

**BOARD OF FINANCE  
BUDGET DELIBERATIONS - PROPOSED BUDGET FY 2017-2018  
FEBRUARY 8, 2017**

The Milford Board of Finance held a budget deliberations session on Wednesday, February 8, 2017 in Conference Room B of the Parsons Complex. Chairman Lema reconvened the meeting in public session at 6:32 p.m.

Board Members Present

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

Also Present

Mayor Benjamin G. Blake  
Peter Erodici, Finance Director

Excused: Joseph Castignoli

Chairman Lema stated he wished to re-order the agenda and bring forward the Law Department. He also stated he would be recusing himself from participating in the discussion as the city attorney is also his law partner. Chairman Lema turned the meeting over to Mr. Fitzpatrick.

**(4131) Law Department** - Jonathan Berchem, City Attorney was present for questions/comments. Attorney Berchem stated there were no changes to the budget other than contractual wage adjustments. He stated his department held the line.

**(4131) Ethics Commission** – Jonathan Berchem, City Attorney was present for questions/comments. He stated the budget is identical to last year.

**(4159) Veterans Ceremony** - Tom Flowers, Chairman was present for questions/comments. He stated the bulk of their budget is for the purchase of flags for the veterans graves. Those monies come out of line item 4783 0000.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked if the committee holds monthly meetings.

Mr. Flowers replied yes.

**(4210) Finance Department** – Peter Erodici, Finance Director, Michael Antonicelli, Treasurer, Ariane Swift, Accountant, Daniel Thomas, Assessor and Purchasing Agent Fred Bialka were present.

Mr. Erodici stated he was pleased to announce a new tax collector was recently appointed, Marianne Klinga. He stated she was coming over from the Health Department but has an extensive financial background. He stated he came in with a lean budget as the mayor requested and that they trimmed it where they could. Mr. Erodici stated other than the contractual wage increase the budget is flat. He stated he has some concerns with revaluation. He also spoke about the need for a server that is desperately needed.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about the need for a server.

Mr. Thomas stated the server was compromised and although it has not crashed, it threatens to each week, so the decision was made to purchase a new server to the tune of \$12,000.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about the Deputy Assessor position.

Mr. Thomas stated one does personal property, another does the motor vehicle work and the third does the field work, however they all work as a team.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked if they are all cross-trained.

Mr. Thomas stated they are cross-trained to a degree and that they continue to work on those areas.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about the wage increase.

Mr. Erodici explained it is the 2 1/2 % contractual wage increase and, plus one step increase.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about printing and binding (account 4784 0000) increase.

Mr. Thomas provided an explanation for the increase.

**(4143) Board of Assessment Appeals** – Dan Thomas, Assessor was present for questions/comments. Mr. Thomas stated they do not anticipate as much activity for FY 17/18. He explained overall assessments went down. He also stated they are in their last week of appeals.

**(4215) Management Information Systems (MIS)** – Jean Lasczak, MIS Coordinator was present. She stated her budget is status quo with the exception of software and maintenance fees which went up. She also explained they purchased a piece of equipment which will go off warranty midyear. Ms. Lasczak stated it is a critical piece of equipment and explained its function. She also pointed out they are still on New World and that there was an increase with support there as well. She explained the contractual increases for the various software programs.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked if they would see any refunds.

Ms. Lasczak stated it would depend on timing. She stated she would continue to work with the Finance Director.

**(4121) Mayor's Office** – Mayor Blake was present for questions/comments.

Mayor Blake stated the budget is status quo and almost identical to last year, with the exception contractual wages. He stated he received some disturbing news on the amount of money they city would be losing from the State.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked if the loss was on the city side or if it included the Board of Education.

Mayor Blake stated it would affect both the City and Board of Education. He said it also includes ECS funding which was cut by \$11,000,000.

Mr. Erodici explained the teachers' pension which the State has contributed 100%. He stated the governor has proposed that all cities and towns contribute to that fund.

**(4122) General Expenses** – Mayor Blake was present for questions/comments.

Chairman Lema asked about the elimination of line item 4773 0002 Soccer Fields Rental.

Mayor Blake explained the release of that rental.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about line item 4875 0000 Regional Planning Agency Dues

Mayor Blake explained that line item is for SCROG which the city belongs to.

**(4121) Golf Course (Fund 18)** – Dan Worroll stated he was here tonight for Dick Austin, Chairman, who was unavailable. Mr. Worroll stated the golf course is entering its 20th year of operation and is in great condition. He stated the budget is similar to last year with the exception of dollar amount transfers within line items to cover the water service account.

**(4811) Borough of Woodmont** - Ed Bonessi, Borough Warden was present for questions/comments. He distributed a handout to the Board members regarding the Belmont Street groin which he stated was designed in the 1970's and is failing at this point. He stated this is the last one, but that they need to start looking at what they are going to do with it as far as either repair or cutting it off. Mr. Bonicci stated they were fortunate with regard to snow removal last year and had some savings. He provided the Board with the contract between Mallico Construction and the Borough and went on to explain the numbers. He also provided a list of the contractors they use for various projects in the Borough.

Chairman Lema asked if the new Borough Hall was up and running.

Mr. Bonessi stated it is just about up and running. He also stated they sold their former building and used those monies for a storage building where they house various pieces of equipment.

**(4320) Fire Department** – Chief Douglas Edo, Assistant Chief Gary Baker and Logistics Battalion Chief Anthony Fabrizi were present for questions/comments. Chief Edo stated overall the budget is flat, with the exception of contractual obligations. He stated his concern is with the vacation and relief line items and stated he believes it will be tight. Chief Edo also pointed out a slight increase in line item 4114 0000 Holiday. He stated another concern lies in the Capital Outlays accounts. He questioned line item 4923 0351 which was \$1 and stated he believed that to be a typographical error in that he thought it should be \$1,000. Also, changes to line item 4942 0254 Life packs.

Chairman Lema asked if the department have seen any savings with the closing of the two buildings.

Chief Edo stated they are basically even.

Mr. Erodici stated according to his notes, line item 4923 0351 is \$1.

Mayor Blake stated the rationale is that there is the reserve account for the EMS account.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about the rescue vehicles.

Mayor Blake stated they have three licenses. He stated they have gone out to bid with Nelson and Access. Mayor Blake explained Milford handles all of the ALS calls and the BLS calls are handled by Access or Nelson.

Chairman Lema asked approximately what the department anticipated garnering as far as income from rescue calls.

Chief Edo stated the change over occurred in October, so they don't have finite numbers as yet.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked if there is overtime for battalion chiefs, captains and lieutenants.

Chief Edo replied yes.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about line item 4206 0000, Terminal Leave Pay which was \$0 last year increased this year.

Mr. Peter explained those funds are used for retirements, and that it is anticipated there could be a few in the new fiscal year.

**(4331) Emergency Management** (formerly Civil Preparedness) – Chief Douglas Edo was present for questions/comments. Chief Edo explained is a flat charge with no change from last year.

**(4805) CMED** - Chief Douglas Edo was present for question for questions/comments. Chief Edo explained the formula for the calculations which is based on a per capita charge.

**(4360) Lighting, Hydrants, Water** – Chief Douglas Edo was present for questions/comments. Chief Edo explained this account essentially pays the bills.

Chairman Lema asked if discussions had taken place with the Regional Water Authority.

Mayor Blake stated a sub-committee has been formed to conduct a study. He stated it has been an issue and the subject comes up regularly. Mayor Blake stated Milford is disproportionately charged, adding Milford has well over 100 hydrants. He added Milford has pushed back with other utilities, but have not been successful with the water company, but will continue their efforts.

**(4420) Public Works Office** - Chris Saley, Public Works Director was present for questions/comments.

None.

**(4421) Highway/Parks Division** – Chris Saley, Public Works Director was present for questions/comments.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about line item 4515 0000 Road & Drain Maintenance.

Director Saley explained that line item is used for maintenance on town roads. He also spoke of the importance of keeping up with the infrastructure, which he stated is so very critical.

Chairman Lema asked about line item 4979 0405 Dump Truck/Sander/Plow

Mayor Blake explained this line item is part of the city's vehicle acquisition program. He added there are other sources that are available.

Director Saley stated the amount of, \$380,000 is for two trucks. He stated they currently have 21 trucks.

**(4423) Building Maintenance** – Chris Saley, Public Works Director was present for questions/comments.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked if there is a difference in pay for night versus day custodians.

Director Saley stated it is a differential.

Mr. Erodici stated the shift differential could be found on p. 68 of the budget book.

**(4424) Engineering** – Chris Saley, Public Works Director was present for questions/comments.

No questions.

**(4429) General Garage** – Chris Saley, Public Works Director was present for questions/comments.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about line item 4978 0000 Maintenance Equipment and inquired about the increase from \$0 to \$10,000.

Director Saley explained the funds are for a GPS subscription.

Mayor Blake added they are in the first year of the subscription, but the second year, is halfway into the fiscal year, so it is 6 months.

Director Saley referred to line item 4335 0000 Equipment Supply & Upkeep. He stated it is a line item the department has struggled with, mainly due to the age of the fleet.

**(4431) Solid Waste Operations** – Chris Saley, Public Works Director was present for questions/comments.

Mayor Blake explained this department has been reduced by five positions.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked how many vacancies there were in the department.

Director Saley responded there are four.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about the Truck Driver-Laborer position

Director Saley stated there are no laborer positions and explained they were all upgraded to truck drivers.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about the wages increase.

Mr. Erodici explained it is a contractual wage increase

**(4426) Wastewater** – Chris Saley, Public Works Director was present for questions/comments.

Chairman Lema asked about nitrogen credits.

Director Saley stated he believed they are on pace for approximately \$100,000, but pointed out the State has made some cuts. He stated he wanted to note for the record the team at Wastewater who do a great job.

**(4154) Sewer Commission (Fund 12)** – Chris Saley, Public Works Director was present for questions/comments.

No questions.

**(4503) Public Debit Service**

Chairman Lema asked if there would be any bond refunding.

Mr. Erodici replied no.

Mayor Blake pointed out that last year there was a reduction in the debt service

**(4994) School Debt Service** – no questions.

**(4995) Employee benefits, Non-teaching** – no questions.

**(4710) Employee Benefits, General**

Chairman Lema asked about the increase in line item 4211 9905 Pension: Fire/Police/General.

Mr. Erodici explained the number reflects a 15% increase over last year.

Chairman Lema asked if the trend will continue to increase.

Mr. Erodici explained the pension funding policy over the years.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about line item 4209 0000 State Survivors Fund.

Mr. Erodici explained it is only for police and fire and went on to explain how the fund is administered.

**(4720) Insurance and Bonds** – no questions.

**(4740) Claims & Refunds**

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about line item 4840 0000 Heart & Hypertension Claims and if the number has gone down.

Mr. Erodici stated it has decreased slightly.

**(4790) Benefit & Salary Reserve**

Mr. Erodici explained this account is for pending contracts who have not settled.

**(4799) Unallocated Contingency** – no questions.

**(4993) Education Audit** – no questions.

**(4997) Education Health Insurance Contribution** – no questions.

Chairman Lema stated the Board would stand in recess until next Monday, February 13, 2017. The Board recessed at 8:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen A. Kennedy  
Recording Secretary