

**BOARD OF FINANCE  
BUDGET DELIBERATIONS - PROPOSED BUDGET FY 2014-2015  
FEBRUARY 12, 2014**

The Milford Board of Finance held a budget deliberations session on Wednesday February 12, 2014 in Conference Room B of the Parsons Complex. Vice Chairman Marlow reconvened the meeting in public session at 6:32 p.m.

Board Members Present

Scott Marlow, Vice Chairman  
Joseph J. Fitzpatrick, Jr.  
Mikel Montano  
Joseph Castignoli

Also Present

Mayor Benjamin G. Blake  
Peter Erodici, Finance Director

Excused: Brian Lema

Vice Chairman Marlow stated he would re-order the agenda to bring forward the Mayor's budget (4121) followed by General Expenses (4122).

**(4121) Mayor's Office** – Mayor Blake stated the budget is substantially the same as last year, with no changes other than a 2% contractual wage adjustment.

**(4122) General Expenses** – Mayor Blake stated he would be happy to answer any questions.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about line item 4140 0001 Personal Property Audit.

Mayor Blake stated they receive what is collected. He stated they are in the fourth year of the contract and explained the contract with the company.

Mr. Castignoli asked if it is based on contingency.

Mr. Thomas replied yes.

Mayor Blake addressed one potential change in this account. He referred to line item 4773 0002 Soccer Fields Rental and stated if the project for the two turf fields goes through, this amount would change. Mayor Blake stated based on the recent bonding package, this item would be removed once a contract is in place concerning the two turf fields.

Mr. Marlow asked if there is a yearly renewal on the current contract.

Mayor Blake stated there is another 7 years left, however, they would re-negotiate a new contract which will be \$1.



**(4210) Finance Department** – Peter Erodici, Finance Director, Ariane Swift, Accountant, Daniel Thomas, Assessor and Judy Haley, Tax Office were present. Mr. Erodici stated this budget has remained flat. He stated the only increase is in regular wages, which is a contractual 2% increase. He spoke of the need of an accountant which has been brought to this Board previously and approved. Mr. Erodici stated nothing has changed with regard to the need for an accountant 1 position, if anything the need is now greater. He deferred to Ms. Swift for a different perspective.

Ms. Swift stated the need and level of support is even greater than before. She stated with the Affordance Care Act, Gasby and numerous other mandates, the need for support is increased greatly. She stated they currently administer 60 insurance groups, also processed through the accounting department is benefits administration, employees and retiree questions, cost share and medicare, to name a few. Ms. Swift stated this department also supports the risk manager and workers compensation clerk. She stated by far the greatest challenge is the Affordable Care Act and its numerous mandates. She also stated they manually calculate the tax forms which go out to the city employees. She stated various compliance provisions continue to come their way. Ms. Swift also stated the Accounting Department produces over 350 invoices per week. She stated they also serve as liaison for the AS400 system. She stated the bottom line is they need help, adding that federal and state regulations keep increasing. She implored the Board to consider their request.

Mr. Erodici reminded the Board that the request for this position was substantiated and approved by both the Board of Finance and Board of Aldermen previously, but the position was then removed before it could be filled. He expressed concern one of the departments could miss something and be held responsible. He thanked the Board for listening to his concerns.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked if they do any outsourcing.

Mr. Erodici stated there is a part of GASBY 34 that deals with capital assets that they receive help from the former city accountant.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about the computer software that was deleted from the budget.

Mr. Thomas stated that was for the Assessor's Office for processing benefits for the elderly and veterans. He went on to explain the application process.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked how many residents this impacts.

Mr. Thomas replied 2,600.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about the other computer in the budget that was requested.

Mrs. Haley stated that was for the Tax Office. She explained the process for switching over computers every few years. She stated one of the computers in their office is so slow and it loses data. She stated they did not get a computer during the last cycle and they are now overdue. She also explained the Walsh Tax Program.

Mr. Thomas referred to line item 4752 0000 Revaluation Operations and explained rather than ask for it all at once, they ask for it gradually.



Mr. Erodicti addressed the accounts in Capital Outlays and explained the importance of their software to minimize errors. He stated there are many areas where they are handwriting by pen. He stated this would be a tremendous help to Dan's staff.

**(4143) Board of Assessment Appeals** – Mr. Dan Thomas was present for questions/comments. Mr. Thomas stated the budget is the same as last year and also pointed out it is a non-reval year.

**(4215) Management Information Systems (MIS)** – Jean Lasczak, MIS Coordinator was present. Ms. Lasczak stated here budget is the same as last year with the exception of Capital Outlays, which she stated changes from year to year.

Mr. Marlow asked about the PC/LAN Coordinator.

Ms. Lasczak stated she asks every year for an additional coordinator. She explained LAN is a Local Area Network and WAN is Wide Area Network and explained the work of that position, adding it is a very busy position. She also reminded the Board that one person splits time between the police and fire departments, but that it has become very difficult in past years due to the complexity of the applications. She explained at length the work done in each department and the numerous applications for each department. She also stated the integrity and stability of those data bases is extremely important.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about line item 4796 0000 Software & Maintenance and the large increase.

Ms. Lasczak stated the increase is due to contractual obligations due to each vendor's license. She cited as an example Vision ware, where they pay a licensing fee for that program.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about line item 4977 0123 Computer Hardware reduced to \$0 from \$13,397.

Ms. Lasczak explained that was for a second barracuda web filter.

**(4121) Golf Commission** – Vice Chairman Marlow stated Mr. Austin was unavailable, but if anyone had any questions, they could contact him.

**(4811) Borough of Woodmont** – Vice Chairman Marlow reported Mr. Bonessi had called and was away on business and that Mr. Schmeisser would be attending, but was running late. Vice Chairman Marlow stated they would take up this account when Mr. Schmeisser arrived.

**(4320) Fire Department** – Chief Douglas Edo and Administrative Battalion Chief Ronald Wetmore were present for questions comments. Chief Edo stated the Mayor asked them to hold the line and they did just that. He stated the only difference is contractual wages which are up 2.25%.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about line item 4923 0351 EMS Equipment.

Chief Edo explained that is part of their ongoing replacement cycle of paramedic equipment, such as defibrillator's. He noted the cost of the equipment is up.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked if it is additional equipment or cost.



Chief Edo stated it is the cost of the equipment, adding they try to replace at least one piece each year.

Mr. Marlow asked about line item 4203 9941 Educational Supplement.

Chief Edo stated that is a contractual item. He explained any firefighter that has a fire degree or fire related degree receives a stipend.

Mr. Marlow asked if it is a yearly stipend.

Chief Edo replied yes.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about line item 4227 0350 Fire Station Improvements.

Chief Edo stated it is for the fire station on Naugatuck Avenue which is coming on 18 years old. He stated he would like to do some replacement/repairs and stay ahead.

Ms. Montano asked about line item 4971 0000 Vehicle and Equipment that was reduce to \$8,000 from \$26,000.

Chief Edo stated they had hoped to replace one of their vehicles.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about line item 4776 0000 Telephone System which seemed high.

Chief Edo stated these are the same costs each year associated with each of the station houses.

Mr. Erodici also pointed out there is a Fund 76 for the 911 PSAP. He explained it is funding from the State that goes to offset the operational costs of the PSAP center.

Mr. Marlow asked about the Communications/Technology Supervisor that was requested.

Chief Edo stated the department shares a technology person with the police department so that person is only available to the department two plus days a week. He stated as did Ms. Lasczak early in the evening that the needs of the department are increasing and there have been time when they need that person but he is at the police department.

**(4331) Civil Preparedness** – Chief Douglas Edo and Administrative Battalion Chief Ronald Wetmore were present for questions comments. Chief Edo stated the budget is the same as last year.

Mr. Marlow asked about line item 4944 0216 Early Warning System.

Chief Edo stated this is for equipment repairs and replacement of parts. He explained there was a motor vehicle accident and the pole was hit and the equipment was damaged in the incident.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about line item 4117 0000 Seasonal/Temporary and the significant increase.



Chief Edo stated that is for the Deputy EMD position. He stated he is the EMD Director, but they found after Storms Irene and Sandy that the additional help was needed.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about line item 4712 0000 Training Expenses and what that entailed.

Chief Edo explained the department would like to have an additional EMT SWAT medic. He went on to explain the importance and the value of that position to the department and the city.

**(4360) Lighting, Hydrants, Water** – Chief Douglas Edo and Administrative Battalion Chief Ronald Wetmore were present for questions comments. Chief Edo stated this account basically pays for the rental of the hydrants. He stated they have questioned the amount with the Regional Water Company.

**(4805) CMED** - Chief Douglas Edo and Administrative Battalion Chief Ronald Wetmore were present for questions comments.

Mr. Erodici stated this account was left basically flat. He asked Chief Edo to keep him and the Board informed of any changes.

Chief Edo stated they meet on a quarterly basis and that he would check at the next meeting.

**(4426) Wastewater**

**(4420) Public Works Office**

**(4421) Highway/Parks**

**(4423) Building Maintenance**

**(4429) General Garage**

**(4431) Solid Waste Operations**

Mr. Erodici stated he would speak with the Mayor and Mr. Tomasco regarding the Public Works Departments. He suggested they might have to move the above departments (4426, 4420, 4421, 4423, 4429, 4431) to February 24, 2014.

**(4424) Engineering** - Robin Lynch, Administrative Assistant was present for questions.

Mr. Marlow noted a city engineer is now in place.

Ms. Lynch replied yes. She stated he has been with the city for about 3 ½ years. She stated he is involved with the drainage projects and hazardous mitigation. She stated he also works with Call Before You Dig and he also provides support to the Public Works Department.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked if all other positions are now filled.



Ms. Lynch replied no. She stated the Engineering Tech position is not filled because he was promoted to the Chief Inspector position. She stated to her knowledge they are not currently filling that position due to a hiring freeze.

Mr. Marlow asked about line item 4189 0000 Professional Fees and Services.

Ms. Lynch stated that is part of the GPS System.

Mr. Castignoli asked about line item 4977 0123 Computer Hardware.

Ms. Lynch stated their current processing unit freezes and the hardware needs replacing.

**(4154) Sewer Commission (Fund 12)** - Robin Lynch, Administrative Assistant was present for questions. Ms. Lynch provided the Board with an update on existing projects.

Mr. Marlow asked about the overtime account.

Ms. Lynch explained she is paid 10 hours a week from that account for her work with the Sewer Commission.

Mr. Fitzpatrick noted on the revenue side that the sewer use fee is down \$300,000.

Mr. Erodici stated that number is driven by expenditures.

**(4811) Borough of Woodmont** –Mr. Schmeisser, Burgess from the Borough of Woodmont was present for questions/comments. He provided the Board with a handout. He asked the Board to continue the same level of funding for the Borough. He continued with an in-depth explanation of the operations of the Borough of Woodmont. He noted with the number of snow storms this year they will have less in their budget because of snow removal. He stated the major costs of the Borough are lighting, snowplowing and street work, which in total costs about \$170,000. Mr. Schmeisser also spoke about Storm Sandy costs and stated they recently found out there are costs they may not be reimbursed for.

**(4502) Equipment Reserve Allocation** – Mr. Erodici stated this was to be removed from the agenda.

**(4503) Public Debit Service** – Mr. Erodici commented this account is the bulk of the debt service.

**(4994) School Debt Service** – Mr. Erodici stated this account represents all of the school projects. He pointed out it is up slightly due to the East Shore Middle School project.

**(4995) Employee benefits, Non-teaching**

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked Mr. Erodici if he knows the number of people this entails.

Mr. Erodici stated the accountant for the Board of Education calculated the figures for this account. He stated it includes coaches, administrators, paraprofessionals, custodians and cafeteria works.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked how the number is verified.



Mr. Erodici explained the Board of Education's accounting manager certifies it to the Finance Department.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked if the auditors verify the numbers as well.

Mr. Erodici replied yes.

**(4710) Employee Benefits, General** – Mr. Erodici stated he discussed this account with the Mayor and that they agreed to keep it as is.

Mr. Marlow asked about line item 4211 9905 Pension: Fire/Police/General.

Mr. Erodici stated the bulk of this account is fire and police. He stated going forward they will have a position amount in that line item.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about line item 4209 0000 State Survivor's Fund.

Mr. Erodici explained it is an existing benefit where the City funds police and fire on a percentage basis. He noted a slight uptick and explained.

Mr. Castignoli asked about actual expenditures to police and fire.

Mr. Erodici stated the year ended June 30, 2013 with the total at that time as \$21.3M. He went on to explain benefits and how they flow out of the trust fund. He also spoke of the significant changes in pensions.

Mr. Castignoli asked about line item 4211 9905 Pension: Fire/Police/General.

Mr. Erodici explained the number is from the actuaries.

#### **(4720) Insurance and Bonds**

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about line item 4823 0000 General & Auto Liability and asked why it is down.

Mr. Erodici explained that is the annual funding that goes into the Fund 17. He stated the City is now fully insured with CIRMA and this account represents funding of the premium. He noted runoff claims are down to one or two.

#### **(4740) Claims & Refunds**

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about line item 4840 0000 Heart & Hypertension Claims. He noted the account is down and asked if that was due to retirements.

Mr. Erodici stated there is a cutoff date from new hires. He stated the City continues to fund those existing for their lifetime, including medication.



**(4790) Benefit & Salary Reserve** – Mr. Erodici stated there are two pending contracts, Milford Employees Association (MEA) and Milford City Hall Employees Association.

**(4799) Unallocated Contingency** –

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked if this account can be increased during the year.

Mr. Erodici state this account is used for transfers out of the budget for accounts that may fall short during the fiscal year.

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

**(4997) Education Health Insurance Contribution**

Mr. Castignoli asked how this figure is arrived at.

Mr. Erodici explained the healthcare consultants, along with the data they receive is calculated. He stated it is driven from claims numbers. He pointed out the City continues to ask for updated numbers.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked if the Affordable Care Act (ACA) would impact this account.

Mr. Erodici explained ACA is charging employees a fee to basically fund the exchanges of this and that it went into effect January 1, 2014. Mr. Erodici stated it is an assessed fee which is projected to be around \$300,000 and is federally mandated.

Being no further budget business, the Board recessed at 8:51 p.m. Vice Chairman Marlow stated this Board would reconvene budget deliberations on Thursday, February 20, 2014, at which time the Board of Education would present.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen K. Huber  
Recording Secretary