

**BOARD OF ALDERMEN
REGULAR MEETING
OCTOBER 3, 2022**

The Board of Aldermen of the City of Milford held their regular meeting on Monday, October 3, 2022, in the Aldermanic Chambers at City Hall. Chairman Vetro called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. Chairman Vetro asked those present to join in saluting our flag and reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

1. Roll Call

Board Members

M. Arciuolo
B. Broesder
E. Beatty
M. Casey
D. German
A. Giannattasio
G. Harla
S. Marlow
J. Moffitt
H. Mulrenan
R. Pacelli
M. Parente
P. Vetro
R. Vitali

Also Present

Mayor Benjamin G. Blake
J. Berchem, City Attorney
K. Fortunati, City Clerk
P. Erodici, Finance Director
J. Rosen, Chief of Staff

Excused:

W. Willis

2. Public Statements

Public statements are limited to the legislative function of the Board of Aldermen. He stated only residents; taxpayers or electors may address the Board. The time limit granted to each speaker shall be three (3) minutes. He asked each speaker to adhere to the three-minute limit.

William J. Ziebell, 10 Silver Street, discussed a parking lot and playground area on Silver Street and concerns with work on neighboring properties.

Phil Lorenzo, 21 Oak Ridge Lane, on behalf of condominium owners concerning trash reimbursement. He discussed increase in reimbursement for only certain condominium association and its inequities.

Mary Dalton, 21 Southwick Court, spoke in favor of condominium trash reimbursement. She suggested Public Works picking up garbage in order to save City and condo associations money. She stated the association uses the same type of bins as other City residents.

Ald. Anthony Giannattasio, 58 Rosebrook Road, thanked the Mayor for acknowledging October as Italian Heritage month and discussed planned activities for the coming month.

Rob, Unknown Address, discussed businesses in Milford.

3. Consideration of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Aldermen held on September 12, 2022.

Ald. Harla and Ald. Giannattasio made and seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting held on September 12, 2022, as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

4. Consideration of the Minutes of the Special Organizational Meeting.

None.

5. Chairman's Report and Communications

Chairman Vetro stated October is breast cancer awareness month. He reiterated October is Italian heritage month.

6. Mayor's Report and Recommendations

Mayor Blake stated the agenda is very light, he requested the Board's action on item 8a.

7. Unfinished Business

None.

8. New Business (from Mayor's Report Items 8a)

(8a) Ald. Harla and Ald. Giannattasio made and seconded a motion to approve the appointment of (U) Jamil T. Azhari, 178B Seaside Avenue, 06460, as a member of the Board of Health to fill the present vacancy, term to expire 12/31/23.

Ald. Arciuolo stated he has known Jimmy and his wife since he moved into Milford Pharmacy and he is an exceptional persona and welcomes him to the new position.

Motion carried unanimously.

9. New Business not on the Agenda that may be introduced by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of those present and voting.

None.

10. Budget Memo Transfers

None.

11. Refunds

11a. Ald. Harla and Ald. Giannattasio made and seconded a motion to approve refunds in the amount of \$113,851.39. Motion carried unanimously.

12. Report of Standing Committees

a. Ordinance Committee –

12a-1 An Ordinance Repealing Chapter 20. Streets, Sidewalks and Public Places, Article III. Openings and Excavations, Sections 20-59 through 20-82 and Adopting Chapter 20, Streets, Sidewalks and Public Places, Article III, Openings and Excavations, Sections 20-59 through 20-67.

Ald. Parente stated the Ordinance Committee meet earlier this evening and the ordinance was tabled for further review. Ald. Parente stated that the ordinance repeals the current ordinance and provides for significant changes. She stated she feels additional review and comment is required from the Mayor, Public Works Director and Public Works Committee.

b. Public Safety and Welfare Committee – no report.

c. Public Works Committee

Ald. Beatty read from a prepared report concerning important issues and concerns. She discussed concerns with the proposed road opening ordinance and that it should be referred to the Public Works Committee for review and comment.

b. Liaison Sub-Committee – Flood & Erosion Board – no report.

c. Liaison Sub-Committee – Park, Beach & Recreation Comm. – no report.

d. Liaison Sub-Committee – Planning & Zoning Board – no report.

e. Liaison Sub-Committee – Sewer Commission – no report.

f. Liaison Sub-Committee – Harbor Management Commission – no report.

g. Liaison – Council on Aging – no report.

h. Liaison Sub-Committee – Library Board – no report.

i. Liaison Sub-Committee – Veterans Ceremony & Parade Commission – no report

j. Liaison Sub-Committee – Fine Arts – no report

k. Liaison Sub-Committee – Milford Redevelopment & Housing Partnership – no report.

l. Liaison – Golf Course Commission – no report.

m. Liaison – Inland Wetlands Agency – no report.

- n. Liaison – Board of Health – no report.
- o. Liaison – Human Services Commission – no report.
- p. Liaison Sub-Committee – Pension & Retirement Board – no report
- q. Liaison Sub-Committee – Milford Government Access Television (MGAT) – no report.
- r. Liaison – Economic Development Commission – no report.
- s. Liaison Sub-Committee – Milford Arts Council – no report.
- t. Liaison Sub-Committee – Milford Progress, Inc. – no report.
- u. Liaison Sub-Committee – Fire Commission – no report.
- v. Liaison Sub-Committee – Police Commission – no report.
- w. Permanent School Facilities Building Committee – no report.

14. Executive Session. A two-thirds (2/3) vote of those present and voting is required for any item to be considered in executive session. A two-thirds (2/3) vote of those present and voting is required to go into executive session.

(14a) Consideration of settlement of RJ Milford v. City of Milford regarding 1645 Boston Post Road, 51-53 Roses Mill Road.

(14b) Consideration of settlement of Milford Medical Associates v. City of Milford regarding 20, 30, 40 and 50-60 Commerce Park and 215 Cherry Street.

(14c) Consideration of settlement of Costco Wholesale Corp. v. City of Milford regarding 1718 Boston Post Road.

Ald. Vetro stated item 14c has been withdrawn and will not be going forward this evening. He requested a motion to enter into executive session.

Ald. Giannattasio and Ald. Beatty made and seconded a motion to adjourn to Executive Session. Motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Vetro announced those entering Executive Session for items 14(a) and 14(b) would be the full Board of Aldermen, Mayor, City Attorney, Jonathan Berchem, and City Assessor, Marcus Irrek.

The Board adjourned to Executive Session at 8:03 p.m.

Chairman Vetro reconvened the regular meeting at 8:14 p.m.

Ald. Harla and Ald. Giannattasio made and seconded a motion to approve the settlement of RJ Milford v. City of Milford regarding 1645 Boston Post Road, 51-53 Roses Mill Road. Motion carried unanimously.

Ald. Harla and Ald. Beatty made and seconded a motion to approve the settlement of Milford Medical Associates v. City of Milford regarding 20, 30, 40 and 50-60 Commerce Park and 215 Cherry Street. Motion carried unanimously.

Being no further business to discuss, Ald. Giannattasio and Ald. Casey made and seconded a motion to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously.

The Board adjourned at 8:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Toni Jo Weeks", written over a horizontal line.

Toni Jo Weeks
Recording Secretary

Public Works Steering Committee Report

September, 2022

On August 24th, the Public Works Sub Committee met and explored a number of important issues and concerns that emerged from a discussion regarding Public Works operations, resources and manpower.

The committee charged me in my role as chairperson with the task of requesting a meeting with the mayor prior to the next scheduled September PW meeting and before the scheduled Board of Alderman meeting on September 12th.

The director and assistant director of Public Works thought that the resource concerns were a priority that should not wait until after the Labor weekend holiday until the usual B of A meeting date of September 12th. I requested via city email account that the mayor meet with our committee leaving the choice of date open to his availability but he replied that it was not necessary to have a meeting and suggested instead that I call him at any time.

Upon receiving the Board of Alderman packet with agenda for September 12th, I reached out to the mayor to express my reservations about the proposed Public Works ordinance. Specifically, the proposal ordinance had not passed through our PW committee despite our subcommittee being referred to in the ordinance document. The employee directors of the Public Works unit were not aware that an ordinance concerning Public Works was on the agenda for September 12th. They each expressed concerns about the tentative, potential reorganization of responsibilities within the PW department.

This was not only my observation since the lack of clarity was apparent to all including the affected department managers. My perusal

identified a seeming change of organization at the point of service in the description of a roadside project manager. Was this a new position or a newly redesigned position that already existed? Our questions were appropriate and geared to understanding what we were ultimately being asked to approve and we were eager more knowledgeable by better informed others.

Subsequently, the Ordinance Committee posed questions to our subcommittee that we were not in a position to answer. Apparently, this new ordinance proposal skipped three important data points in terms of seeking feedback for review; the Ordinance Committee, the Public Works Committee and the Directors of Public Works . The directors knew of the content changes in regard to the PW department but were unaware of the specific ordinance proposal or the agenda placement. Director Saley had previously made known to myself and the mayor that he was unable to attend the September 12th Board of Alder meeting due to a prior commitment. Likewise, the Ordinance Committee received the ordinance on the agenda in our B of A packets but no specifics, time for review or other documents were provided.

Upon receiving notice of the ordinance as September 12th agenda item, I spoke with the majority leader as well. He owns a commercial business that intersects with paving, road management and distribution of materials and is therefore familiar with the industry standards and procedures. The majority leader indicated that he also had a few probing questions about the new ordinance that he would need to have clarified before approval. Apparently, some of those questions have been answered and modifications do appear in the latest version of the ordinance placed on our agenda for this October 4th, Board of Alderman meeting. This begs the question of just what were we voting on the first time around on September 12th, prior to any changes based on suggestions and prior to any review by the committees of influence?

The mayor stated at the September 12th B of A meeting that the P W ordinance was of some urgency and saved the city considerable sums of money. This was the first time that costs and/or revenue were referred to in relation to the proposed ordinance. The Public Works director, when explicitly asked the next day since he was not present on September 12th, stated that he had no knowledge or information to suggest that the ordinance was an important cost saving or necessary measure. No financial data were provided or discussed in preparation for our ordinance vote.

So, why am I here before you in public testimony? . I do not want the reputation of our collective work together to be marred and I am a team player by nature. I stand here because I have made repeated requests to have more information forthcoming but these have not been heeded.

The Board of Alderman requires adequate resources in the form of time, information, documents in order to prepare to carry out official responsibilities. I have served four terms as an elected official on the Board of Alderman and I take the position seriously. I am very proud of being a part of minding the public purse and of the many remarkable achievements of this mayor, administration and board particularly, our improvements in education, provision of essential services while maintaining low mill rates and taxes. I do not want this reputation to be marred.

This ordinance was handled in a clumsy and heavy-handed manner skirting important channels of communication . I am not here questioning motive; just process with the aim to improve how we operate currently. It is clear that we are in a pattern of essential information ,necessary to perform our duties, being withheld. My concern is that this unyielding response to suggestion is deliberate. Any

witness to the August Board of Alderman meeting understands that there is a call for more transparency in our work together. The administration seems to have doubled down and again placed the Public Works ordinance on the agenda as if the legitimate concerns and positive suggestions had not been brought forward previously.

If this ordinance is important, cost saving and effective for the city, all the more reason why the mayor should be eager to gather our support

I suggest an alternative script..to the mayor for the scenario that has just been executed.

“Chairperson Beatty, I understand that you are requesting additional information so that you can support this Public Works ordinance. Let me attend your Public Works subcommittee meeting so I can provide necessary information and/or documentation as needed. Perhaps, your committee would benefit from an explanation of how monies will be saved so I can provide the financial context during our discussion. I will also suggest to our majority leader and aldermanic chairperson that sufficient time be allotted in caucus to explore any remaining questions and resolve any lingering doubts about the impact from the newly proposed ordinance.”

During our Spring 2022 budget deliberations, the minority delegation indicated that they were feeling marginalized by the super majority held on this board. It is perhaps, an unfortunate fact, that a supermajority can disadvantage the minority group. A discussion among members ensued and it was conceded that only a good deal of robust consensus building can counter such an imbalance. What we did not anticipate is that there might be negative outcomes for the majority delegation when there is a super majority. Have we lost the ability and desire to govern according to best practice or can we merely

count the votes? Is that what has happened in the recent ordinance measures on our board of Alders? Since the votes may exist to pass a measure, is there a disincentive to listening to the legitimate issues raised. The bonus and very welcomed outcome of a super majority must not herald and end to listening and helping one another? We are in this together with talented members but also people new in their role as legislative actors for the city. It is imperative that we share information among ourselves, seek counsel from informed others as necessary and welcome challenges that accompany new learning.

Ellen Russell Beatty

Board of Alders, Public Works Sub Committee Chairperson

October, 4, 2022