals 15.705. She explained the increase of the assessment division. She stated they also do in-house reval which saves the City \$800,000. She stated the Tax Collector's Office in addition to their other duties are responsible for issuing the permits for beach parking. She stated the treasurer is one person that does the payroll for the entire City. Ms. Doneiko stated the Accounting Department pays all the bills and one person runs all the software. She stated the Purchasing Department also falls under her and stated they have a very sharp purchasing agent who reviews purchase orders, IRP, etc. She stated the Finance Department does all the transfers, which includes Mayor's, Board of Finance, etc. as well as

allocations, budget, budget process and oversees all these departments. She stated they also manage the health insurance, workers compensation and wellness program which they are currently working on.

Ald. Hardiman asked about line item 4718 0000 Travel & Conference.

Ms. Doneiko responded it is for all the departments she mentioned and that there are a number of local conferences the tax office, assessor, accountant, treasurer and finance director attend as well as a national conference which the finance director attends. She stated the Assessor goes to a New England conference as well as State and local meetings.

Ald. Manning asked about write-offs for bad debt not collected and that process.

Ms. Doneiko provided a detailed explanation. She also explained they look at personal, auto, sewer and look at those that haven't been paid for years. She stated they also use the Department of Motor Vehicles.

Ald. Nunno asked if there are any open positions.

Ms. Doneiko replied they have one. She stated they were in the process of hiring another accountant when the freeze was put into effect.

Ald. Blacketter asked about the publications account and noted it appeared to be up 10% from last year. She asked if more could be put on-line.

Ms. Doneiko stated some are technical matters. She also stated the Assessor must purchase the blue book and there are also ads which must be posted in the newspaper for various meetings, etc.

Ald. Rosen asked about line item 4752 0000 Revaluation Operations and noted a decrease.

Ms. Doneiko explained 16 of the properties that have real estate appeals they will start refunding for future revals. She stated currently the monies are for appraisals.

Ald. Vitali asked about line item 4771 0000 Advertising and that it seemed high.

Ms. Doneiko replied that is for several departments, i.e. the Purchasing Department when they go out to bid, Tax Collector is open on Saturdays in July and January and that must be advertised. She also stated the Assessor must advertise their meetings by statute.

Ald. Vitali asked about line item 4773 0000 Office Equipment Rental.

Ms. Doneiko explained there are machines in the Assessor's Office for public use. She stated the biggest cost that comes out of this line item is the postage machine.

Ald. Vetro asked what the new Deputy Assessor's step would be.

Ms. Doneiko replied because of her experience it was Step 1. She stated she was unsure of the other Deputy Assessor.

Ald. Nunno asked how much was transferred from Regular Wages to other accounts in *Personal Services*.

Ms. Doneiko stated \$50,000 was transferred to Seasonal/Temporary. She explained at the end of last year the longtime City Accountant retired. She stated he was hired back for training the new accountant.

Ald. Manning stated it was her understanding the Personnel Department would be overseeing Employee Benefits. She asked what other services they would take over.

Ms. Doneiko stated this is a long term process. She explained the lengthy process when a new employee begins. She stated basically they would be taking over the Medicare Part D notices which are required to be sent out. She proceeded with a detailed explanation of that program and how it works.

Ald. Bier asked about payroll and what departments the City handles.

Ms. Doneiko responded every department in the City except the Board of Education. She stated that includes all part time seasonal for the Recreation Department and Community Development.

Ald. Bier asked how many people the City employs.

Ms. Doneiko responded 556 full time employees, but it can vary with summer help.

Ald. Manning commented regarding receipts for paid taxes and shared a personal situation.

Ms. Doneiko stated to her knowledge they do not send out receipts and have not done so for a number of years.

Chairman Blake stated there have been discussions about hiring an outside firm to audit commercial properties.

Ms. Doneiko stated in-house they are tracking completed building permits, additions, new construction, etc., but they don't have the resources to do some of that work concerning commercial properties. She stated this method of going outside has been used by many communities in the State and results in taxable dollars.

4503 Public Debt Service

Ald. Blacketter asked Ms. Doneiko to elaborate on line items 4621 0000 Clean Water fund, Principal and 4622 0000 Clean Water Fund, Interest.

Ms. Doneiko explained these are two permanent loans outstanding on the sewer renovations. She continued with an explanation of the details of the payment schedule.

4710 Employee Benefits

Ald. Vitali asked about line item 4201 9938 Longevity: Police.

Ms. Doneiko explained after 10 years of service, people in the City start collecting longevity pay.

Ald. Manning asked about line item 4220 0000 Wellness Program and asked who would administer that program.

Ms. Doneiko responded this is still in the development states and stated there is a meeting this Friday. She stated they hope to have a wellness committee to offer suggestions and ideas and reiterated it is still in the infancy stages. She went on to explain some of the programs offered to employees through Anthem BC/BS and also that there are several resources available on the website. She stated the first challenge is to get employees familiar with the tools available.

Ald. Manning asked about outside consultations and the average percentage being affected by personnel.

Ms. Doneiko responded the Board would want to exercise caution in going in that direction. She continued with a lengthy explanation.

Ald. Manning asked about line item 4712 9922 Training: MSA.

Ms. Doneiko responded it is required by union contract.

Ald. Manning followed up (inaudible).

Ms. Doneiko stated this is dependent on whether the applicant takes outside courses and if so they get reimbursed for job related courses up to a certain amount.

Ald. Willey questioned line item 4201 9909 and 9938.

Ms. Doneiko responded it is typical in a government environment.

Ald. Willey asked about line item 4207 9938 and 4208 0000.

Ms. Doneiko explained it is the law that you pay earned vacation time. She stated with regard to severance that they estimate how much it could be in a particular year.

Ald. Willey asked about line item 4211 9909 Post Employment Benefits. He asked the actuary's evaluation as to what that is

Ms. Doneiko replied at the end of last year it was \$17,000,000 that went on the Statement of Assets. She continued with an explanation of pay as you go.

Ald. Willey asked if the City has fallen behind another \$10,000,000.

Ms. Doneiko responded yes and explained the actuary board looks at.

Ald. Vitali asked about line item 4211 9909 and asked about the decrease.

Ms. Doneiko explained the contractual obligation is to pay the benefit, not fund it.

Ald. Blacketter asked about training and asked how they estimate how much will go into that account.

Ms. Doneiko explained they look at the trends and history.

4720 Insurance and Bonds

Ald. Patterson asked when the City went from being self-insured to having a carrier.

Ms. Doneiko replied last year when they found out it would be cheaper. She explained the money was transferred from the general fund to the self-insurance fund to pay the premiums.

Chairman Blake asked about line item 4830 9908 Insurance Consulting and asked the last time this went out to bid or there was an RFP).

Ms. Doneiko responded they are in the 5th and final year. She stated they would be going out for an RFP next January.

Chairman Blake asked how long the current consultants have been with the City.

Ms. Doneiko replied since 2000 or 2001. She explained they are different people making the decisions each time.

Ald. Blacketter asked if this is the same group that has advice for insurance.

Ms. Doneiko stated all insurance through the City is through this fund.

Ald. Blacketter questioned why the insurance consultant had made changes for those that request the use of our buildings, parks, etc.

Mayor Richetelli responded that comes from the insurance carrier not the consultant. He also pointed out they are working on an individual basis with each group.

Ms. Doneiko added getting a Certificate of Insurance is an advantage to the City is something should happen to someone using the building. She stated this is done so that the City will not be held liable and noted it is pretty standard through the insurance industry.

Ald. Blacketter stated it was her understanding the new values were based on the consultant's recommendations and that she has heard concern from groups as well as constituents who have asked why the police limits are so high. She stated we needed to document the various levels and that she would also like to see clarification.

Mayor Richetelli remarked he understood her position adding all the groups that use our facilities are worthwhile and we certainly want them to use our facilities, but we have a responsibility to make sure the City is covered with regard to liability. He stated they are working with every group to help them and that although it is complicated they are not turning anyone away.

Ald. Veccharelli commented we have insurance on our facilities, but we also required people to have insurance to use our facilities. He stated it feels like we are pricing ourselves out. He asked if we are covered, why the added burden on the people renting our facilities.

Mayor Richetelli stated the City carries the required amount of insurance for a City this size. He explained where a private group uses a facility it is common to have them carry insurance.

Ald. Veccharelli asked about line item 4829 0000 Other Insurance asking what that covered.

Mayor Richetelli responded the vast majority of what is being discussed is under line item 4823 0000.

Ald. Veccharelli asked about line item 4830 9908 and what exactly they do.

Ms. Doneiko responded they shop our insurance policy. She explained they did comparisons for the City and presented the information. She stated they also advise the City on coverage, changes on the law, renewals, etc. She also stated they are involved with open claims the City still has from the self-insurance. She stated they also bring safety programs to the various departments.

Chairman Blake asked if there is an additional premium above and beyond aside from the \$105,000.

Ms. Doneiko stated the agent of record is \$45,000, adding they do not receive commission and if they have they turn it back to the City.

Ald. Bier stated looking at the historical data he asked where the savings came from.

Ms. Doneiko stated the contribution to the workers compensation fund is where we saw the reduction.

Ald. Patterson commented is argument is not with carrying the insurance; the problem is with the language the insurance carrier requires.

Ald. Hardiman spoke with regard to the two events he holds each year and he too had a problem with the language.

Ald. Bier commented \$2,000,000 was expended in 07-08 and the Board of Finance is recommending \$1,407,607 and asked why the reduction.

Ms. Doneiko explained part of that had to do with the fund balance. She went on to explain in lengthy the probability range.

Chairman Blake commented as to the fund balance and referred to balances in the amount of \$3,200,000 surplus and \$6,400,000 surplus.

Ms. Doneiko explained the numbers he referred to are the health insurance.

Ald. Ditchkus stated he wanted to respond to comments made earlier, that fellow aldermen were stating they had a gripe with the language. He stated we are here for the best interest of the City, not personal groups.

Ald. Patterson responded he took great offense to Mr. Ditchkus' comments. He stated that is what he does is look out for the best interest of the city.

Ald. Blacketter stated her concern is there is an Ordinance and police that dictate insurance. She stated if we have a policy letter we need to follow that or perhaps we need to update the Ordinance.

Mayor Richetelli stated he wished to assure the Board and Ald. Blacketter they are working to make this a smoother process. He also pointed out this is not a budgetary matter and respectively suggested the Board move on.

Ald. Vecchareli asked about line item 4830 9908 Insurance Consulting and stated they needed to get some advice from them as to a reasonable amount of insurance to charge.

Mayor Richetelli responded they are working with the insurance consultant on all of this. He reiterated in that line item the insurance consultant is paid \$45,000. He stated they will continue to work with the insurance consultant, carrier and all of these groups.

Chairman Blake asked if they were no longer a member of CCM, if they would not longer have CIRMA as a TPA.

Ms. Doneiko explained they could compete for a TPA.

Ald. Willey asked the Board return to the budget.

Ald. Toohey expressed her appreciation of the Mayor's Office regarding this discussion tonight. She pointed out everything being discussed here has been discussed at a Recreation Commission meeting adding they listen to this every month at the Recreation level. He stated she was appreciative this would be looked into.

4993 Education Audit Fees – no questions.

4994 School Debt – no questions.

4995 Employee Benefits, Non-Teaching – no questions.

4997 Education Health Insurance Contribution

Ald. Willey asked for an explanation for the change from the department request to the Board of Finance recommendation.

Ms. Doneiko explained it is a two-fold answer. She stated the revised estimates from the healthcare consultant that works with Anthem, plus when they go the audit and saw the fund balance they were able to use it to offset the costs.

Ald. Willey asked if there is 10-15% in the fund balance.

Ms. Doneiko stated the projection for next year is \$25,000,000 in claims, which is between both the Board of Education and City.

Ald. Willey stated last year they go another revised budget and asked if another one was expected.

Ms. Doneiko stated she did not know at this time.

Chairman Blake stated there is \$6,000,000 in surplus, last year it was \$4,000,000 and 4-5 years ago, \$1,000,000. He stated it seems like it would be responsible if they took out at least \$1,000,000 to \$2,000,000.

Ms. Doneiko reminded the Board \$500,000 was used to offset the fund balance.

Chairman Blake asked the Finance Director to provide details of the account and fund balance.

4215 Management Information Systems (MIS) – Jean Lasczak, Coordinator was present for questions.

Ald. Nunno asked if there were any open positions.

Ms. Lasczak responded no.

Ald. Manning asked about the separate software accounts under *Operational Expenses* and those in *Capital Outlays* and if she could explain the differences.

Ms. Lasczak responded the software under *Operational Expenses* is for upgrades, services, annual fees and the software account under *Capital Outlays* is for the actual purchase.

Ald. Blacketter stated the fire department has a person who works on GIS inputting and asked how many other departments have someone as well.

Ms. Lasczak explained the core component is out of her office. She stated the fire department has an individual who inputs specific fire department information which is specific to that department.

Ald. Blacketter stated she was asking what departments they provide services and what other departments input their own.

Ms. Lasczak responded her department supports the fire department and all other departments in the City and that she is currently working with Wastewater, Sewer, Inland Wetlands, Planning and Zoning, Police, Engineering and any department with interface with the GIS. She stated they also provide mapping for outside agencies.

Chairman Blake asked about the GIS system and if they also utilize Google earth and others.

Ms. Lasczak responded some of those systems don't have the resolution their system requires for some functions.

Ald. Veccharelli asked about line item 4777 0193 Server, computer.

Ms. Lasczak responded this is a typical retirement of an older server or expansion of another server. She explained many of the servers are old, but they do try to get as much life out of them as possible. She stated this line item is to cover a server or possibly two smaller servers or extended data.

4129 Personnel Department – John O’Connell, Personnel Director was present for questions.

Chairman Blake asked how many citywide positions were currently open.

Mr. O’Connell replied he provided that information to Ald. Rosen today and he did not have it in front of him, but he believed it was 11. He stated the openings were in Accounting, Highway, Engineering and Wastewater.

Ald. Willey asked about the decrease in Seasonal/Temporary.

Mr. O’Connell explained on July 1, 2008 the three budgeted positions were virtually vacant and they were fortunate to have the retired Administrative Assistant come back on a temporary basis.

Ald. Vetro asked if the Personnel Director could provide the Board with a list of paid employees that might be considering retirement.

Mr. O’Connell responded that would be difficult to do. He stated some people come in several times a year just to inquire as to possible retirement numbers.

Ald. Ditchkus expressed concern about such a list being released stating he would be concerned if his name were on such a list and being out there as a possible retire. He also questioned if there would be any HPPA implications.

Mr. O’Connell explained some people only inquire about retirement only out of curiosity.

Ald. Vetro stated he was specifying names of individuals, simply positions.

Ald. Manning asked about duplicating charges in light of that department now taking over new duties.

Mr. O’Connell explained the primary work would be notification of Medicare Part B and also commented it would increase their workload.

Ald. Manning asked if the hiring freeze were continued, if that would affect advertising.

Mr. O’Connell responded if they did not hire it would not matter. He stated if you had department heads leaving, you would need to advertise that position.

Chairman Blake asked if any thought had been given to putting hiring position on the web site.

Mayor Richetelli stated many positions through contract must be posted within the department for a specified amount of time.

4151 Civil Service Commission – John O’Connell was present for questions.

Ald. Manning asked if this Commission met last year.

Mr. O’Connell explained it has been the past practice of this Commission that the Personnel Director takes the minutes. He stated the monies are kept in the account in the event there was a situation they needed to hire a secretary. He went on to explain the duties of the Civil Service Commission.

4350 Building Inspection – Thomas Raucci, Building Inspector was present for questions.

Ald. Willey asked if the department is seeing less demand in light of the current economy and how that impacts this budget.

Mr. Raucci responded they have been fortunate here in Milford. He stated in the first 9 months of 2008-2009 compared to 2007-2008 they are only 9% off and in permits alone, they are not slowing down.

Ald. Willey asked about the reduction in the overtime account to \$5,000 and if that amount was doable.

Mr. Raucci responded he did not believe it would be.

Ald. Willey asked about line item 4977 0142 Software which has been reduced to \$0.

Mr. Raucci responded it was his understanding it would be available under the technology package approved last year.

Mayor Richetelli explained this Board approved those funds in March 2008 for the bond authorization.

Ald. Hardiman asked Mr. Raucci if he could explain line item 4776 0002 Wireless Services.

Mr. Raucci replied that also would be covered by the technology package for laptops in the vehicles. He stated this would help with the data transfer in the field.

Ald. Rosen asked if the department anticipated any retirements or vacancies.

Mr. Raucci responded no, he did not anticipate any retirements or vacancies.

Ald. Blacketter asked if they should expect to see a reduction of duplicating, office supplies, etc.

Mr. Raucci responded there could be, but it was really hard to say.

Ald. Vitali asked about line item 4180 0000 Other Professional Services and if he could elaborate.

Mr. Raucci explained those monies are in place if they needed a consultant for a particular project beyond their capabilities.

Ald. Vitali asked what those fees have been historically.

Mr. Raucci responded they have been slightly above \$2,000.

Ald. Vetro asked about line items 4783 0000 and 4784 0000 and why they increased.

Mr. Raucci replied the printing and binding is fairly consistent, but it does fluctuate year to year. He stated the office supplies account is slightly over 2007-2008.

Ald. Ditchkus asked about line item 4476 0000 Dangerous Building Costs and asked what it is used for and usually about how much.

Mr. Raucci explained it is a huge variable and that it could be an abandoned property that is intact, but needs to be boarded up.

Ald. Ditchkus asked about the General Fund Revenue (p. 6). He stated last year it was budgeted for \$1,000,000 and this year it is \$750,000.

Mr. Raucci explained it is calculated based on what the economy has done. He stated the nature of the permits is one variable and explained a smaller project generate smaller dollars.

Chairman Blake asked about Regular Wages and how much was transferred in 2007-2008 and 2008=2009 to other accounts under *Personal Services*.

Mr. Raucci responded he did not have those numbers with him, but would be able to produce them. He also explained the Clerk A position was open the first six months, but he did not bring those figures.

Ald. Blacketter asked what moves have been made to put services on-line and reduce printing and binding costs.

Mr. Raucci responded that is something the Kimball Committee will be addressing. He stated as a department they have not had the opportunities to look at or enact anything from that report.

4420 Public Works Office – Bruce Kolwicz, Public Works Director and Kelly Hammill, Administrative Assistant were present for questions.

Chairman Blake stated he wished to compliment the Public Works Department on the quick response concerning a tree that fell on a neighbor's property.

Mr. Kolwicz commented that through the years they have had liaisons such as Ald. Vetro who have brought back questions for them to respond to.

Ald. Patterson stated he did not see on the revenue side were charges for fencing and trash comes.

Mr. Kolwicz responded it is because they don't have the overtime and will not be going out on the weekends. He stated the Recreation Department voted that down.

Ald. Manning stated she spoke with Ms. Hammill regarding the costs associated with rentals and this being added onto the revenue side.

Mr. Kolwicz explained the list the aldermen were provided with concerning all the events and what is done ahead of time. He also explained the support their department does for these events.

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

Mr. Kolwicz responded they just have not used that account because there is not enough money. He suggested if perhaps it were increased it could be possible.

Ald. Blacketter asked about street lighting and when they are due for relamping.

Mr. Kolwicz responded in the last 15 years they have done relamping in the 4 quadrants of the City. He also stated some has been done in Woodmont with more planned near the water.

Ald. Blacketter asked if they would have the same opportunity as the City to find those savings.

Mr. Kolwicz replied it is all the City of Milford when they look at it. He explained the process stating it begins in the Mayor's Office, and then it is forwarded to the Police Department and then UI.

Ald. Vetro thanked the Public Works Director for the job his department does throughout the year and also complimented the way they do with expertise. He asked the total amount expended this year on snow removal.

Mr. Kolwicz responded \$289,000.

Chairman Blake echoed the sentiments of Ald. Vetro and especially Ms. Hammill who is always quick to respond.

Ald. Veccharelli asked about line item 4977 0142 Office chair.

Mr. Kolwicz stated all of their furniture is hand-me-downs over the years. He stated their desks and chairs are from the old Central Grammar School. He stated it was no outlandish to request a new chair.

4421 Highway/Parks – Bruce Kolwicz and Kelly Hammill were present.

Ald. Hardiman asked about line item 4522 0000 Cement & Concrete and asked if it could be reduced.

Mr. Kolwicz explained they have two masons who have been rebuilding the catch basins. He stated last year they rebuilt 85 and that they generally expended quite a bit of money from this account.

Ald. Ditchkus asked if the recycle machine they purchased has saved money.

Mr. Kolwicz noted it was purchased about 5 years ago. He stated without it they would not have been able to do what they have done.

Ald. Ditchkus echoed the sentiments of his colleagues adding the staff at public works did a great job this winter and added his personal thanks.

Chairman Blake asked about residents being able to donate asphalt. A brief discussion ensued.

Ald. Willey noted there are 45 positions in this department. He asked how many positions are currently open.

Mr. Kolwicz responded two.

Ald. Willey asked if they are getting by with those open positions.

Mr. Kolwicz stated they are just getting by and with the freeze they were unable to fill. He explained the Maintainers do all the manual work, i.e. snowplowing, plantings, etc. and that it is an all round job. He stated since 2003 they have lost 5 jobs, one of which was a foreman. He explained the process to hire for some of these positions and also spoke about the number of calls that come in from the public that they must respond to.

Ald. Willey asked about line item 4112 0000 Overtime and asked if that is for required projects.

Mr. Kolwicz explained the overtime is for things that are unexpected or just can't be finished during the week. He also pointed out in the summer they hire college kids for grass cutting, etc.

Ald. Willey asked about line item 4515 0000 Road & Drain Maintenance and asked if that is internal labor or external services.

Mr. Kolwicz responded that is material.

Mayor Richetelli explained highway/parks is less this year and that all of the budgets in this department are less. He explained this division lost two positions and two were not filled because of the freeze. He stated most of the calls they get are from citizens and alderman for this division specifically. He asked what the loss of two more positions would mean.

Mr. Kolwicz stated they should have at least 3 sweepers for a City this size and there is only 1. He also spoke as to the asphalt cleanup of the parks, etc. He stated basically everything is touched in some way by the Public Works Department. He stated when they lose a Maintainer it just keeps pushing them back.

Ald. Ditchkus asked Mr. Kolwicz if he could explain the miles of roads in the City and the impact if they were to lose another employee.

Mr. Kolwicz stated there is close to 1,200 streets in Milford and explained the 240 miles of center line road and duties.

Ald. Nunno asked about line item 4111 0000 Regular Wages and asked how much had been transferred to other accounts within *Personal Services*.

Ms. Hammill stated she did not have those figures in front of her.

Mayor Richetelli reminded the Board only transfers within *Personal Services* could be done without coming to this Board. He explained wages could not be transferred into a vacant position and reiterated only transfers outside *Personal Services* would have to come before this Board.

Chairman Blake stated it was his understanding if a person were out on workers compensation, etc., it would also apply.

Mayor Richetelli responded yes.

Ald. Veccharelli asked about line item 4518 0000 Sidewalk Maintenance and why that account shows no monies being expended.

Mr. Kolwicz stated the figure was not reflective of what actually has been spent in that account.

Ald. Manning asked if there were other errors and if they could provide the Board with current numbers. She also asked about barrel runs.

Mr. Kolwicz responded the run is between Memorial Day and Labor Day and it is the highway department and sanitarian that does it.

Ald. Manning asked if there is any overtime involved.

Mr. Kolwicz responded no.

Mayor Richetelli stated they get many calls because the barrels are full. He went on to explain the rotation on Fridays and that they don't have the resources on the weekend.

Chairman Blake asked if the additional money was in Highway/Park and that it seemed as though there were services added, albeit great services, such as the removal of Christmas trees, etc.

Mr. Kolwicz stated they always picked up Christmas trees, but this year they did it during the week and that it was much more efficient.

Ald. Veccharelli thanked Public Works for taking care of the point at Caswell Cove. He noted the cement blocks have been removed, garbage, etc.

4423 Building Maintenance

Ald. Hardiman asked if there were any specific building improvements planned.

Mr. Kolwicz stated there are a number of capital projects on hold. He stated the last projects approved by this Board have been completed, i.e. roofs at Fanny Beach, Tri Beach and the work at Parsons as well as the roof and gymnasium.

Ald. Manning asked about the oil tanks at City Hall and the Fowler Building. She referred to the \$539,000 economic stimulus growth and commented these two locations should be covered under it. She asked if they could look at other buildings and see what energy efficient projects could be prioritized.

Mr. Kolwicz responded they do have such a list and explained some of the programs they are working on, i.e. Nxygen, heating valves, etc. He also stated the roof at the Public Works garage is flat and desperately in need of a pitched roof. He stated that location is where they house the diagnostic equipment. He also stated the roof and electric systems have been in the Capital Improvement Plan for some time.

Ald. Manning asked about an audit report for energy funds.

Mr. Kolwicz replied it may have been done by Tom Ivers office.

Ald. Blacketter suggested that Mr. Kolwicz get that repot.

Ald. Vetro asked when the fuel bid was done and if it is accurate.

Mr. Kolwicz stated it is the Purchasing Agent that puts it out to bid. He commented the fuel is really an educated guess each year.

Chairman Blake asked what they locked in with last year.

Mr. Kolwicz replied he did not have that information in front of him, but could get that figure.

Ald. Nunno asked about line item 4111 0000 Regular Wages and asked the amount transferred from that account to other accounts within *Personal Services*.

Mr. Kolwicz stated he would get that information.

4424 Engineering

Chairman Blake asked if they anticipated getting a City Engineer for next year.

Mr. Kolwicz explained they have been using On-Call, Westcott and Mapes, Codespoti and CCG and it has worked out very well. He also pointed out they do not have a licensed surveyor on staff so they have been able to gain much more from having these people on staff.

Mayor Richetelli stated it is his opinion a City this size should have a city engineer on staff, but stated he is open to have dialogue on this.

Ald. Blacketter expressed concern as to how to manage them and who would take on additional responsibilities.

Mr. Kolwicz stated they would not sub-contract. He also explained what State statutes requires. He also spoke of the value of Glen Behrle, Chief Inspector and the Administrator and what they do on a day to day basis.

Ald. Willey asked what account they are paid out of.

Mr. Kolwicz responded line item 4189 0000.

Ald. Willey noted that account has \$0 budgeted.

Mayor Richetelli explained it was thought a city engineer would be hired, if not the monies would have to be transferred into that account.

Mr. Kolwicz also pointed out when this budget was compiled the City had a City Engineer.

Ald. Willey asked about other openings.

Mr. Kolwicz responded the Chief Survey Party and explained that position.

Ald. Patterson asked if there was a cost analysis as to what it would cost to have a City Engineer v. a company.

Mr. Kolwicz pointed out they have been working within the same constraints as the dollar amounts of a City Engineer.

Ald. Vitali asked if they got more expertise with having On-Call.

Mr. Kolwicz responded they are able to draw on everything those firms have to offer. He stated even when the City had an Engineer they would call these companies because of the number of disciplines they have available.

Ald. Vitali stated it would be more cost effective because you would not have to pay benefits, etc. and this Board would determine the best fit.

Ald. Vetro asked what a Step 1 salary would be for a City Engineer.

Mr. Kolwicz responded around middle \$70,000.

Mayor Richetelli stated they have gone through two rounds of posting and testing and have not been able to hire anyone for the amount be offered.

Ald. Patterson asked if there is a potential conflict having these individuals.

Mr. Kolwicz responded no and stated that is why they stay with the three. He also stated the prior City Attorney found no conflict.

4429 General Garage

Ald. Rosen asked if there were any anticipated retirements or vacancies.

Mr. Kolwicz responded they have two. He stated the garage foreman passed away suddenly the first week of January leaving a huge void. Mr. Kolwicz stated they are in the process of putting together a test package. He stated they also have one mechanic position open.

4431 Solid Waste

Ald. Toohey asked if there are any current openings.

Mr. Kolwicz responded no, but they do have one retirement coming the end of May.

Chairman Blake asked what position.

Mr. Kolwicz responded the truck driver – laborer.

Ald. Nunno asked if there has been any progress in increasing recycling.

Mr. Kolwicz responded yes. He stated they are right on track and actually up in tonnage, higher than last year. He stated the numbers this Board was given by ECC were recycling numbers. He also commented the Board of Education is one of the largest users of the trash museum in Stratford.

Chairman Blake stated at that meeting last month this Board adopted a new contract and that waste disposal costs would be going down, but it appears higher in the budget. He asked Mr. Kolwicz if he could explain the disparity.

Mayor Richetelli reminded the Board the numbers were going to be slightly higher for the first year and going down thereafter.

Mr. Kolwicz recalled they were underfunded the first six months and right now it is working and in full swing. He also reminded the Board we now own it and also the numbers could fluctuate. He stated he would get the up-to-date numbers for the Board.

Ald. Willey asked about line item 4112 0000 and asked why overtime is so high in this department.

Mr. Kolwicz explained this is guaranteed contractual overtime. He stated it also takes care of anyone who is out sick, workers compensation, etc. but the bulk of it is pickup.

Ald. Willey asked about line item 4790 9947 Bulky Waste Disposal. He stated if there was any savings last year with one pick-up being eliminated.

Mr. Kolwicz stated people just don't stop putting their trash out. He stated even if it was cut down to one, the department would still be out there picking up for weeks, adding if there was only one pick-up it would take up to 8 weeks to complete picking it all up.

Ald. Patterson asked why 4790 9947 was \$0.

Mr. Kolwicz explained they no longer go to the transfer station and that they have to go to another facility, basically for anything that can't go to the burner.

Ald. Manning asked about extended dump hours and the cost to the taxpayer.

Mr. Kolwicz stated they no longer pay Enviro because they own it, so they are saving money.

Ald. Manning asked if it is overtime.

Mr. Kolwicz responded yes because it is Saturday.

Mayor Richetelli explained when the extra hours were enacted originally it was done so at no cost to the taxpayer. He explained the excess commercial hauler with the new contract with CRRA and commercial haulers bypassing us which they are not allowed to do. He stated Milford is not the only town experiencing this and that they are addressing it.

Ald. Veccharelli asked if there still is bulky pick-up next year.

Mr. Kolwicz responded yes.

Chairman Blake asked if the Board reduced it \$90,000 if they would still have the one pick-up.

Mr. Kolwicz stated it was not a good rule of thumb to base a pick-up on \$90,000. He stated it would be hard to say if it will still be possible.

Ald. Giannattasio asked about line item 4709 0000 Condo Reimbursement.

Mr. Kolwicz responded it is something that has been this way for years. He explained the condominiums and private hauling receive reimbursement which is calculated based on what we are disposing. He stated it is not \$100%.

Ald. Ditchkus went back to the previous question which he understood was whether we are ok with bulk pickups. He stated that question really should be asked if this Board, adding if that number is cut the department will then have to work with that number.

Ald. Blacketter asked why line item 4790 9947 was \$0.

Mr. Kolwicz stated it is the items that cannot be accepted at the transfer station. He also pointed out those items have not changed.

Ald. Manning commented about a 2007 Resolution which was passed regarding recycling and how that was working.

Mr. Kolwicz stated they put out the bins prior to events, typically the Oyster Festival but what they find is that people end up putting trash in them and there really are very few bottles and cans in the end.

4426 Wastewater – Jim Cooper joined Mr. Kolwicz and Ms. Hammill.

Ald. Willey asked about line item 4214 9916 Blue Cross: Grant Premium

Mr. Cooper responded it is its own fund, Fund 12 which is all costs for Sewer Commission and Wastewater. He stated these specific benefits are paid for by the Sewer User Fee.

Ald. Vitali asked how many people the department employs.

Mr. Cooper responded 31.

Ald. Vitali asked about line item 4229 0000 Meal Allowance.

Mr. Cooper explained it is for employees who work overnight or extra. He stated it only happens occasionally.

Chairman Blake asked if the sewer user fee goes up how much would have to be cut on the spending side to keep it the same.

Mayor Richetelli stated expenses are relatively close to last year. He stated without knowing the total number of sewer users it would be impossible to calculate at this point.

Ald. Manning asked about line item 4824 0000 Fire & Inland Marine.

Mr. Cooper explained the City holds the policy, but what is attributable to Wastewater is through the sewer user fee.

Ald. Blacketter asked about line item 4741 0000 Nitrogen Credits.

Mr. Cooper explained the full expectations of the treatment plants. He stated they expect the number of credits they have to purchase should go down.

Ald. Veccharelli asked about line item 4741 0000 Chemicals, Non-Medical and asked when they would begin to make money on this.

Mr. Cooper stated this was put forth by DEP to encourage use. He stated they have seen some results near the end of 2008 and hoping they will be able to purchase less next year or possibly selling back to the State.

Ald. Veccharelli asked if he was saying they really did not know for next year.

Mr. Cooper responded he expected it would be below the \$400,000 number.

Ald. Manning asked about line item 4442 0000 and asked if they would see a reduction in electricity because of the fuel cells.

Mr. Cooper responded there are no fuel cells. He explained the process they are at.

Ald. Manning asked if eventually they would see something.

Mr. Cooper responded they are not available.

Ald. Veccharelli asked about line item 4741 0000 and if it could be reduced to \$0.

Mr. Cooper responded no. He stated they still have to pay and explained after 2010 that number will be less.

Ald. Manning asked about line item 4978 0000.

Mr. Cooper explained that is a fund that is recommended by the State to cover unanticipated things, i.e. they need a generator on the Old Field Lane Pump Station.

Ald. Bier asked about line item 4442 0000 and the upgrades to the system and if that would reflect some savings.

Mr. Cooper responded because of the greater number of tanks and equipment they wouldn't use as much electricity and it would be more effective, but the cost would be the same.

Ald. Blacketter asked about line item 4450 0000 and if they could see a reduction there.

Mr. Cooper stated there are over 40 pump stations with its own building and there is always something going on. He stated the buildings need new roofs, doors, etc. He reiterated with that number of buildings there is always something.

Ald. Ditchkus asked about upgrades to the existing building. He also asked if they still have to be maintained.

Mr. Cooper responded there are no new buildings, just maintenance. He stated the existing buildings are over 40 years old.

Ald. Veccharelli asked if there was any where in this budget that takes care of the buffer between the marina and Caswell Cove and also if there were any provisions to plant anything for a buffer.

Mr. Kolwicz responded the Tree Commission and Milford Trees are looking for places and it would be right down that side.

Ald. Nunno asked if there are any open positions.

Mr. Cooper responded 3 and added 3 people would be retiring in the next month. He stated those positions are a Superintendent, Process Operator and Truck Driver.

Ald. Ditchkus asked then if the department would be short 6 people.

Mr. Cooper responded yes and it is a grave concern especially since some are mandated by DEP.

Ald. Manning asked which position was mandated.

Mr. Cooper responded the Process Operator.

Chairman Blake asked about the Boom Truck for \$60,000 and if that is one truck.

Mr. Cooper responded yes.

4502 Equipment Reserve Allocation

No questions/comments.

4790 Benefit & Salary Reserve

Mayor Richetelli stated there would be an \$850,000 savings to the City if the bargaining units agreed to \$0 increase in salary. He stated as an update this Board approved five contracts and since that time he had received the sixth. Mayor Richetelli stated they were still talking with the police dispatchers union and the police itself. He stated if they don't agree he would still recommend the Board keep \$7,672 in that line item

4799 Unallocated Contingency

No questions/comments.

Chairman Blake announced the next budget session would be held on April 29, 2009 with the Board of Education.

Ald. Vetro and Ald. Patterson made and seconded a motion to recess at 11:06 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen K. Huber
Recording Secretary