

**BOARD OF FINANCE
BUDGET DELIBERATIONS - PROPOSED BUDGET 2016-2017
FEBRUARY 22, 2016**

The Milford Board of Finance held a budget deliberations session on Monday, February 22, 2016 in Conference Room B of the Parsons Complex. Chairman Lema reconvened the budget session at 6:36 p.m.

Board Members Present

Brian A Lema, Chairman
Joseph J. Fitzpatrick, Jr.
Joseph Castignoli
Mickel Montano
Lauren Secondi

Also Present

Mayor Benjamin G. Blake
Peter Erodici, Finance Director

(4193) Public Library - Christine Angeli, Library Director was present for questions/comments. She stated the budget represents less than one half percent increase. She stated those increases are in seasonal/temporary and web base.

No questions.

(4340) Animal Control – Scott Ellingson, Head Animal Control Officer was present for questions/comments. He stated the budget is the same as with the exception of an increase in holiday pay. He stated Mayor Blake recommended a decrease in the training line item. Mr. Ellingson stated whenever possible they take advantage of free training.

Mr. Castignoli asked the types of animals the department picks up.

Mr. Ellington stated primarily dogs and cats; however, they have picked up ferrets, birds, etc, but no wildlife.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked what town they pick up from and how much they are paid.

Mr. Ellington stated Orange, 3 payments yearly.

(4131) Law Department – City Attorney Jonathan D. Berchem was present for questions/comments.

Chairman Lema stated he would recuse himself from this department and the Ethics Commission since he is a partner in the same law firm with Attorney Berchem. He turned the meeting over to Vice Chairman Fitzpatrick.

Attorney Berchem stated the budget is status quo from last year. He stated he made a few cuts in their research accounts. The town hall union contract has expired, so he left contractual wages the same as last year.

(4131) Ethics Commission – City Attorney Jonathan D. Berchem was present for questions/comments. No questions. The line item that is concerning is legal fees, which would cover a hearing.

Mr. Castignoli asked who the members of the committee are.

Attorney Berchem stated they only meet as needed.

Vice Chairman Fitzpatrick turned the meeting over to Chairman Lema.

(4133) Probate Court – Judge Beverly Streit Kefalas was present for questions/comments. Judge Streit Kefalas stated her budget is a flat request from last year. She explained her budget proposes the purchase of a scanner, which is necessary due to requirements of the State concerning live records. This request would get what the staff needs. The goal and anticipation is that records will be available on-line to the public. Judge Streit Kefalas explained they were taken out of funding by the governor, but they are looking to restore a cap back.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked if all fees go to the State.

Judge replied yes. She added workers' comp., payroll, etc is paid through the State.

(4801) Council on Aging – Janice Jackson, Director and Mary Allen Hermosa were present. She stated the department consists of 6 full time employees and 20 part time employees with 8 teachers. She stated their budget represents a 1% increase which equates to just over \$13,000. She read from a prepared statement providing details of lunches, meals on wheels, rides, etc. She stated they are always looking for ways to reduce costs. Ms. Jackson stated there were 1,820 members in 2015. She also pointed out they raised their membership fee to \$15.00 per year. She stated the senior center is also open on Sunday. Ms. Jackson explained they had an increase in their workers compensation due to a fall suffered by an employee.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked where membership fees go.

Ms. Jackson stated fees go to the Council.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about Meals on Wheels and where it comes from.

Ms. Jackson stated the food is prepared by Lindley Caterers and that it is Lifebridge who runs the program.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked why they don't go out to bid.

Ms. Hermosa stated she believed it is a federal program.

Mayor Blake commented regarding a grant for elderly transportation.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked their other sources of income.

Ms. Jackson stated it is through membership fees, United Way and Community Development Block Grant.

(4803) Fine Arts Council – Paige Miglio, Executive Director was present. She stated their request is the same as it has been for a number of years. She spoke of internal shifting in staff and cleaning services and the role of a third part-time person. Ms. Miglio also spoke of a grant recently received which would go towards capital improvements.

Mr. Fitzpatrick commented on the grant job.

(4812) Transit District – Henry Jadach, Executive Director was present for questions/comments. Mr. Jadach stated they have a local fixed bus route service, and their coastal link, van service, service for seniors, and they operate the train station. Mr. Jadach stated \$2.2M would include new buses. He also spoke of the new hub at the Connecticut Post Mall which is working out well. Mr. Jadach stated he is very happy the city is so supportive of the transit district.

Mr. Castignoli asked about the new buses.

Mr. Jadach explained it is a technical process through the State that they piggyback on.

(4807) Regional Mental Health

Mayor Blake stated the city appoints someone to this position, but have not done so as yet.

(4123) Community Development – Julie Nash, Community Development Director was present for questions/comments. She stated the budget is the same as last year, except a request for an upgrade to the computer system.

(4155) Economic Development – Julie Nash, Community Development Director was present for questions/comments. No questions.

4620 Recreation Department - Paul Piscitelli, Jim Garfield, Dan Worroll were present for questions/comments. Mr. Piscitelli stated the budget reflects an overall decrease, although there is an increase in the seasonal/temporary account. He stated with the increase in minimum wage in 1/2016 and is expected to increase again in 2017.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about the projection \$260,000 (Regular Wages)

Mr. Erodici stated it is a typo.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked if they are reimbursed for day camps.

Mr. Piscitelli stated that account is for supplies for camps and bussing. He stated each camp is a paid camp.

Mayor Blake stated his office has received calls about camp starting earlier in light of an earlier end to the school year.

Mr. Piscitelli stated this has been discussed; however an additional \$21,000 would be helpful.

4153 Park & Recreation Commission - Paul Piscitelli and Dan Worroll, Chairman were present for questions/comments. Mr. Piscitelli stated the budget is primarily secretarial fees and a line item for planting trees on the west end of the green.

4811 Borough of Woodmont - Edward Bonessi, Warden and Kit Schmeisser were present for questions/comments. Mr. Bonessi commented the Borough of Woodmont is a municipality within a municipality. He stated they pay their own snow plowing, sand, clean up from storm, pay for police coverage, etc. Mr. Bonessi explained they recoded their expenses to align with the same coding the City uses. He stated the Borough is requesting \$452,000 for projects that have been prioritized. He noted during his tenure as Borough Warden he has endured two hurricanes, several Nor'easters and two blizzards. He continued with an explanation of his handout. The \$10,000 increase proposed by the Mayor is just not enough to get the roads paved. He went on to explain the excel spreadsheet. He also spoke of the long term drainage projects that still need to get done which have been on their list dating back to 1978. He stated the groin is 4 1/2 feet wide and a foot at the widest point. He stated he is asking this Board to increase the funding beyond what the mayor recommended.

Mr. Castignoli asked with the mild winter to date if they would get money back.

Mr. Bonessi replied no.

Mr. Schmeisser stated they look at the past 10 years, as well as the historic storms that have occurred, it is a break even.

Mr. Bonessi added they use Borough reserve funds to pay for public works projects that should not be paid for by Borough taxes.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked the total tax income.

Mr. Bonessi responded \$130,000.

Mr. Schmeisser stated when the Borough was set up in 1903 they were to receive a portion of Milford taxes as a rebate.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked if they go out to bid for paving projects.

Mr. Bonessi stated they have various companies, but they do not go out to bid.

Mr. Fitzpatrick stated his concern is not knowing if the Borough is really getting the best buck for their dollar because they do not go out to bid.

Mr. Castignoli stated last year the Borough received \$220,00, so his question is what didn't they get.

Mr. Schmeisser explained paving projects and the reserve account which in the end is flushed out to pay for a particular project.

Mr. Bonessi added they did a number of groins since the storms.

Mr. Castignoli asked how much is in the Borough reserve fund.

Mr. Schmeisser stated approximately \$135,000.

Mr. Bonessi stated those funds are supposed to use for Borough projects.

Mr. Schmeisser spoke of the work of the work Mr. Bonessi has done during his tenure as Borough Warden.

Chairman Lema stated the Board would stand in recess until Thursday, February 25, 2016.

Mayor Blake stated there would be some adjustments that have come from the governor as well as adjustments from some of the departments for this Board's consideration at that time.

The Board recessed at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen A. Kennedy
Recording Secretary