

**BOARD OF ALDERMEN
BUDGET DELIBERATIONS
APRIL 23, 2008**

The Board of Aldermen of the City of Milford held a Budget Deliberations Session for the FY 2008-2009 on Wednesday, April 23, 2008 in the aldermanic chambers of City Hall. Chairman Blake called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. and welcomed everyone to the budget hearings of the Board of Alderman. He asked everyone present to stand and to join in saluting our flag and reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

1. Roll Call

Board Members Present

B. Bier
J. Blacketter
B. Blake
V. Ditchkus
M. Hardiman
B. Lambert
S. Manning
R. Nunno
J. Patterson
J. Toohey
N. Veccharelli (7:08 p.m.)
P. Vetro
R. Vitali
S. Willey

Also Present

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

Excused

A. Giannattasio (7:52 p.m.)

Mayor Richetelli stated he received a call from Ald. Giannattasio who had a business conflict.

Chairman Blake acknowledged Jay Rowe who was in the audience.

Mr. Rowe stated he wished to make the Board aware of his upcoming "Smooth Jazz" concert this weekend at the Parsons Auditorium. He explained it the 6th annual "Smoot Jazz" fundraiser that benefits our high school music programs and explained who would be there.

Ald. Vitali thanked Mr. Rowe for all he does for our students.

Chairman Blake stated there were some adjustments to tonight's schedule.

Mayor Richetelli apologized for interrupting but stated he wished to make the Board aware that the grant budgets the Board requested are here.

Chairman Blake stated they have a lengthy agenda and asked everyone on the board to keep their questions short and concise. He stated they would begin with the Board of Assessment Appeals followed by the Finance Department.

Ald. Vetro and Ald. Patterson made and seconded a motion to adjourn.

Ald. Ditchkus asked if the Chairman was closing the proceeding or if they would be reconvening at the next meeting.

#4143 Board of Assessment Appeals

Ald. Blacketter asked why the seasonal temporary account is higher this year.

Mayor Richetelli explained it is due to State law and statute. He also stated it was actually more last year because it was a revaluation year.

#4210 Finance Department – J. Doneiko, Finance Director was present for questions/comments. Ms. Doneiko gave an overview as to what the Finance Department is made up of and what they do. She stated the Tax Department, Purchasing, Accounting, Treasurers and Finance Departments all fall under this account and that the fiscal matters are handled by those last three departments. She provided some of the highlights as to what these departments do and the savings they have generated for the City. She continued with an explanation of the duties and responsibilities of the Finance Director's division. She also spoke as to some of the changes that have occurred in the accounting standards and why she is asking for a second accountant. She addressed the deferred reimbursement on school construction projects that necessitates more financial reporting. She also spoke as to the other reports they are required to file.

Ald. Willey spoke as to the need for a new accountant and asked if the staff is working an excessive amount of overtime or if things just weren't getting done.

Ms. Doneiko replied they have been doing the work of 1 ½ people.

Ald. Willey asked how automation has helped and if the new automation would provide additional help.

Ms. Doneiko responded it may not necessarily help her department but would help other departments. She explained.

Ald. Willey asked about line items 4151 0000 Professional & other Special Svcs and 4189 0000 Misc. Professional Fees & Svcs.

Ms. Doneiko explained in fiscal year 2008 they were defending several revaluation cases.

Ald. Hardiman asked about line item 4977 0130 Office Chair.

Ms. Doneiko responded it is 3 chairs in the Assessor's Office.

Ald. Veccharellil asked about the new accountant position and if it would be possible to hire someone for less money, possibly someone just out of school. He commented he would like to see her department get some help.

Ms. Doneiko stated part time would really not be an option. She also commented they want to start building a feeder system so they can promote from within. She spoke as to the number of unfilled government positions. She stated they are in competition with towns such as Wallingford. She stated it might be possible to drop it down a step or two, but the goal is to get someone who is able to prepare the required statements, grants, etc.

Ald. Vetro asked about line item 4977 0190 Computers in the amount of \$6,127.

Ms. Doneiko explained that is for 6 computers and also how they try to rotate their computers every few years. She stated it is very important to this department to replace the computers on a regular basis.

Ald. Vetro asked how many computers all together.

Ms. Doneiko responded 26.

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

Ms. Doneiko explained it is for the tax collector, deputy collector for in-state training and that they are required to generate enough credits for their certifications. She stated she goes to one conference each year and that she too is required to maintain credits for certifications.

Ald. Ditchkus asked about line item 4752 0000 Revaluation Operations and 4796 0000 Software Maintenance.

Ms. Doneiko responded with regard to line item 4796 0000 it is for their vendor, New World to analyze their custom changes and determine if it is compatible to 8.0 due to be released in the fall 2008. She explained the mailer that needed to go out with regard to Revaluation.

Ald. Blacketter asked about line item 4112 0000 Overtime and also line item 4117 0000 Seasonal/Temporary and if these line items would be reduced.

Ms. Doneiko explained line item 4117 0000 is for the people in the Assessor's Office, i.e. the tax credit program. She explained how monies are transferred to seasonal temporary.

Ald. Blacketter asked about line item 4775 0000 and commented it seemed incredible high.

Ms. Doneiko explained how it was billed when she first came here. She stated they have a number of representatives getting contracts for the whole city. She explained it is for the upkeep of typewriters, computers, etc. and that this was the most efficient way.

Ald. Blacketter asked if the other departments were aware of this.

Ms. Doneiko responded the other departments have not had that change for the past 8 years.

Ald. Blacketter asked if line item 4796 software would go to zero if the bonding were approved.

Ms. Doneiko responded they still would need to upgrade their current system.

Ald. Vitali asked about line item 4771 0000 Advertising.

Ms. Doneiko responded that is for the Assessor's Office for their legal notices and for the tax office for tax bills, RFP's for the Purchasing Department.

#4503 Public Dept Service

Chairman Blake asked about the bonds authorized and issued that are from old projects but not spent and if there is an account of those that the Board could see.

Ms. Doneiko explained they are authorized and issued after it is spent. She spoke as to the 1876 tax reform act. She stated with the school projects they bond when they know what portion they are going to bond for and explained.

Chairman Blake asked if there is money authorized and issued and not spent.

Ms. Doneiko stated there is some in the school projects, sewer, etc.

Ald. Willey asked if it is possible to project the amount of money they will spend during this year, i.e. sewer money just bonded for and also if she could explain B.A.N.D. (Bond Anticipation Notes).

Ms. Doneiko explained they would be issuing temporary funding that reduces that bonding.

Ald. Willey asked about the outstanding debit overall to the City.

Ms. Doneiko responded \$66,500.

Ald. Ditchkus spoke as to the bonding for the school projects and commented as to the amounts. He stated it was his understanding if a project comes in short there is no money "laying around".

Ms. Doneiko responded they only bond as to the extent the money has been spent. She added they work very closely with bond counsel.

Ald. Bier noted debt service has been very consistent over the last three years. He asked if the total debit is consistent in relation to the amount they owe.

Ms. Doneiko explained the legalities of the bond notes and amortization schedule.

Ald. Bier asked if the debt has been consistent or if the \$6,000,000 is a coincidence.

Ms. Doneiko responded the monies the Board sees all come off the amortization schedule. She stated it is not extra money but it is what they pay.

#4710 Employee Benefits

Ald. Willey asked about line item 4211 9909 Post Employment Benefits noting the department request was \$6,000,000 and the Mayor and Board of Finance recommend \$1,750,000.

Ms. Doneiko explained the City's arc for calculated benefits. She stated it does not include education and is only for the City side. She stated about \$4,000,000 is for retirees.

Ald. Willey asked about post employment benefits and asked about gross liability and how much would they have had to contribute. He commented for the last 25 years this city has been buying employee benefits on credit and that it makes him a little uncomfortable.

Ms. Doneiko stated they have been doing pay as you go and explained the government standards.

Ald. Vitali asked is going to \$1,750,000 was low.

Ms. Doneiko responded there is no need to start panicking. She spoke as to progress and also noted they will have to see now that negotiations have started.

Mayor Richetelli spoke as to OPEB and the new GASBY standards. He stated the bonding agencies are looking for cities to start funding or fully funding. He stated this is the first step and that hopefully in about a month he would be coming back to the Board with a report as to how negotiations are going.

Ald. Manning asked about line item 4220 0000 Wellness Program and commented she was happy to see that new program. She asked if the City is working with a wellness provider, which would help to lower cost.

Ms. Doneiko explained they are working with their healthcare consultant and Anthem getting programs out to the employees and retirees. She stated it is a nice partnership going with healthcare provider and the healthcare consultant.

Chairman Blake asked about line item 4211 9908 Pension Consulting. He commented the same actuary has been here as long as he has and wondered if the Pension Board selects that person.

Ald. Willey asked about line item 4211 9905 Pension: Fire/Police and noted it is zero and asked what it will be next year.

Ms. Doneiko responded that number comes from the actuary. She explained if a large number of people were to leave the City that number would go up.

Mayor Richetelli added this line item is attributable to what they did 5 years ago. He explained how these pension funds were merged five years ago and over time they City has saved significant amounts of money.

Ald. Veccharelli commented as to line item 4211 9909 Post Employment Benefits and stated it is a heavy burden on all communities. He also spoke as to pay as you go and noted the Republican leadership was in favor of this pay as you go and that we did not want to burden the taxpayer. He also noted the Finance Director is fully aware of this burden on the taxpayer and is doing her best to cover this. He stated we have to realize how

much of a cost the City has to payout and that it is astronomical and eventually down the road it will be self-funded. He added that \$1,750,000 is a lot of money and that we have been discussing this on both sides of the aisle.

Mayor Richetelli noted Ald. Veccharelli was correct in that many towns don't participate. He stated we are fortunate that the City of Milford has followed responsibly what the actuary has advised. He stated if we don't start now, then 30 years from now we will be in trouble. He stated there has to be a plan in place and it is important to act responsibly and that is reflected in this line item.

Ald. Ditchkus stated he takes offense that this is a "Republican" pay as you go. It stated it has nothing to do with party. He pointed out there was a change in standard and this Board acted responsibly, but reiterated it has nothing to do with party lines.

Ms. Doneiko spoke as to the FY 2008 contribution for Fire/Police pension is \$4,000,000 that is now zero. She stated it is really not the entire \$1,750,000.

#4720 Insurance and Bonds

Ald. Manning asked about line items 4825 0000 Workers Compensation and 4830 9908 Insurance Consulting.

Ms. Doneiko explained the insurance consulting has been consistent. She stated if they don't need it they don't spend it.

Ald. Manning asked about line item 4825 0000.

Ms. Doneiko explained that is FY 2009. She stated the actuary report was in early Fall. She stated the number is coming down, but that they did have a few bad experiences. She expressed her hope it would continue to come down.

Mayor Richetelli pointed out this is the account the Finance Director alluded to in her opening remarks. He also pointed out it was in 2003 the City went to self-insurance. He stated they paid more then but over the years the self-insurance has saved money over the long run.

Chairman Blake asked who the TPA is.

Ms. Doneiko responded they use Webster insurance and that they do an RFP every 5 years.

Chairman Blake asked about the insurance consultant.

Ms. Doneiko explained the agent of record accepted that fee and continued with her explanation.

Chairman Blake asked about it being put out to bid.

Ms. Doneiko explained the need to be careful with that.

Chairman Blake asked if they could be specific in the bid.

Ms. Doneiko responded it is because they are looking for professional services. She stated they do not bid insurance but that they have changed policy, i.e. excess insurance. She stated they are able to get different carriers with a different rate.

#4790 Benefit & Salary Reserve

Ms. Doneiko explained the monies go into that department that the union is connected with. She stated there will be some retro pays.

Chairman Blake asked if that number could be reduced.

Ms. Doneiko responded it is a clear estimate of what they expect to owe.

#4799 Unallocated Contingency

#4993 Education Audit Fees

Chairman Blake asked if professional services are put out to bid.

Ms. Doneiko responded they did an RFP and next year they would do another. She explained the difficulties when you keep changing auditors since you want to make sure they fully understand the City and its system. She reiterated they do an RFP on this.

Chairman Blake asked how often the City changes auditors.

Ms. Dontiko responded they have had the same firms for about 8 years.

#4994 School Debt

Ald. Willey asked the total amount of school debt.

Ms. Doneiko responded \$24,500,000 is school construction out of \$66,000,000.

Ald. Patterson asked if they are retiring at least close to what they are bonding.

Ms. Doneiko explained what the Board has authorized they have not even begun selling notes to. She stated the bonding would not be until the fall.

#4995 Employee Benefits, Non-Teaching

Ald. Willey asked what that included and how many positions.

Ms. Doneiko responded this account is a FICA payment they make for BOE employees. She explained she sends them a letter reminding them the amount the city will pay.

#4997 Education Health Insurance Contributions.

#4157 Harbor Commission – Mr. B. Swift , Harbormaster was present for questions/comments.

Chairman Blake asked about the moorings/floating dockage and if they are filled for the season.

Mr. Swift responded they filled 50 back in January and that there are currently about 14 left. He commented this year they advertised in Wind Check magazine.

Chairman Blake asked how they are filled.

Mr. Swift responded the only stipulation is that boats have to be registered in Connecticut.

Mayor Richetelli noted as a point of information the aldermen would see at their next meeting a request to do some maintenance on the Helix Mooring System.

Ald. Lambert asked the current fund balance.

Mr. Swift responded as of March 7, 2008 \$421,620.

Ald. Giannattasio asked about line item 4823 0000 General & Auto Liability.

Mr. Swift responded that come out of the Finance Office. He stated their insurance went up because of some incidents a few years ago.

Mayor Richetelli added the marina is part of the City's self-insurance. He stated each entity such as the marina along with the Borough of Woodmont, school system and Golf Course are included. He stated they are in the process of changing back, based on the claims they have had over a certain amount of time. He added there have been a number of suits due to slip & falls.

Ald. Lambert asked about line item 4977 0124 Photocopier and if that is something they requested.

Mr. Swift explained when the landing started some 12-13 years ago it was on a shoe string budget. He stated the copier they have just is not repairable.

Chairman Blake asked if it would be a lease or if they would own it.

Mr. Swift responded they would own it.

Ald. Giannattasio asked about line item 4823 0000 General Liability and if the Harbor Commission recommended this.

Mr. Swift explained the percentage of parking there and the amount of traffic.

Ald. Nunno asked about line item 4713 0000 Membership.

Mr. Swift responded they belong to several organizations and there is a membership fee attached. He stated being a member helps keep up with new legislature, regulations, etc.

Ald. Veccharelli expressed his thanks of how the Marina is run and that it is very user friendly.

Ald. Blacketter asked about line item 3839 Other Revenue and if he could provide those numbers.

Ald. Vitali stated it is important to remember this is an enterprise. He spoke as to the importance of keeping the infrastructure and harbor in tact.

Ald. Ditkus stated he believe the line item 3839 is for mooring fields.

Mr. Swift explained unclaimed moorings that were sold.

#4320 Fire Department – Chief L. LaVecchia and Battalion Chief William D. Healey, Finance and Logistics were present for questions/comments. Chief LaVecchia thanked the Board for allowing him to switch his night. He reviewed what his department does and reviewed the handout distributed to the aldermen.

Chairman Blake asked, as a hypothetical question, if the Chief could identify three line items that could be cut.

Chief LaVecchia responded he could probably give three, but it would come with a reduction in services.

Chairman Blake asked under the current budget what the Chief would identify.

Chief LaVecchia responded building repairs, and that possibly they could do less and not do some of the necessary and required repairs. He referred to ISO and the department's rating.

Ald. Lambert asked about the insurance reimbursement program.

Chief LaVecchia explained there are two types of programs, EMS billing and Fire and Other Emergency Services billing. He stated EMS is regulated by the State. He stated they would be required to change their licensing.

Mayor Richetelli added this is something he and the Chief have been discussing for a number of years and that they will continue to explore further. He stated it was important to remember that not everyone carries insurance, i.e. an indigent person. Therefore would you charge that person, and how do you decide whom you will and will not charge. He stated there is also the administrative aspect and the costs associated with that such as personnel, billings, etc. He stated he would hope to have a proposal sometime in the future.

Chief LaVecchia spoke as to the need for a second rescue truck that is desperately needed. He stated he would rather spend the time putting together a full program.

Mayor Richetelli added there are many things to think about. He stated the concept is to bill and use billing for the second rescue truck.

Chairman Blake stated last year the Chief identified some other towns that were doing and asked why not use them as a model and work it into Milford.

Chief LaVecchia stated there are a lot of difficulties in doing that. He stated of Fairfield does it but only for EMS and Branford does it.

Ald. Willey asked about line item 4444 0000 Heating Fuel and if the Chief thought he would run short in that account.

Chief LaVecchia responded yes they probably would.

Mayor Richetelli noted they lock in for commodities, i.e. gas, natural gas, etc., but last year there was no benefit.

Ald. Willey asked how long they are locked in.

Mayor Richetelli responded he believed until the end of the summer.

Ald. Willey asked about overtime and if that is straight time.

Chief LaVecchia responded all overtime is straight time unless an individual is held over on shift.

Ald. Willey commented overtime would seem cheaper because there are no benefits.

Chief LaVecchia stated prior to putting that second rescue truck in service they were losing two paramedics a year. He stated the department currently has 10 paramedics.

Ald. Giannattasio asked about certified pump and aerial operators.

Chief LaVecchia responded there are no rules or regulations to have them certified. He explained in the past they have brought people into the department to train the men.

Ald. Giannattasio asked about line item 4712 0000 Training Expenses and how that account would be affected.

Chief LaVecchia responded he is working with Speaker of the House Amann for an additional training grant.

Ald. Giannattasio asked if that would strain services if the State does not come through.

Chief LaVecchia responded it would not have an affect.

Ald. Lambert offered thanks for an exemplary job the fire department does.

Ald. Vetro also thanked the Chief and his staff.

#4331 Civil Preparedness – Chief LaVecchia as Executive Director of the Civil Preparedness stated he would answer any questions.

Ald. Lambert asked about line item 4117 0000 Seasonal temporary.

Chief LaVecchia responded that is for the State mandated Emergency Operations Plan that is updated on an annual basis.

Ald. Lambert asked about line item 4994 0216 Early warning system and if he could provide a brief explanation.

Chief LaVecchia responded there are several in the City and that they have sirens and also have the capability of doing voice recording or talking over. He stated they have also installed four flood gauges. He explained the background and how it is utilized.

Ald. Toohey asked about line item 4977 0002 Emergency shelter and that it is a significantly lower number.

Chief LaVecchia responded they are in good shape with such items as cots, blankets, etc. He stated the need this year would probably be generators.

Chairman Blake referred to the Code Red system and noted the City of New Haven got one through a federal grant.

Chief LaVecchia stated there are few grants for a community of this size.

Mayor Richetelli added through DEMHS they get federal funds each year, but they will not pay for a Reverse 911 system or Code Red.

Ald. Nunno asked if the department could work under the Board of Education's Connect Ed system.

Chief LaVecchiar responded no.

#4340 Animal Control – Pat Liptak, Animal Control Officer was present for questions/comments.

Mayor Richetelli announced this would be Ms. Liptak's last budget session with the Board, as she will retire from the City after 23 years of service.

Ald. Veccharelli commented he had the opportunity to visit recently and was treated very well. He added the Animal Control Office is a fine organization.

Ald. Lambert asked the amount they bring in from Pound Pooches.

Ms. Liptak responded she had no idea and stated that is Pound Pooches program. She stated her division has nothing to do with that.

Ald. Lambert asked about donations to the dog pound.

Ms. Liptak responded they would go to Pound Pooches.

Ald. Lambert asked the balance in the Fund 76 account.

Ms. Liptak responded \$1,000 in building and \$1,200 in the general account, which would be used for the feral cat program.

Ald. Nunno commented with a new Animal Control Warden the City would realize a savings in salary and stated that figure could be much lower.

Ald. Mannin asked about data on the cell phone plan, the contractor, and number of cell phones and when the contract expires.

Ms. Liptak responded they have Nextel. She stated they have three phones and that they have always had Nextel because of the walkie-talkie feature.

Ald. Bier asked about line item 4112 0000 Overtime and also line item 4117 0000 Seasonal/Temporary and why it is low.

Ms. Liptak stated she does need the amount requested, but it was cut.

Ald. Bier asked how that would affect that account.

Ms. Liptak responded it will affect it a lot and that she will probably need a transfer.

Ald. Toohey commented every year this account remains the same and every year this Board cuts it yet the agency still finds a way to do the impossible. She asked about the Pet Food Bank and donations for their own animals.

Ms. Liptak explained the Pet Food Bank is used for seniors and indigents who may not be able to feed their animals. She stated they usually have money but sometimes they run short. She stated each year she stays within the guidelines and many times they go without.

Ald. Blacketter asked about line item 4748 0000 Promotional Expenses and commented it is already over budget and asked if the \$500 would be substantial.

Ald. Toohey interjected and stated last year it was a typographical error in the book and that the account and the line item for Rabies control were inverted.

Ald. Blacketter asked about line item 4720 0001 Rabies Control.

Ms. Liptak explained that account is for rabies inoculation for their personnel and also for questionable animals.

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

Ald. Blacketter asked if the bonded funds or potential bonded fund in this budget. She stated she wanted to make sure it is one or the other.

Ms. Lasczak explained any reflection of the bond to the accounts would be if the Board funds the IBM-I upgrade. She continued with an explanation of line item 4775 0000 Office Equipment Upkeep.

Ald. Blacketter asked what portion of the software falls within MIS.

Ms. Lasczak responded all network systems under this budget. She explained the programs.

Ald. Hardiman asked about the three positions, GIS Coordinator, GIS Analyst and GIS Clerk.

Ms. Lasczak explained the GIS Coordinator is the relay person and all projects revolve around the GIS program, i.e. police, fire, MIS. She stated the GIS Analyst is responsible for the day-to-day updating of maps, producing maps, etc and the clerk is an altered position that encompasses charges and duties of the entire department.

Ald. Willey asked about line item 4189 0000 Professional Fees and why such an increase.

Ms. Lasczak explained it covers services outside the realm of their expertise. She explained in detail the various network programs throughout the City. She also spoke as to some of the services they can request for instance if a program were to “crash”. She also commented last year the upgraded to the website came out of this account.

Ald. Blacketter asked about line item 4777 0193 Server, computer and asked if this is different from the bond.

Ms. Lasczak explained the servers in the bond are “i” series. She stated this is to replace a network server and that they try to replace one network each year.

Ald. Blacketter asked about line item 4775 0000 Office Equipment Upkeep.

Ms. Lasczak explained a good portion of this line item is related to the system running in the computer room.

Ald. Nunno asked if the Board were to ask for a 10% cut, what she would be able to cut.

Ms. Lasczak responded 86% of her budget is related to support of other item and that most of this budget deals with the critical support of other departments.

Ald. Patterson asked if there was any thought of going with a Meta frame.

Ms. Lasczak responded the acquisition of personnel computers comes out of each individual budget. She stated there equipment is 8 years old. With regard to the suggestion, she stated they already do that for the fire department but they don’t have the diversity of applications.

Ald. Veccharelli asked about licensing for software and if her office is responsible for renewing licenses throughout the City, i.e. QuickBooks, etc.

Ms. Lasczak responded police and fire are the exception. She stated they do their own licensing and that some of the smaller departments will do their own licensing.

Ald. Veccharelli asked about adding 35 new mailboxes and how much that would cost.

Ms. Lasczak spoke as to changes with Microsoft. She stated she was not sure of the impact part of that in the bond and that she did not have those numbers in front of her.

Ald. Veccharelli asked about individual boxes.

Ald. Giannattasio raised a point of order that this was not germane to the budget.

Chairman Blake stated he was overruling the point of order.

Ald. Veccharelli stated he was looking for a price of how much it would increase in the budget to include mailboxes. He stated he has been an advocate of e-mail addresses for City business and that it would be easier for city elected officials to communicate. He reiterated all elected officials should have an e-mail address and it warrants being looked at.

Ms. Lasczak responded Microsoft will change per mailbox as the trend in the industry. She stated the technology is not complicated but it still requires a license whether it is web mail or not.

Ald. Veccharelli replied he only said web mail because security issues were discussed last year.

Ms. Lasczak stated it is merely a matter of policy. She stated you also have to take into consideration FOIA and that all conversations would then become public. She also stated it would affect FOIA retention. She stated this is something that really should be discussed off-line.

Ald. Toohey noted the City has a web site established for the school board and that they have their own e-mail addresses. She asked the impact to the City if you add this Board to that web address. She stated she agreed there are things to take into consideration with regard to FOIA and questioned how much responsibility this Board should incur. She asked about using the web site to add the Board's e-mail addresses without any cost.

Ms. Lasczak responded it is not her place to publish the Board's e-mail accounts. She suggested they contact the Board Secretary, Rosalie Spinelli and she could provide the addresses.

#4219 Personnel Department – John Boland, Director of Personnel was present for questions/comments.

Ald. Lambert asked if he could anticipate how many retirees this year.

Mr. Boland responded he has received 6 so far this year.

Ald. Lambert asked about line item 4977 0109 Typewriter and if that was a replacement.

Mr. Boland responded yes and explained there still are a number of forms that have to be filled out. He stated the current one is 10 years old.

Ald. Nunno asked if he has factored in the cost savings from these retirements.

Mayor Richetelli interjected and stated they may pay less in the budget but in the long term put in OPEB and that you also needed to look at that and not just possible salary savings.

Chairman Blake commented in the school budget they factor in 15-20 retirees. He asked if the Board could get a list of those folks that are going to retire and about how many a year.

Mr. Boland stated there is not set time over the last 5 years, possibly 12.

Ald. Willey commented you just could not equate the Board of Education side with the city side.

Ald. Veccharelli asked about line items 4771 0000 Advertising, 4772 0000 Publications and 4791 0000 Tests and Evaluations.

Mr. Boland explained jobs are posted in the Connecticut Post Newspaper and that there is a link from the City to the newspaper. He also stated they are required to advertise publicly.

Ald. Veccharelli asked about publications.

Mr. Boland explained those are for a loose-leaf service he receives on a monthly basis. He stated this service helps to keep him current with the various services. He also commented when they have to give an oral exam they provide the panelists with lunch.

Ald. Veccharelli asked if the City currently has an exit review.

Mr. Boland responded most people retire, but in the rare case they are not retiring he does speak with them.

#4151 Civil Service Commission – Mr. Boland stated he would be happy to answer any questions.

None

#4250 Building Inspection – Mr. Thomas Raucci, Chief Building Inspector was present for questions/comments.

Chairman Blake commented he has asked other department if they had to identify 4 line items, what line items would they reduce.

Ald. Ditchkus interjected stating all night they have been asking other department 3 items.

Mr. Raucci responded he did not know if he could identify 3 or 4 if any. He stated the budget he put forth back in December is fiscally responsible and has already been cut.

Ald. Willey asked about line item 4112 0000 Overtime asked why so much was anticipated.

Mr. Raucci explained the request was made based on the last two years. He stated he did not know if that \$35,000 reduction would be felt. He noted they hired for a vacant position they have had.

Ald. Willey asked about line item 4977 0142 Software and asked if this would have helped with efficiency.

Mr. Raucci explained they have made changes in the department and that the wait time has been cut significantly. He explained this request was for a permitting software package and would also allow on-line permitting and that it would enhance efficiency and access.

Mayor Richetelli commented this was cut from the budget and is in the bonding package pending before the Board.

Chairman Blake asked about line item 4976 0139 Television.

Mr. Raucci responded it was to go along with the previous line item. He explained it would have been for informational use and videos for the public concerning the permitting process and could have been able to answer possible questions an applicant may have.

Ald. Blacketter asked about wages and personal services. She stated the requests have nearly doubled and asked how many permits have been processed.

Mr. Raucci explained a study they did two years ago. He stated they could not find anyone that did the amount of work their department does.

Ald. Blacketter asked about software. She asked if he had interfaced to MIS.

Mr. Raucci explained they have looked at 6 different systems. He stated the Cityview was a particular system that would behoove our City and the departments.

Ald. Ditchkus commented about revenue the department has brought into that office. He stated he believed it to be around \$1,500,000.

Ald. Lambert asked the number of applications they had last year and also the number of applications that had to be re-done because they were done improperly.

Mr. Raucci responded they had around 4,400 applications.

Ald. Lambert commented it is her understanding applications are going down and asked if that is correct. She also asked how many, if any of the "big boxes" were contracted out.

Mr. Raucci replied there were only two that took advantage of that.

Ald. Nunno commented that in December the Building Department admitted that a mistake was made

Mr. Raucci replied “with all due respect, we are here to discuss the budget”.

Ald. Nunno continued that a problem had been highlighted in the past and that he was just trying to make sure it would not happen again.

Ald. Ditchkus raised a point of order stating the questioning was not budgetary and out of line. He also asked if Ald. Nuuno could point out in his questioning which particular line item he is referring.

Chairman Blake stated the point of order has been considered but not well taken. He stated the questioning is relevant and germane to the budget.

Ald. Ditchkus raised a point of order and asked for clarification as to what “considered, but not well taken” meant. He reiterated these discussions are to discuss the budget.

Chairman Blake stated the point of order was not well taken.

Ald. Ditchkus asked if the Chairman could show him where “not well taken” is in Robert’s Rules of Order.

Chairman Blake reiterated the point of order has been considered and rejected. Chairman Blake stated there was a question that has not been answered.

Mr. Raucci responded he would respectfully decline to answer that question at this time.

Chairman Blake asked if he would get that information to the Board.

Mr. Raucci (silence).

Ald. Vitali asked as a point of information asking about the Ordinance as it was corrected and it was his understanding they were now upholding that Ordinance.

Chairman Blake stated to Mr. Raucci that he was asked to come before this Board and that he chose not to and further that these issues do concern the budget and how the department is run.

Mr. Giannattasio stated the Board was not here to debate a prior issue and that he respected Mr. Raucci’s decision not to comment.

Ald. Veccharelli asked about line items 4712 0000 Training Expenses. 4772 0000 Publications and 4774 0000 Postage.

Mr. Raucci explained the postage and proposed rate increase. He stated with regard to publications that are for printing and binding, special signs and reports.

Ald. Veccharelli asked out of which account when the historian was notified.

Mr. Raucci responded it would be postage.

Ald. Veccharelli asked if there is enough money in that account and that they haven't had any problem doing his job.

Mr. Raucci responded yes there is money in that account.

Ald. Veccharelli asked if there is a problem that there is not enough money in a particular account that he may not be able to notify the historian and get him the information he wants and noted the historian has not been very happy. He also asked about line item 4977 0121 Desk.

Mr. Raucci explained it is an "L" shaped desk for additional workspace.

Ald. Veccharelli asked if the department will be promoting a Building Inspector to a Deputy Chief Building Inspector.

Mr. Raucci responded his hope and intent is that this person will take responsibility for some of the duties that have fallen under his domain, i.e. phone calls, residential aspect of the office, etc. He stated that individual would handle issues that can arise from those types of projects.

Ald. Veccharelli stated he wished to clarify they are promoting an Inspector B and that it would not be an Inspector A who would be next in line.

Mr. Raucci explained it would open the door for the balance of the men in the office to apply.

Ald. Manning asked the number of cell phones, contractor and who has them and when the contract expires.

Mr. Raucci responded there is one for every inspector (5) and that they carry Nextel. He stated he does not know when it expires and that it is done through purchasing.

Ald. Ditchkus commented with regard to cell phones that it is a cost savings and time.

Mr. Raucci responded yes.

Ald. Lambert commented she wished to clarify when Ald. Manning has been asking about cell phones it is to see what departments use which services.

Ald. Veccharelli commented he understands the need for cell phones and that the Board would like to see a group rate for the entire City and get one giant plan and save the City money by consolidating. With regard to computers he stated he would like to see them all go out to bid.

Ald. Ditchkus responded for clarification that Ald. Manning has the right to ask questions and that it is his recollection that member of this Board were looking to cut cell phones last year.

Ald. Veccharelli raised a point of order stating he was not addressing Ald. Ditchkus and that now was not the time for Ald. Ditchkus to be a hypocrite.

Chairman Blake stated he has considered the point of order and it is not well taken.

Ald. Ditchkus asked not to be shut down because someone does not like what he is saying.

Ald. Lambert asked if they have a checklist for a person that comes into the department. She stated this question does pertain to the budget because it falls under many items in the budget. She also asked if the computer would help with that.

Mr. Raucci responded they do have requirements.

Ald. Blacketter asked if that information is on line.

Mr. Raucci replied the requirements for a permit are available under the website.

Ald. Bier stated he heard the Building Inspector say earlier they had 4,400 applications last year. He asked if he saw that number going up or down.

Mr. Raucci responded he would see it staying around the same. He stated the commercial is still vibrant.

Chairman Blake asked of the 4,400 applications what percentage needed to be re-filed or filed again and if he could get this in the next few weeks.

Mr. Raucci responded he would make every effort to get that information but that it would be labor intensive for his staff. He also stated one of his veteran clerks retired last week.

Chairman Blake asked if they were looking to replace that clerk.

Mr. Raucci replied the test has been given and they are starting the process.

Chairman Blake asked about a cost savings in the position.

Ald. Vitali asked if the position is negotiable.

Mr. Raucci responded yes.

Ald. Ditchkus commented it is his understanding Milford ranks as one of the busiest towns for permits.

Mr. Raucci stated the last information he was provided with placed Milford as third in the State.

Chairman Blake asked if third in the State was based on applications.

Mr. Raucci replied it is permits issued. He also noted Milford is third only to Stamford and Norwalk.

#4424 Engineering – Mr. Robert Britton, City Engineer was present for questions.

Ald. Manning explained the Board has been going through cell phones asking who the department has for a provider, number of phones and when the contract expires.

Mr. Britton responded they have two cell phones with Nextel and the contract expires in May.

Ald. Willey asked if there is a position being eliminated.

Mr. Britton explained there were some vacant positioned due to settlements.

Ald. Willey asked for an explanation of line item 4189 0000 Professional Fees.

Mr. Britton explained they are consulting fees that were being paid out of other departments.

Mr. Kolwica added with Bob on board the engineering technicians positions would change and work more with GIS and MIS.

Ald. Lambert asked if that is why there is an increase in capital outlays.

Mr. Britton explained they were proposing two computers and that they are not standard computers. He explained further they would be run through the auto cad system. He also stated they were looking at a 21" monitor because they are looking at maps.

Ald. Nunno asked about line item 4713 0000 Membership.

Mr. Britton explained the increase and there are several groups. He explained the importance of joining an organization and that the City should be part of it.

Ald. Veccharelli asked about computer hardware.

Mr. Britton responded he just explained it and reiterated.

#4420 Public Works Office – Mr. Bruce Kolwicz, Director and Ms. Kelly Hamil, Administrator were present for questions.

Ald. Vitali asked Mr. Kolwicz if he could live with 5 line item cuts in his budget.

Mr. Kolwicz responded nothing in the office.

Chairman Blake commented that perhaps Ald. Vitali was referring to all Public Works accounts.

#4421 Highway/Parks

Ald. Lambert asked about line item 4117 0000 and if they were projecting more hours this year.

Mr. Kolwicz responded last year they had difficulty getting even college students to work at the \$8.00 rate so they have increased that rate to \$10.00. He also commented they have had kids work with them in the past but cited the pay for the difficulty.

Ald. Lambert asked about line item 4516 0000 Seawall & Dock Upkeep

Mr. Kolwicz responded it is an account they use every year, but it comes after budget time. He explained it is for dock upkeep. He stated it is also for the area called the “duck pond” which is really the Wepawaug.

Ald. Willey asked about line item 4113 0000 Snow Removal and asked the specific costs. He commented many towns don’t even budget for snow removal.

Mr. Kolwicz explained they budget for snow removal and try not to change that amount. He also stated that figure includes the meal allowance required and also sand and salt.

Ald. Willey asked if that is overtime.

Ms. Hamill responded it is wages.

Ald. Ditchkus stated he wished to be clear even though this year was light, they budget the same every year in line item 4113 0000. He stated it is also his recollection Public Works has had to come back to this Board for a transfer into this account.

Ald. Blacketter asked about line item 4533 0000 and if that is contracted.

Mr. Kolwicz responded that account is for salt. He explained they go by the State bid.

Ald. Lambert asked about truck driver operator, sweep and if they carry a CDL license and how many overall have that license. She also asked about the sweepers and how they determine what roads get swept.

Mr. Kolwicz explained the CDL requirements. He stated they currently have 3 and one in training. With regard to street sweeping, he explained they basically follow their plow routes.

Ald. Willey asked how much is in the snow removal account.

Mr. Kolwicz replied about \$41,400.

Ald. Manning asked about cell phones, how many, the carrier and when the contract expires.

Mr. Kolwicz responded all together in Highway they have 12 and the rest basically are in Building Maintenance. He stated they have Nextel.

Ald. Veccharelli asked about line item 4467 0000 Ballfield Upkeep and 4464 0000 Recreational Areas Upkeep. He stated he had a constituent call him and state the lights at Washington Field were on and no one was playing ball. Ald. Veccharelli suggested possibly the umpires could arrive early and turn them on and then turn them off when the games are over or perhaps put some type of timer on them to shut off at a certain time.

Mr. Kolwicz stated the season began last week with night games. He stated no one is allowed to go into the powerhouse except an election. He also noted they are digital timers. He stated in the past the night foreman will go over and shut the lights off and get everybody out or if it is raining. He explained they are looking at the possibility of an outside switch just to turn them off.

Ald. Veccharelli expressed his hope something could be figured out for the future.

Chairman Blake asked about budgeted positions and if anyone will retire this year.

Mr. Kolwicz responded his department has a low turnover rate and that most of the people they have been there over 20 years.

Chairman Blake asked if he could let the Board know if a budgeted position will have a retirement.

Ald. Blacketter asked about access to the bathrooms.

Mr. Kolwicz explained the policy. He stated they do not maintain those bathrooms.

#4423 Building Maintenance

Ald. Hardiman asked about line item 4923 0000 Building Improvements and 4923 0502 Roof Repairs.

Mr. Kolwicz explained the cement on some of the flat roof and that these are smaller projects.

Ald. Manning commented electricity is a large part of this budget. She asked if there is any talk of retrofitting the building to make it more green. She also asked what building they are working on.

Mr. Kolwicz responded they are involved with a number of buildings. He also explained three years ago with Nxge they put a number of switches and ballasts in and that they have realized a savings on this. He also stated they have been involved in a number of projects, i.e. "Night the Light".

Chairman Blake commented not all the buildings have been retrofitted.

Mr. Kolwicz responded they plan on moving forward with the same project at Lisman Landing and see what savings they can recognize there.

Chairman Blake suggested for energy savings turning the thermostats down.

Mayor Richetelli commented in the summer they have the ability during peak hours to go off line and go on generator and that they have been very successful with that over the last two years.

Ald. Blacketter asked how much it costs to run the generator.

Mayor Richetelli added they also pay a certain amount for the City to run the generator.

Ald. Blacketter asked what sort of inspections and maintenance is in place due to repairs, etc. She stated she would like to see some scheduled plan.

Mr. Kolwicz responded they have one of the best building maintenance programs in the State. He noted he only has two masons and the numerous building with brick. He stated they are very proactive. He continued and explained that Parsons was built in the 1940's and that his department has done repairs, but it is a massive project. He explained the details of some of the work there.

Ald. Blacketter stated her question is to all buildings and seeing a plan as to what needs to be done.

Mr. Kolwicz spoke as to Fanny Beach and the work there and reiterated they have one of the best programs in the State.

Mayor Richetelli recognized Public Works and Building Maintenance and that they do a tremendous job and that you won't find more maintained, cleaner buildings than at Parsons, City Hall, etc. but these buildings are getting older. He stated the long-range plan that Ald. Blacketter is looking for is in the Capital Improvement Plan.

#4429 General Garage

Ald. Patterson asked if there is a program for truck that shutdown after 5-minutes of idling.

Ald. Willey asked about line item 4331 0000 Gas & Other Propellants and asked about gas, heating and oil and that it appears all three of the items are exposed.

Mr. Kolwicz stated they do not know what the bid is. He commented he has been out of lubricant since Janaury.

Ald. Willey commented these numbers seem out of date.

Mayor Richetelli explained the budget process and noted the need to be as conservative as possible. He continued with an explanation of the history noting there just is no exact science.

Mr. Kolwicz commented they also changed from premium fuel and that he will be coming back to this Board because he is out of money in line item 4336.

#4431 Solid Waste

Mayor Richetelli commented with regard to line item 4790 9950 and commented it reflected the tipping fee. He stated the contract ends halfway through the fiscal year. He stated it is the hope those numbers will go down, but it is not something to count on. He stated they are also having discussions and negotiations with Wheelabrator but this Board should consider budgeting for what we pay for now.

Ald. Manning asked about line item 4790 9946 Tire Disposal and that the fees seem to fluctuate. She also asked about line item 4112 0000 Overtime.

Mr. Kolwicz responded the tire account does go up and down and explained the program. With regard to line item 4112 0000 that is for Sanitation overtime and that it is paid every day as part of the contract. He continued with an explanation of payment which he stated includes holidays, bulk pickups, etc.

Chairman Blake stated that last year the Public Works Director quoted each bulk pick up at approximately \$90,000. He asked if that included removal, bulk, etc.

Mr. Kolwicz responded the overtime is \$80,000 and with everything else it is around \$90,000.

Ald. Lambert commented at a time like this, the Board might wish to consider a spring and fall pickup. She also noted the cost of gas has gone up as well as wages.

Mr. Kolwicz reminded the Board bulk pick-ups went from 5 to 3 and event if they went to just 2 it would be like doing 3 because of the amount people put out and additionally you will find it all over the City.

Mayor Richetelli added the Board needed to be cognizant that people have a certain amount of bulk trash they put out and if there is 1/3 more because there is only going to be 2 they will still have to pick it up. He also stated you may not recognize \$90,000 if you reduce a pickup.

Ald. Ditchkus spoke as to the 5 bulk trash pickups and when they were cut to 3 and there really was not any significant savings.

Mr. Kolwicz noted that Stratford went to collecting every other year and now they just find it all over the City.

Ald. Blacketter asked about line item 4790 9944 Hazardous Waste Removal and asked if the City was working towards having a facility here all year round.

Mr. Kolwicz explained this City was a founding member years ago. He stated just this year he spoke with the Health Department about the possibility of having a satellite pick up here but the permitting process is very stringent and may not be possible.

#4426 Wastewater

Ald. Lambert asked about line item 4189 0000 Misc. Professional Fees & Svcs and asked if that has to do with training.

Mr. Kolwicz explained that is handled through different accounts.

Ald. Lambert asked about line item 4442 0000 and if that account could be cut \$10,000.

Mr. Kolwicz responded he would not know until the plant is up and running. He reminded the Board this account is forth both plants.

Ald. Hardiman noted they received a memo from J. Cooper, Superintendent of Wastewater that he felt there will be several increases as follows 4471 increase to \$150,000, 4751 increase to \$10,000, 4771 increase to \$200,000 and 4989 increase to \$25,000.

Mr. Kolwicz addressed each of those proposed requests individually.

Ald. Hardiman asked about line item 4746 and asked what that is.

Ms. Hamill explained that is for the landline phones.

Ald. Hardiman asked if that is station to station.

Mr. Kolwicz responded it is tied into the 911 system.

Ald. Blacketter asked about 4741 0001.

Mr. Kolwicz responded the program is up and running and will start doing much better. He stated he expected that number could change but reiterated it will be at least a year before they see it.

Ald. Blacketter asked if it would affect the Sewer Commission.

Mr. Kolwicz responded Milford really doesn't have a lot of dirty water. He explained the history of the Nitrogen credit.

Chairman Blake reminded the Public Works Director of Ald. Vital's question earlier about 5 line items.

Mr. Kolwicz replied City Waste, eliminate bulk pick, building improvement. He stressed very strongly if you cut compliance you sacrifice safety. He also commented with regard to the ballfields that there would be some very angry people and if you cut bulky waste you have reduced services to the taxpayers.

Ald. Blacketter asked about any incentives to recycle and any cost savings.

Mr. Kolwicz noted the ECC asked the same question. He explained they have looked into many different things and are looking into plastics and glass. He also spoke as to cardboard. He also noted there would be a need to retro fit every truck or purchase new ones. He also stated they have looked into single source recycling but there is no one around here that could take it from this City.

#4154 Sewer Commission – no questions.

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

The Board adjourned at 12:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen K. Huber
Recording Secretary