

**BOARD OF FINANCE
BUDGET HEARINGS - PROPOSED BUDGET FY2017-2018
FEBRUARY13, 2017**

The Board of Finance held a budget deliberations session on Monday, February 13, 2017, in Conference Room B of the Parsons Complex. Chairman Lema announced the Board was out of recess and reconvened the budget deliberations meeting in public session at 6:35 p.m.

Board Members Present

Brian Lema, Chairman
Joseph J. Fitzpatrick, Jr.
Mickel Montano
Laureen Secondi

Also Present

Mayor Benjamin G. Blake
Peter Erodici, Finance Director

Excused: Joseph Castignoli

(4825) Beth El Shelter – Mrs. Toni Dolan, Executive Director, Attorney Max Case and Suzanne Lapine, Chairman of the Board were present to answer questions/comments. Mrs. Dolan thanked Milford for all of the support over the years. She distributed packets for their most recently approved budget. Mrs. Dolan stated they are projecting a deficit this year. She spoke of the cuts from the State last year that impacted them in excess of \$60,000. She also commented in light of the governor's proposed budget, they just don't know what to expect. Mrs. Dolan stated they continue to provide more services with less money. She continued with an explanation of the services they provide including outreach, etc. She stated their staffing remains the same. Mrs. Dolan continued with the overview of the department and spoke of their per diem employees (9) which cover the evening shifts. She explained the no-freeze shelter and the protocol for winter shelter which is mandated by the governor, but no longer funded. She stated the soup kitchen is open 7 days a week and that they have served 26,676 meals between lunch and dinner and weekends. Mrs. Dolan stated the City's grant represents 12% of their budget, and that they are requesting a slight increase this year to cover the projected deficit and unfunded mandates.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked Mrs. Dolan if she knew where or what the cuts would be.

Mrs. Dolan stated she just did not know at this point, that it was too early in the State budget process. She gave kudos to their Board who cover many of their events.

(4112) Elections – Mrs. Keri Rowland, Mrs. Debra Fellenbaum, Registrars and Joanne Rohrig, City Clerk were present for questions/comment.

Mrs. Rowland explained the elections account pays for everything related to elections. She stated they are just coming off the presidential elections. She also spoke of the number of individuals that registered to vote this year. She spoke of the poll workers and the 175 poll workers which were used prior to the election and on Election Day. Mrs. Rowland stated the amount requested this year is slightly less since there is no presidential election. She also spoke of the number of State mandates that come with no funding.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked how the cuts would impact their budget.

Mrs. Rowland stated it would likely be a general cut. Secretary of State is pushing for early voting. If that occurs she stated they could exceed the budget.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked why.

Mrs. Rowland explained it would be for staffing, absentee ballots, etc.

(4115) Registrar of Voters – Mrs. Keri Rowland and Mrs. Debra Fellenbaum, Deputy Registrar were present for questions/comments.

Mrs. Rowland stated she would be remiss if she did not acknowledge their staff. She stated they can work as much as 20 hours on Election Day. She stated she wished to publicly thank them.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about salaries.

Mrs. Rowland and Mrs. Rohrig both responded there is some crossover.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about the seasonal temporary.

Mrs. Rowland stated there are two seasonal temporary workers who work 18 hours a week, and more on Election Day.

(4129) City Clerk – Mrs. Joanne Rohrig, City Clerk was present for questions/comment.

Mrs. Rohrig stated some line items increased slightly while others went down.

Chairman Lema asked about advertising 4771 0000 which she pointed out was reduced from last year.

Mrs. Rohrig stated she moved some of those funds to seasonal temporary property.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about 4778 0000 Indexing/Recording and if everything is digital.

Mrs. Rohrig replied most of it is and went on to explain the system being used.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about line item 4980 0601.

Mayor Blake stated he is working with building maintenance department to provide security enhancements in that corridor which would include the tax office, assessor's office, etc.

(4826) Boys & Girls' Club – Mrs. Megan Altomare was present to answer questions/comments. Mrs. Altomare stated the club is now serving over 300 kids. She stated they added a summer camp this past year which was very successful, with a waiting list. Mrs. Altomare stated they now offer transportation from four schools (JFK, Mathewson, Pumpkin Delight and Calf Pen). She stated it has increased costs somewhat, but the value and service outweigh the costs.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about contributions.

Mrs. Altomare stated they received some funds from individuals, corporations, as well as grants and fundraising. She stated they also generate a small amount of revenue from their membership fees.

Mr. Fitzpatrick thanked her for the good work the club does.

(4610) Health Department – Ms. Deepa Joseph, Health Director was present for questions/comments. Ms. Joseph provided the Board with a handout which she stated provides a snapshot of the work of the department. She continued with an explanation of the handout. She stated they also pursue grants whenever possible.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked the percentage of grants they receive from the State.

Ms. Joseph stated she would estimate 80%. She stated they are hearing they are likely to receive a 10% cut, but that amount has not been confirmed. Ms. Joseph pointed out in her budget there is a reduction of line item 4189 00 Misc. Professional Fees. She explained the Young Parent Program would not be administered through Bridges.

Chairman Lema asked the increase in that line item.

Ms. Joseph referenced line item 4117 0000 Seasonal/temporary which from reduced to \$5,000 from \$25,000. She stated the difference went into misc. professional fees.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked if the salary increases were contractual.

Ms. Joseph replied yes.

(4998) Education Health Services/School Nurses – Ms. Deepa Joseph was present for questions/comments. Ms. Joseph reported the budget is flat aside from contractual adjustments.

Chairman Lema asked about 4131 0000 Medical & Dental

Ms. Joseph explained that line item is the cost for their substitute nurses when someone is out.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked if substitute nurses are paid the same amount as regular nurses.

Ms. Joseph stated the substitute nurses are paid less.

Chairman Lema asked about line item 4117 02000 Seasonal/temporary.

Ms. Joseph explained it is used for just that, seasonal help.

(4821) Visiting Nurse Association – Ms. Deepa Joseph was present for questions/comments. Ms. Joseph stated they have a medical contractor who works with them. She explained at one time supported by visiting nurses. She stated they provide 40 exams at \$300 each.

(4817) Human Services Department – Ms. Deepa Joseph was present for questions/comments. Ms. Joseph distributed a handout providing an overview of the Human Services Department and their work. She stated she has been working with the department for just over 6 months and continued with an explanation of the handout.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about clinical services and treatment services. He asked if they overlap with Bridges.

Ms. Joseph replied no. She stated they work hard to make sure there is no duplication of services. She stated they are one of their partnering agencies.

(4111) Board of Aldermen – Mayor Blake stated the budget is the same as last year and that it reflects secretarial fees for various aldermanic meetings, public works, etc.

(4141) Board of Finance – Mayor Blake noted the budget is the same as the previous year and provides secretarial fees.

(4146) Flood & Erosion Board – Mayor Blake stated that Board has been very busy over the last 5 years with the two major storms, coastal resiliency, FEMA grants, etc.

(4147) Tree Commission – Mayor Blake reported this account is status quo. He stated the Tree Commission has been working with the public works department and Milford Trees. Mayor Blake stated the commission strives for that perfect balance.

(4156) Conservation Commission – Steve Johnson, Open Space and Natural Resource Agent and Janet MacAllister were present for questions/comments. He stated the budget is flat and went on to explain their work, which includes advising on open space and making recommendations to the Planning and Zoning Board. He stated he serves as a liaison for this Commission. He stated it is a 9 member Commission and that the bulk of their budget is training expenses. He provided the Board with an overview of some of their projects.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked if there are secretarial fees.

Mr. Johnson stated commission does have monthly meetings and as staff liaison he acts as the secretary, which provides them with the opportunity to allocate funds elsewhere.

(4162) Open Space - Steve Johnson, Open Space Agent was present for questions/comments. Mr. Johnson thanked the Board for their support and stated it is much appreciated. He provided the Board with an overview of the position and the fabric of Milford and the importance of maintaining Milford's open space. He stated he essentially serves as a resource for the city, reaching out to various groups, etc. He also spoke of this work seeking out grants for various projects.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked the Finance Director where expenses could be found in the budget for this account.

Mr. Erodici stated it is in the Fund 76 account.

Mr. Johnson continued with an overview of work of the open space agent.

(4813) Bridges - Barbara DiMauro, President and CEO and Jennifer Fiorello, Chief of Business Operations, who oversees the financial operations, were present for questions/comments. Ms. DiMauro provided the Board with an overview of the services they provide at Bridges. She stated they are also focusing attention on the opid epidemic, where they are seeing increases in overdoes, etc. Ms. DiMauro stated they also received a small grant from the State.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about the opid epidemic and if they track the doctors who are prescribing these types of prescriptions.

Ms. DiMauro stated they do track physicians and explained they are required to track the use of the medication. She also stated they are a Narcon provider and that their case workers have been trained to detect overdoes.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about the \$1,700 increase in the budget.

Mayor Blake stated that is the Young Parents program that is now being administered by Bridges.

(4815) Veterans Grave Preservation Commission – no questions.

(4816) Milford Flotilla 73 - Francine Golillo, stated the Flotilla has been supporting Milford for over 60 years and continued with an explanation of their work, which she stated now includes teaching students how to read charts, compasses, etc. She stated they are very proud of their collaboration with the Milford Public Schools and that they are going national with their program. She stated Flotilla is 100% volunteer. Ms. Golillo stated the Flotilla still teaches boating safety, and that they charge a small fee and upon completion those individuals can obtain their license.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked if they receive any other funding.

Ms. Golillo replied no. The only funding they receive is from the nominal fee they charge for the boating courses.

(4818) – Milford Historic District – No questions

(4820) – Milford Historic District II – No questions.

(4822) Cemetery Association – Mr. Jim Beard, member of the Board of Directors was present for questions. He commented traditional burials are down somewhat. He also spoke about the wall at the back of the property.

(4620) Recreation Department – Mr. Paul Piscitelli, Recreation Director was present for questions/comments. Mr. Piscitelli stated the minimum wage proposals are coming up again. He stated in the past few years they have been able to survive the increases, but they are now at the breaking point. He stated they spend 80% of the seasonal/temporary budget in the summer. He stated it is likely he will need to come back to this Board for an increase down the road. He stated otherwise, his overall budget is flat, with the exception of contractual items.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked the number of seasonal/temporary staff.

Mr. Piscitelli replied about 200.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about the new fields on Orange Avenue.

Mr. Piscitelli stated they are nearing completion and the expectation is that they will be used for a variety of sports such as lacrosse, soccer, football, and likely field hockey in the future.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about the lights at the tennis courts.

Mr. Piscitelli stated they are replacing the lights at 8 courts. He stated they are not LED, but they would like to change them at some point.

(4153) Park, Beach and Recreation Commission – Mr. Paul Piscitelli was present for questions/comments. Director Piscitelli stated the account funds secretarial fees for the monthly meetings.

(4157) Harbor Management Commission (Fund 36) – Ray Swift, Operations Director was present for questions/comments. Mr. Swift stated the budget is the same and that they are very conscious of what they spend.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about line item 4990 0501 Furniture Fixture Equipment.

Mr. Swift stated they are looking to replace the furniture on the landing patio. He stated the patio work was completed this past year and that he was looking to replace the old, worn tables and chairs. Mr. Swift stated one of their largest expenses is insurance, which has increased dramatically.

Mr. Erodici stated there has been an increase each year and also there had been a deficit which is almost gone, which will likely help.

Mayor Blake asked Mr. Erodici to look at the insurance in preparation for the Harbor Commission's presentation to the Board of Aldermen.

Chairman Lema stated the Board would stand in recess until February 15, 2017 at which time they would hear from the Board of Education.

The Board recessed at 8:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen A. Kennedy
Recording Secretary