

**BOARD OF FINANCE
BUDGET DELIBERATIONS – TECHNICAL DISCUSSION
PROPOSED BUDGET 2017-2018
MARCH 2, 2017**

The Milford Board of Finance held a budget deliberations session on Thursday, March 2, 2017 in Conference Room B of the Parsons Complex.

Board Members Present

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

Also Present

Mayor Benjamin G. Blake
Peter Erodici, Finance Director

Chairman Lema reconvened the Board of Finance budget hearings in public session at 6:35 p.m. Chairman Lema stated tonight the Board would have its technical discussion on the proposed budgets for fiscal year 2017-2018. He stated since there were several members of the Board of Education present, he would start with the education budget.

0010 4996 Education Operations

p. 94 Education Operations - Lema asked if any members had any questions, comments.

Mayor Blake interjected when this budget first came out we did not have the State's proposed budget. We have recently learned Milford has received an \$11,000,000 cut to the education budget. He stated he has had numerous discussions with Dr. Feser and members of her staff. He stated until more information is available, it is difficult to have a clear picture.

Chairman Lema stated the city and BOE would have to look at more structural cuts if in fact these cuts do come our way.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked if the \$11,000,000 cut included the teacher pension contributions.

Mayor Blake stated there just is not enough information at this time. A brief discussion ensued as to final date for numbers from the State.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about the \$383,000 cut.

Dr. Feser explained the \$383,000 ECS cut. She stated they have frozen two positions at this time until they have more definitive information.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about the introduction for pathways from last year.

Dr. Feser stated this year the cost is \$23,400 for the robotic kits at the middle schools.

Mr. Castignoli asked Mr. Richetelli had spoken with the police department regarding SROs being absorbed into the police department budget.

Mr. Richetelli stated no change has been made at this time.

Mr. Castignoli asked about the truancy officer which would be part time.

Mr. Burt explained the role of the truancy officer and the importance of confidentiality, thereby the request to have the position be a staff member.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked if salary negotiations were completed.

Mr. Richetelli stated the only negotiations for 2017-2018 is for paraprofessionals. He stated teacher negotiations are completed and included in this budget.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked the percentage of the increase.

Mr. Richetelli stated it was difficult to put an overall number in place. He explained it is not only salary, but also included step increases.

Chairman Lema asked the overall percentage increase.

Mr. Richetelli stated it is 3.1% which includes step increases, as well as wages. He referred the Committee to the Executive Summary, Section IV.

Chairman Lema asked the overall number of employees.

Dr. Feser stated 1,100.

Mr. Richetelli stated that figure did not include coaches, etc.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about projected retirements.

Mr. Richetelli stated they average 18 teaching retirements per year. He stated generally are able to absorb the loss of positions through attrition.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked the project enrollment for next year.

Mr. Richetelli stated the current enrollment is 5,881, with an expected enrollment next year of 5,698.

Mr. Fitzpatrick commented his generally feeling at this point would be that he anticipates a reduction to the budget.

Chairman Lema stated when looking at significant cuts, it comes down to structural reconstruction to achieve the reductions needed.

Mayor Blake pointed out the Board of Education came in with a very conservative number for their budget.

4153 Park Beach and Recreation

Chairman Lema asked about line item 4432 0001 Trees, Shrubs & Lawn.

Mayor Blake explained the plantings are down in conjunction with Milford trees.

4162 Open Space

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked if that is paid out of the Fund 76 account.

Mr. Erodici stated it is paid through the general fund budget. He stated, initially it was paid out of the Fund 40 account.

Chairman Lema asked what bargaining units had not be ratified as yet.

Mr. Erodici stated Police, Fire, Nurses, Dispatchers are still negotiating.

Mayor Blake pointed out that Fire has a tentative agreement.

4210 Finance Department

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked when the next reval would come do.

Mr. Erodici stated it was February 2017.

Mayor Blake added funds are in place for the adjudication of any appeals.

4310 Police Department

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about the position total numbers.

Mr. Erodici stated the dispatchers were put into this department.

4320 Fire Department

Mr. Erodici stated he had a few technical corrections which amount to close to a \$14,000 increase in wages and a small increase in 1/5 fiscal year. He pointed out there are no new positions.

Chairman Lema commented with the closing of the fire stations, he had hoped to see a savings.

Mayor Blake stated Station 5 and Station 6 closed. Station 5 went to the Borough of Woodmont and Station 6 was sold by bid.

4331 Emergency Management

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about the increase in line item 4444 0000 Heating Fuel.

Mayor Blake stated it is primarily for the building on Seeman's Lane.

4360 Lighting, Hydrants, Water

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked the Mayor if the city was still negotiating water charges.

Mayor Blake stated there is a sub-committee that has had discussions, with a formal meeting scheduled in the next few weeks.

4423 Building Maintenance

Chairman Lema asked if the natatorium generates any income.

Mayor Blake replied yes.

4429 General Garage

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about line item 4978 0000 Maintenance Equipment.

Mayor Blake explained it is part of the GPS program and essentially is an accountability tool.

4431 Solid Waste

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about positions.

Mayor Blake stated this year three (3) laborers were eliminated and the remaining nine (9) laborers were reclassified to truck-driver laborer.

4503 Public Debt Service

Mr. Castignoli asked if the increase in this account was due to the recent bonding.

Mayor Blake stated there were some bond refunding previously so that provided a small decrease.

Mr. Erodici added it was offset by completion of projects.

4710 Employee Benefits

Mr. Erodici stated there is one technical correction. Line item 4421 9919 Self Insurance Contribution the new amount is \$11,557,207, with a new sub-total in Employee Benefits of \$23,447,020 and a new Department Total of \$23,470,220. He explained they have been in negotiations with Anthem and were able to bring down the account.

4790 Benefit & Salary Reserve

Mr. Castignoli asked what bargaining units had not settled as yet.

Mr. Erodici stated this is for the contracts that have not settled, police, fire, nurses and dispatchers.

4813 Bridges Healthcare, Inc.

Mr. Castignoli asked about the \$19,600 increase.

Mayor Blake stated this is a transfer from the Health Department for the Young Parent Program.

4826 Boys & Girls Club

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about the \$15,000 increase.

Mayor Blake stated they have expanded their services greatly.

4827 Literacy Volunteers of So. CT

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked if there is an overlap.

Mayor Blake explained that is primarily for adult learning.

4992 Private School Textbook

Mr. Castignoli asked if the amount is by Statute.

Mayor Blake explained it is a formula.

4994 School Debt

Mr. Castignoli asked if that represents some of the recent bonding.

Mr. Erodici stated a portion is for architectural and engineering fees.

4997 Education Health Insurance Contribution

Mr. Erodici stated there is a technical correction in line item 4221 0000 Contribution, Self Insurance Fund for a new sub-total of \$19,017,168 and a new department total of \$19,017,168.

4157 Harbor Management Commission

Mr. Erodici stated he had a minor technical correction in response to Mr. Swift's request. He stated Permits and Fees (see handout)

0010 0000 General Fund Revenue

Mr. Erodici stated there were some minor adjustments and explained the changes. He stated since they still don't have enough information from the State, the figures could change once they learn more from Hartford. He also stated to offset the ECS number, he used the Governor's figure from line item 3643 0001 State Realty - Pequot and (see handout). He stated essentially the numbers are a wash. As we get firm numbers going into the Board of Alderman phase, he will make those adjustments.

Mr. Castignoli asked about the grant for municipal projects which is anticipated to be cut. He asked the impact.

Mr. Erodici stated those monies were used to town aid road repairs for use by default, or if the city received a waiver it could be used for other city projects.

Chairman Lema stated the Board would stand in recess until March 8, 2017.
The Board recessed at 7:59 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen A. Kennedy
Recording Secretary