

**BOARD OF ALDERMEN  
BUDGET DELIBERATIONS – FISCAL YEAR 2017-2018  
MAY 15, 2017 – FINAL VOTE**

The Board of Aldermen held a budget deliberation session on Monday, May 15, 2017 in City Hall for Consideration and Voting RE: the proposed general budget, revenues and appropriations for fiscal year 2017-2018, establishment of the 2017/2018 mill rate and the tax due dates.

Chairman Vetro reconvened the Board in public session at 7:04 p.m.

**1. Roll Call**

Board Members Present

B. Anderson  
E. Beatty  
B. Bevan  
M. Casey  
D. German  
A. Giannattasio  
J. Golden  
J. Grant  
M. Hardiman  
S. Shaw  
F. Smith  
N. Veccharelli  
P. Vetro  
R. Vitali

Also Present

Mayor Blake B. Blake  
P. Erodicti, Finance Director  
S. Fournier, Mayor Blake's Admin. Asst  
J. Rohrig, City Clerk

Absent

B. Bier

Chairman Vetro stated tonight the Board would conclude its budget deliberation and vote on the proposed general budget, revenues and appropriations for fiscal year 2017/2018.

Ald. Giannattasio stated he did not know tonight the Board would be voting on the final budget. He stated their caucus was not prepared to vote tonight and further it was his understanding tonight was about alternative budgets.

Mayor Blake stated there are many concerns waiting until the end of the month to finalize the budget. He stated the city has a new tax collector, the need to get the tax bills out on time, etc. He stated the department heads are present tonight to provide answers to any questions the Board might have. He spoke of being prudent and understanding the realities of the budget. Mayor Blake stated he and Finance Director Erodicti were in Hartford last week and spoke with Milford's legislative delegation as well as numerous other parties. Mayor Blake stated it is just not likely the State will have a budget before the end of June. Mayor Blake stated he and Mr. Erodicti have also had numerous discussions with the Board of Education, Superintendent of Schools, the school's Chief Operating Officer, Assistant Superintendent, and others. He stated after those lengthy discussions they acknowledged

there will be some challenges, but services would not be compromised and that safety of Milford's citizens was first and foremost.

Ald. Casey stated the biggest component is the ECS which was originally \$11M and now the budget being presented tonight is \$8M. He asked how that number was arrived at.

Mayor Blake stated he spoke with Milford's State Senator who is also the Chair of the Education Committee and Milford's representatives on the Appropriations Committee. He stated they know that somewhere along the way Milford would receive a "haircut".

Ald. Casey asked about the worst case scenario.

Mayor Blake stated only 6% of Milford's budget comes from the State.

Ald. Vitali expressed appreciation of the work that has been done. He stated an alternative budget should have come after tonight's discussions. He spoke of redundancy with the budget. He also stated it was his understanding tonight's meeting was purely informative, adding the process tonight lacked transparency. Ald. Vitali stated there was very little information available tonight for this Board to vote on a final budget. He reiterated the work tonight is backwards and falls short, but he did appreciate the work that had been done.

Mayor Blake stated what this Board was provided last month was a best case scenario. He spoke of the work the departments have done within their respective budgets. He also spoke of the work of Mr. Erodici who worked tirelessly to provide this Board with an alternative budget that works for Milford. Mayor Blake stated he was more than happy to work with the Board.

Ald. Veccharelli and Ald. Smith made and seconded a motion to approve the following budgets: Acct. 4111 Board of Aldermen as recommended by the Board of Finance for fiscal year 2017/2018, with the following change: line item 4774 0000 Postage from \$200.00 reduced to \$100.00 for a new sub-total in *Operational Expenses* of \$204.00 and a new department total of \$6,205.00; Acct. 4112 Elections as recommended by the Board of Finance for fiscal year 2017/2018, with the following change: line item 4701 0000 Election Expenses from \$110,000.00 reduced to \$107,500.00, for a new sub-total in *Election Expenses* of \$107,500 and a new department total of \$107,500; Account 4115 Registrar of Voters as recommended by the Board of Finance for fiscal year 2017/2018, with the following change: line item 4117 0000 Seasonal Temporary from \$20,000.00 reduced to \$19,500.00 for a new sub-total in *Personal Services* of \$152,457 and a new department total of \$165,065.00; and Acct. 4116 Milford Government Access TV (MGAT) in the amount of \$19,250.00, as recommended by the Board of Finance for fiscal year 2017/2018.

Ald. Giannattasio requested a 5 minute recess.

The Board recessed at 7:24 p.m.

Chairman Vetro reconvened the budget deliberation/final vote meeting in public at 8:06 p.m.

Ald. Smith stated he wished to withdraw his second on the motion.

Ald. Veccharelli stated he wished to withdraw his motion.

Ald. Veccharelli and Ald. Golden made and seconded a motion to approve the budget as recommended by the Board of Finance and as further revised in accordance with the adjustments set forth in Exhibit A, which has been presented and on file with the City Clerk. Exhibit A contains revised budget amounts for the fiscal year 2017/2018 budget representing \$2.5M in reductions (or approximately 1.2%), in reductions from the approved Board of Finance budget.

Ald. Shaw and Ald. Anderson moved to amend Account 4825 Beth El Center, line item 4708 0000 Grant to read \$85,000.00, for a new subtotal in *Operational Expenses* of \$85,000.00 and a new department total of \$85,000.00.

Ald. Shaw stated the new amount of \$85,000.00 brings this account to the amount recommended by the Board of Finance.

By roll call vote, the motion carried 9 yes (Anderson, Beatty, German, Golden, Hardiman, Shaw, Smith, Veccharelli, Vetro) and 5 no (Bevan, Casey, Giannattasio, Grant, Vitali).

Ald. Shaw and Ald. Anderson moved to amend Account 0010 4827 Literacy Volunteers of So. CT, line item 4708 0000 Grant to read \$5,000.00, for a new subtotal in *Operational Expenses* of \$5,000.00 and a new department total of \$5,000.00. Motion carried unanimously.

Ald. Giannattasio questioned increases requiring a 2/3 vote.

Mayor Blake stated the two previous motions reinstate those accounts to the amount recommended by the Board of Finance.

Ald. Bevan stated the Board of Finance did not approval the current budget in front of the aldermen.

Mayor Blake stated the numbers were updated from word they are receiving from Hartford.

Ald. Bevan asked about input from the Board of Finance regarding these changes.

Mayor Blake stated this is an extraordinary year because of what is going on at the State level. He stated this process is similar to what is done each year at this level.

Ald. Bevan stated due to the lack of information he has he would be voting no to this budget.

Ald. Giannattasio stated every department head out in the audience tonight is realizing a cut and yet the Democrats have just put through two increases. He reiterated tonight was to be an informational meeting with the budget vote taking place on May 25, 2017. Ald. Giannattasio expressed his frustration with the budget and the way it was taking place tonight. He stated he is not in favor of the budget being presented tonight, nor the process. He stated he should have been made aware of these changes.

Mayor Blake stated the minority asked for the single vote process which was agreed to. He also stated he asked the various departments to provide alternative budgets that would be decided upon at the time of the budget vote. Mayor Blake stated an adopted budget is necessary so that the tax bills can go out on time. He expressed concern pushing the budget vote too far out into May.

Ald. Anderson and Ald. Shaw moved to amend Account 4996 Education Operations, line item 4001 0000 Lump Sum Appropriation and restore \$684,632 which amount represents the full allocation recommended by the Mayor and Board of Education, and adopted by the Board of Finance for a new sub-total in *Education Operation* of \$92,296,582 and a new department total of \$92,296,582.

Ald. Vitali stated he is a proponent of education and completely supports education, and that his vote tonight is not indicative of this department. Ald. Vitali stated he felt the same way regarding the Beth El Center.

By roll call vote the amendment fails 5 yes (Anderson, Beatty, Golden, Hardiman, Shaw) and 9 no (Bevan, Casey, German, Giannattasio, Grant, Smith, Veccharelli, Vetro, Vitali)

Ald. Anderson and Ald. Shaw moved to amend the Account 4996 Education Operations, line item 4001 0000 Lump Sum Appropriating, and adding \$342,316.00 for a new subtotal *Education Operations* of \$91,954,266 and a new department of \$91,954,266.00.

By roll call vote, the amendment carried 8 yes (Anderson, Beatty, Golden, Hardiman, Shaw, Smith, Veccharelli, Vetro) and 6 no (Bevan, Casey, German, Giannattasio, Grant, Vitali).

Ald. Anderson stated he would have preferred to have gone line item by line item. He stated he wished to fund education at the recommended level.

Ald. Vitali stated he would consider revisiting this account after a decision is made by the State as to the cut.

Ald. Smith requested a 5 minute recess. The Board recessed at 8:24 p.m.

Chairman Vetro reconvened the Board in public session at 8:36 p.m.

Ald. Anderson stated representatives from Milford Public Schools and the Board of Education were present and that he would like to afford them the opportunity to comment on the original budget and the Impact of the \$91M lump sum budget, if they so desire.

Chairwoman Glennon stated the Board of Education put forward a frugal budget and that it meets the needs of the district, with a small increase. She stated they recognize the challenges the State of Connecticut and City of Milford are facing.

Ald. Shaw noted that it seemed as though Milford took one of the biggest cuts because it managed its money well. She stated the budget the Board of Education put forward was responsible and diminous and that she took issue with the cut the Board of Finance made. She stated everyone

needs to participate in the reality of possible cuts, not just this year, but next year too. She asked how a \$700,000 cut would affect the Board of Education.

Ms. Glennon stated historically when there is a reduction, one of the first accounts the Board of Education will look at is buildings and grounds. She stated beyond that it would be difficult to say until they know what they actually have to work with. Ms. Glennon stated some difficult decisions would be made and that the Board of Education would meet with administrators and educational leaders.

Ald. Veccharelli and Ald. Golden made and seconded a motion to approve the Budget as recommended by the Board of Finance and as further revised in accordance with the adjustments set forth in Exhibit A, which has been presented and on file with the City Clerk. Exhibit A contains revised budget amounts for the fiscal year 2017-2018 budget representing approximately \$2.5M (or approximately 1.2%) in reductions from the approved Board of Finance budget.

By roll call vote, the Motion carried 8 yes (Anderson, Beatty, Golden, Hardiman, Shaw, Smith, Veccharelli, Vetro) and 6 no (Bevan, Casey, German, Giannattasio, Grant, Vitali).

Chairman Vetro announced the Board would stand in recess to allow the Finance Director to calculate the figures and set the mill rate. The recessed at 8:53 p.m.

Chairman Vetro reconvened the Board in public session at 9:26 p.m.

Ald. Veccharelli and Ald. Hardiman made and seconded a motion to approve an Ordinance establishing a budget for the City of Milford for fiscal year 2017-2018, setting the mill rate and establishing a due date in accordance with the provisions of the Connecticut General Statutes and the Charter of the City of Milford.

**Whereas:** The Board of Finance of the City of Milford has made estimates of the income and amount of money necessary to appropriate for the expenses of the City of Milford for the fiscal year commencing July 1, 2017 and ending June 30, 2018, and has classified such expenses under appropriate headings, departments and appropriations as more fully appears in the proposed Fiscal Budget submitted to the Board of Aldermen in accordance with Article VI, Section 2 of the Charter of the City of Milford; and,

**Whereas:** The Board of Aldermen, having met and conducted a public hearing, has considered said proposed fiscal budget and has made changes therein pursuant to Article VI, Section 3 of the Charter of the City of Milford; and

**Whereas:** The Board of Aldermen, in its deliberations and voting on said budget, has estimated revenues for the 2017-2018 fiscal year in the amount of \$205,787,062 and authorized appropriations for 2017-2018 fiscal year in the amount of \$205,787,062.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT AND IT IS HEREBY ORDAINED AND ENACTED BY THE BOARD OF ALDERMEN OF THE CITY OF MILFORD AS FOLLOW:**

That the proposed fiscal budget for the fiscal year commencing July 1, 2017 and ending June 30, 2018, as amended by the action of the Board of Aldermen pursuant to law, is hereby adopted and ordered to be filed with the City Clerk.

The taxes for the fiscal year commencing July 1, 2017 and ending June 30, 2018, at the rate of 27.79 mills upon the ratable estate within the limits of the City of Milford, are hereby laid and levied to meet the expenses of said budget. Said mill rate is set on the predication that it is estimated that \$394,925 of said levy will be granted for Elderly Exemptions (State of Connecticut), \$790,289 will be granted for a local tax relief program for the elderly, \$465,444 will be granted for a local tax relief program for Veterans and 97.85% of the resulting levy will be collected during the fiscal year commencing July 1, 2017, provided that if the taxes of any person shall exceed Two Hundred Dollars (\$200.00), the first installment thereof, but not less than one-half of the amount of such taxes shall be due and payable on the first day of July 2017 and the remainder due and payable on the first day of January 2018, but any taxpayer may pay the total amount of the tax for which he or she is liable at the time when the first installment shall become payable. Such tax rate shall apply to all districts of the City of Milford.

<b><u>TAXES TO BE RAISED</u></b>	<b><u>\$176,780,274</u></b>
<b><u>TOTAL APPROPRIATION</u></b>	<b><u>\$205,787,062</u></b>
<b><u>TOTAL REVENUE</u></b>	<b><u>\$205,787,062</u></b>

This Ordinance shall take effect in accordance with the Charter of the City of Milford

Mayor Blake thanked the Board for its work and realizing every vote wasn't unanimous. He stated overall the budget represented a tax decrease and a second tax cut Milford has experienced. Mayor Blake stated it is a prudent budget. He commended the Board for the time and hours and also thanked the Board of Education and Finance Director Peter Erodici for their hours.

Ald. Giannattasio stated this is a difficult time and that he took exception where with some of the comments that were made tonight. He reiterated he did not expect to vote this evening and hoped for time and an informative discussion this evening, but instead was forced into voting this evening. He stated the minority did not have the opportunity to look at the alternative budgets that Mayor Blake referenced. Ald. Giannattasio questioned if the budget being passed would manage the expectations from the State. He recognized the work that went into this budget, but wished to reiterate his concerns.

Ald. Veccharelli thanked the Board for its time and efforts. He stated some drastic cuts were handed to Milford, but still a good budget was put forward. We also stated a lot was asked and in the end they were able to provide reductions to their budgets, adding it was a hard task to do. He thanked Mayor Blake for the hard work and dedication he gives the Mayor's Office and to the taxpayers of Milford, he has provided yet another tax break. Ald. Veccharelli also thanked all of the departments who worked with Mayor Blake and tried to make the citizens of Milford happy and also make their departments work. He stated this is one of the lowest budgets in 11 years, it was hard, but everyone worked together to give up a little.

Ald. Vitali thanked the departments for coming out tonight. He expressed his hope this Board would not have to revisit this budget down the road.

Chairman Vetro thanked the aldermen for their hard work and expressed appreciation for the decorum tonight. He also, thanked Mayor Blake and Finance Director Erodici for working so hard.

By roll call vote, the motion carried 8 yes (Anderson, Beatty, Golden, Hardiman, Shaw, Smith, Veccharelli, Vetro) and 6 no (Bevan, Casey, German, Giannattasio, Grant Vitali),

Ald. Anderson and Ald. Veccharelli made and seconded a motion to adjourn the budget deliberations for 2017-2018 at 9:43 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen A. Kennedy  
Recording Secretary