

**BOARD OF ALDERMEN
SPECIAL ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING
NOVEMBER 20, 2007**

The Board of Aldermen of the City of Milford held their Special Organizational meeting on Tuesday, November 20, 2007 in the aldermanic chambers of City Hall. Mayor James L. Richetelli, Jr. welcomed the Board to the November 20, 2007 Organizational meeting of the Board of Aldermen for the 2007-2009 term at 6:18 p.m. He asked those present to stand and join in the Pledge of Allegiance.

1. Roll Call

Board Members Present

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

Also Present

Mayor J. Richetelli, Jr.
J. O'Connell, Mayor's Admin. Asst.
A. Jepson, City Clerk

2. Matters of Organization of the Board of Aldermen:

Mayor Richetelli stated this meeting is called in accordance with the City Charter, Article 3; Section 4 that states the Board will meet the second Tuesday following the election. He continued by reading from that article. Mayor Richetelli stated it was his honor to begin this meeting and congratulated each and every member and stated he looked forward to working with everyone. Mayor Richetelli stated he had one announcement regarding the packet the aldermen received. He asked if everyone could complete the "Contact Information Sheet" included in the packet and return it by the conclusion of tonight's meeting. He stated if anyone wished to keep any number confidential they could do so by marking it "confidential". He stated they would be kept on file in his office and the City Clerk's Office.

a. Election of Chairman of the Board of Aldermen

Mayor Richetelli stated he would entertain a motion for Chairman.

Ald. Nunno stated it was with deep pride and his sincere honor that he nominates Benjamin G. Blake as Chairman of the Board of Aldermen. Ald. Vetro seconded the motion.

Mayor Richetelli asked if there were any other nominations from the floor. Hearing none, nominations closed.

Motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Richetelli congratulated the new Chair of the Board.

Chairman Blake thanked Ald. Nunno for the nice nomination and stated he appreciated it.

b. Announcement of Majority and Minority Leaders

Chairman Blake stated their caucus met announced Ald. Vetro had been selected as the Majority Leader. Chairman Blake asked if there was a representative from the Minority who would recognize the minority of that party.

Ald. Ditchkus stated the minority has elected Co-Minority Leaders and that he and Ald. Toohey would serve.

Ald. Vetro stated he had a problem with co-chairs for the minority leader. He stated he felt one minority leader should be sufficient and that having two could be pose problems. He stated he did not know what problems it could pose off the top of his head and that he did not wish to go into this at this time but that it was his feeling there would be problems.

Chairman Blake spoke as to the line of succession. He stated there has been some discussion about this issue but that he felt it would be most appropriate if the City Attorney researched this and pending her evaluation they could address it at the next meeting.

3. Matters of Administration:

a. Appointments of Aldermanic Standing Committees by Aldermanic Chairman.

Chairman Blake stated after the announcement of the Aldermanic Standing Committee members the Board would take a brief recess for the purposes of electing a Chair and Vice Chair. Chairman Blake announced the Aldermanic Standing Committee members as follows:

Ordinance Committee: James Patterson, Temporary Chair, Jessica Blacketter, Nick Veccharelli, Vincent Ditchkus, Jr., Anthony Giannattasio.

Public Works Committee: Nick Veccharelli, Temporary Chari, Robert Nunno, Phillip Vetro, Judith Toohey, Brian Bier.

Claims Committee: Martin Hardiman, Temporary Chair, Suzanne Manning, Barbara Lambert, Raymond Vitali, Scott Willey.

Rules Committee: Benjamin Blake, Temporary Chair, Jessica Blacketter, Robert Nunno, Vincent Ditchkus, Jr., Judith Toohey.

Public Safety & Welfare Committee: Barbara Lambert, Temporary Chair, Martin Hardiman, Suzanne Manning, Raymond Vitali, Scott Willey.

Personnel Committee: Benjamin Blake, Temporary Chair, Phillip Vetro, Vincent Ditchkus, Jr.

1. Meetings of the Aldermanic Standing Committees for the purpose of Electing a Chairman and a Vice Chairman of each Committee and conducting any other business pertinent to the Administration of the Standing Committees. Rules Committee to vote on recommended Aldermanic Rules of Order for 2007-2009 term.

The Board recessed at 6:26 p.m. Chairman Blake reconvened the Board at 6:38 p.m.

2. Reports of the Aldermanic Standing Committees.

Ordinance Committee: Ald. Patterson announced he was elected Chair and Ald. Blacketter would serve as Vice Chair.

Public Works Committee: Ald. Vetro announced he would be Chair and Ald. Veccharelli would be the Vice Chair.

Claims Committee: Ald. Hardiman announced he would be Chair and Ald. Manning would be the Vice Chair.

Rules Committee: Chairman Blake stated the Rules Committee met and that he would serve as the Chair and; Ald. Nunno the Vice Chair. Chairman Blake stated at the time the Committee met they adopted the rules as adopted in the packet and would recommend them to the full Board. He stated since they were on this item he would ask for a motion to accept the rules.

Ald. Ditchkus and Ald. Vetro made and seconded a motion to adopt the Aldermanic Rules of Order for the 2007-2009 term. Motion carried unanimously.

Public Safety & Welfare Committee: Ald. Lambert announced this Committee met and she was elected the Chair and Ald. Hardiman the Vice Chair.

Personnel Committee: Chairman Blake announced he would serve as the Chair and Ald. Vetro the Vice Chair.

3. Voting on adoption of the Aldermanic Rules of Order for the 2007-2009 term.
(see above under Rules Committee)

- b. Appointments of Liaison Assignments by Aldermanic Chairman.

Chairman Blake stated there were a number of liaison appointments and that he would read those. He stated there is a democrat and republican appointed to each.

Board of Education: Ald. Patterson and Ald. Vitali

Flood & Erosion Control Board: Ald. Lambert and Ald. Ditchkus

Park, Beach & Recreation: Ald. Blacketter and Ald. Toohey

Planning and Zoning Board: Ald. Vetro and Ald. Giannattasio

Sewer Commission: Ald. Nunno and Ald. Giannattasio

Harbor Management Comm.: Ald. Veccharelli and Ald. Bier

Council on Aging: Ald. Vetro and Ald. Toohey
Library Board: Ald. Manning and Ald. Willey
Fowler Memorial Commission: Ald. Blacketter and Ald. Willey
Milford Housing Authority: Ald. Lambert and Ald. Bier
Golf Course Commission: Ald. Hardiman and Ald. Toohey
Inland Wetlands Agency: Ald. Patterson and Ald. Ditchkus, Jr.
Board of Health: Ald. Veccharelli and Ald. Vitali

c. Appointments of Special Committees by Aldermanic Chairman.

Chairman Blake announced the Aldermanic Special Committees as follows:

Devon Revitalization: Ald. Hardiman, Ald. Manning, Ald. Ditchkus, Jr.
Milford Academy Community Campus Bldg. Committee: Ald. Blake and Mr. P. Beckwith
Permanent School Facilities Bldg. Committee: Matthew Woods, Chairman, David Deflumeri (citizen), Timothy Creedon (citizen), Ald. R. Nunno, Ald. R. Vitali, James Quish (BOE) and Cindy Kopazna (BOE).
Education Funding Committee: Chairman Blake stated the standing representatives for 2005-2007 would remain until January 1, 2008 upon which time the new members would be selected.
LRA: Ald. B. Lambert, Ald. J. Toohey

Chairman Blake stated that completes all the appointments.

Ald. Vetro and Ald. Veccharelli made and seconded a motion the Board have only one (1) minority leader.

Ald. Ditchkus raised a point of order stating this is not an agenda item and further that it is the minority's decision. He stated the minority did not pick and choice the majority's choice of chair and that they have not interfered with the majority's decision for leadership choice.

Ald. Lambert stated the agenda in item 2-b reads "Announcement of Majority and Minority Leaders" so it is on the agenda.

Mayor Richetelli noted this Special Organization meeting is called for the "announcement" of the majority and minority leaders therefore a motion is not in order.

Chairman Blake stated the questions is whether it is permissible and that it would be reviewed by the City Attorney and that it may be appropriate to table this issue and have the City Attorney review.

Ald. Veccharelli commented they were standing on some un-chartered grounds and that certainly there never have been dual roles on either side of the aisle. He stated he is in his 9th year and they have always had leadership in each side. He also commented sometimes there is a battle, but that he believes Roberts Rules of Order allows one leader not two. He stated he believed there is a motion on the floor and that they should move on this. He stated basically they were objecting to a change in procedure. He stated the motion on the floor states they would like a vote on this.

Ald. Toohey stated this affects her directly and she has yet to speak on this. She explained her reason to be co-minority leader and stated they (herself and Ald. Ditchkus) bring to this Board a unique personality. She stated

the rules don't say they can make a change and that the rules were just adopted without any changes. She also stated it is not up to the majority to decide what the minority wants. She also stated they have sat through and done what the minority wants and that this is their choice. She stated she did not want to step off the first night of doing the people's business arguing over one or two minority leaders. She stated this is what their caucus wanted. She also stated this Board voted on the rules and no changes were made. She also stated they have sat through this meeting tonight and supported what the majority has wanted and what the people want. She stated they are only asking for what their caucus asked for and thanked the Board for its time.

Ald. Vitali commented there was discussion earlier that they were going to have this item as "Unfinished Business" at the next meeting after having the City Attorney look at this. He stated this is a concern of the minority and not the majority. He also pointed out there is nothing in Roberts Rules of Order that there cannot be Co-Chairs. He stated what is inappropriate is for the majority to try to control what the minority wishes to do. He also expressed his disappointment that the majority was attempting to control what the minority wishes to do.

Ald. Ditchkus stated he raised a point of order and also reminded the Board it takes a 2/3 vote to place something on the agenda. He also pointed out the agenda does not state there is a vote; it states it is an announcement for minority leader and that this Board is trying to take a vote on an announcement. He stated he thought they were supposed to be bipartisan and that they were off to a bad start. He stated he was respectfully asking the Chair to rule on his point of order.

Mayor Richetelli commented that respectfully Ald. Ditchkus has asked for a ruling but that he wished to remind the Board this is a Special Organizational meeting and a 2/3 vote is not permissible and therefore cannot be added.

Ald. Blacketter asked for clarification stating a minority leader was not presented and that the requirement was to put one forward and that has not been done.

Chairman Blake stated the Board would take a 5-minute recess. The Board recessed at 6:53 p.m. Chairman Blake reconvened the Board at 6:59 p.m.

Chairman Blake stated the point of order has been considered and rejected. He stated there is a motion and a second on the table and asked if there was any more discussion.

Ald. Manning commented in reviewing this her concern would be with succession. He cited as an example if the Chairman, Majority Leader and Mayor were hit by a bus the responsibility would be the minority leader and questioned who that would be if there are co-minority leaders. She stated the citizens have a right to know.

Mayor Richetelli raised a point of order.

Chairman Blake stated to the Mayor he is an "ex officio" member.

Mayor Richetelli stated the Charter is clear as to the line of succession and lists only the Chairman. He stated the Majority and Minority leaders only exist because of the Rules this Board just adopted. He reiterated it is clear in the charter the succession to the Mayor and that is the Chair.

Ald. Patterson stated his concern is the rules just adopted unanimously by this Board are in the singular form with regard to the minority leader and that it is a matter of semantics. He stated the minority leader is not a dual person.

Ald. Willey commented as a new member he is very disappointed at the tone they are starting under. He stated he has not heard a good argument against this. He also pointed out the agenda clearly states “announcement” so the point is invalid. He stated this is a bad way to start out.

Ald. Lambert commented it has been mentioned the majority is asking to pick and choose. She stated they are simply asking the minority to name a minority leader. She stated maybe they should have two majority leaders. She stated precedence has been set in the past but for whatever reasons the republicans cannot make a decision. She reiterated they are only asking the minority to bring forward a minority leader.

Ald. Giannattasio stated this is what their party decided in caucus. He also stated this Board voted for the Chair and asked that he set an example. He stated to the Chair that his party was doing him a disservice and that he should do as he stated and seek legal counsel.

Ald. Veccharelli commented he guessed it was going to be a long two years. He stated suddenly the minority does not like what has been done for year and they are battling what has been a norm for decades and that they have had one leader from both sides. He spoke as to the minority leader being the mouthpiece and representing their side. He stated they are battling each other and calling each other names when it is on the agenda you pick a majority and minority leader and now all of a sudden there are two when it has always been one. He stated he was sorry it is a problem for “you guys” (the minority) to pick one. He stated all they are asking is they hear from the minority who that one person is.

Ald. Ditchkus stated all he has heard from Ald. Veccharelli and Ald. Lambert is that they are insulting the minority’s choice. He stated the vote is illegal and the only people hung up on this are the democrats. He stated the minority is happy with their decision and no one is holding this up but the democrats. He stated the Chair said earlier that he would refer this to the City Attorney and stated they should do that and get a response. He also commented if they want to pick our minority leader then they should let them pick the majority leader and live with that choice.

Ald. Lambert stated they are not asking to pick the minority leader and that it was never the intent to usurp their power and that they would not take that privilege away. She stated are asking the minority to pick their leadership and let the Board know who the minority leader is.

Ald. Vitali stated he thought they were all in agreement that the City Attorney to review this and that the Chair had stated they would revisit this at the next meeting as “Unfinished Business”. He stated he would like to make the question.

Chairman Blake stated there was a suggestion to take this, however a formal motion was never made. He stated there is a motion on the table and asked if there was any further discussion.

Ald. Toohey stated they are going back and forth and this leads to confusion. She asked why the majority is so concerned if the minority has stated in no way would it ever be confusing because they made sure of this in caucus. She also addressed the comment “we could not make up our minds” and stated her caucus

overwhelming came up with this choice. She stated this is what they decided. She also stated the majority could spin anything they want but that at one point the Chair was moving forward and going forward with seeking counsel from the City Attorney but he seems to have changed and lost control over his own party. She stated no one would be hurt or affected by the minority's choice and that they needed to move forward with the people's work and that it would be bad precedent not to do what the people want.

Ald. Veccharelli stated basically there is a motion on the table as to whether they want to have more than one minority leader. He stated it is fair to have the Board vote yes it is ok, or no we want one minority leader. He stated they are not deciding who the minority leader or leaders are only how many. He also stated if the minority is not in a position tonight to give that name and need more time he stated he would be in favor of extending that time.

Ald. Veccharelli and Ald. Lambert made and seconded a motion to move the question.

Ald. Ditchkus stated a 2/3 vote is needed.

By roll call vote the motion failed 9 yes (Blacketter, Blake, Hardiman, Lambert, Manning, Nunno, Patterson, Veccharelli, Vetro) and 5 no (Ditchkus, Giannattasio, Toohey, Vitalli, Willey).

Chairman Blake stated the Board would take a 5-minute recess. The Board recessed at 7:17 p.m. Chairman Blake reconvened the Board at 7:21 p.m.

Chairman Blake stated the motion to move the questions failed and asked if there was any further discussion.

Ald. Blacketter commented the Republicans have stated they had reasons for the dual leadership but have not shared those reasons discussed in their caucus.

Ald. Vitali read from Roberts Rules of Order noting you close debate and that a motion for previous question requires a 2/3 vote that is not debatable. He stated he believed an apology was in order to the minority party as well as the mayor. Ald. Vitali stated he wished to make a motion to put this as "Unfinished Business" at the next meeting.

Ald. Veccharelli raised a point of order stating there is a motion on the table.

Ald. Vitali and Ald. Ditchkus made and seconded a motion to amend the motion to table this to allow the issue to be discussed after the city attorney had ruled.

Chairman Blake stated there is a motion to amend and asked if there is any further discussion.

Ald. Veccharelli raised a point of order. He stated Ald. Vitali's motion is not germane to the main motion so the Chair should not allow it.

Ald. Vitali stated he would withdraw his motion.

Ald. Ditchkus stated he would withdraw his second.

Ald. Ditchkus stated he would like a clarification and asked if the secretary could read back the announcement of what the Chair said that he would have the city attorney give her ruling.

Chairman Blake stated they were voting as to whether the minority should be allowed to have dual minority leaders and they further the minority . . .

Ald. Ditchkus interjected raising a point of order stating the Rules Committee had met and adopted the rules unanimously without any changes.

By roll call vote the motion carried 9 yes (Blacketter, Black, Hardiman, Lambert, Manning, Nunno, Patterson, Veccharelli, Vetro) and 5 no (Ditchkus, Giannattasio, Toohey, Vitali, Willey).

Ald. Veccharelli and Ald. Patterson moved to adjourn at 7:31 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen K. Huber
Board Secretary