

**BOARD OF FINANCE
BUDGET HEARINGS - PROPOSED BUDGET FY2018-2019
FEBRUARY 21, 2018**

The Board of Finance held a budget deliberations session on Wednesday, February 21, 2018, 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 5:35 p.m.

Board Members Present

Brian Lema, Chairman
Joseph J. Fitzpatrick, Jr.
Joseph Castignoli
Lauren Secondi
Scott Moulton

Also Present

Mayor Benjamin G. Blake
Peter Erodici, Finance Director

Chairman Lema stated they would start with the accounts that were held over from the February 12, 2018 budget hearing.

(4811) Borough of Woodmont - Mr. Ed Bonessi was present to answer questions/comments. He distributed a handout to the Board, which included the Malico Construction contract which he proceeded to review with the Board. He stated they are asking for a 1.3% increase. He stated they are already over in their budget and will have another deficit. He cited snow plowing costs.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked the total income from borough residents.

Mr. Bonessi stated there are two budgets. He stated they pay the city approximately \$5.2M in taxes and that they negotiate with the city. He stated they also pay their own lights and beach cleaning. He stated they are thankful to Mayor Blake for his assistance with the elevation surveys. He stated Borough residents pay .85 mil, which is approximately \$133.00. He added that pays for the police vehicle.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked the Borough's total expenses per year.

Mr. Bonessi replied over \$245,000 each year, commenting it's a bargain.

(4420) Public Works Office - Chris Saley, Public Works Director was present for questions/comments. He stated the budget is flat and explained the realignment of some positions

Mr. Castignoli asked about the Assistant Public Works director and questioned the increase.

Director Saley stated it is contractual and follows MSA.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked for further explanation on the Assistant Public Works position.

Mayor Blake explained the city has had a hiring freeze in place for some time. He stated that position is a position that is still open. He went on to explain the step increase.

Mr. Erodici explained the increase reflects the contractual 2.5% increase.

Mayor Blake stated it is equivalent to a building superintendent position. He also pointed out it is a non-union position.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked if and when the position is filled what level it would be filled at.

Mayor Blake stated it would likely be at Step 1.

Mr. Castignoli suggested the position be shown in the budget book at the actual amount.

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

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about line item 4521 0000 Asphalt.

Director Saley explained that account is used for patchwork and minor repairs.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked how many positions were vacant.

Director Saley stated there are 26 vacant positions across the department. He stated in highway/parks there are 4.

Mr. Fitzpatrick stated he question regarding rages is similar to an earlier question regarding the rate of pay a new employee would start at.

Director Saley stated they would come in at minimum.

Mr. Erodici stated some are at a higher rate, but if a new employee starts at a lower rate those funds would go to the fund balance.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about the Property Upkeep accounts and if those were contractual.

Mayor Blake explained there are times when they hire outside contractors. He cited street sweepers as an example.

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

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about the custodian positions and how many there were in total.

Director Saley explained the difference between a night and day custodian and their responsibilities.

Mr. Moulton asked how many buildings they oversee in total.

Mayor Blake stated it is essentially all city buildings, with the exception of the Fire Department who does their own. He stated there are also buildings at the parks, behind the library, natatorium, Stern Hall, etc.

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

Chairman Lema asked if all positions were filed.

Director Saley stated there is an engineering technician position that is open.

Chairman Lema asked if the clerk takes care of the Sewer Commission.

Director Saley replied yes.

(4429) General Garage – Chris Saley, Public Works Director was present for questions/comments. Director Saley reported two mechanics positions that are open.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about the increase in line item 4977 0138 Software.

Director Saley stated it is for the GPS system.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked if the GPS is in every truck.

Director Saley explained the background regarding the previous system, so they are looking at other systems.

Mayor Blake stated it is also for fleet maintenance that needs to be done, a vehicle that is idling longer than it should. He stated the previous system provided too many false/positive results.

Mr. Castignoli asked if the system is monitored.

Director Saley stated they are able to monitor all the alerts.

Mayor Blake reiterated the problems with the previous system.

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

Director Saley stated some of it is for the lifts they have.

Mayor Blake stated it is for a capital purchase that has been identified.

(4431) Solid Waste Operations – Chris Saley, Public Works Director was present for questions/comments. He stated the reduced staff by one full time (Laborer) position.

Chairman Lema asked if the tipping fees remain stable.

Director Saley explained they are month to month and continue to look at various options. He also stated they will be negotiating with the recycling vendor.

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

Mayor Blake explained the revenue from wastewater does not affect the mil rate, only the sewer user fee.

Mr. Castignoli asked about line item 4117 0000 Seasonal Temporary account.

Director Saley explained when this budget was printed a wastewater superintendent had been hired, but he only stayed with the city for one month. He stated currently there is a seasonal temporary person, but the goal is to have a full time superintendent in place.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about line item 4971 0405 Dump Truck.

Director Saley stated each year they try to replace one piece of equipment.

Mayor Blake explained the vehicle acquisition program which is utilized at the end of the year when they look at the capital needs.

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

Chairman Lema stated it is simply administrative.

(4825) Beth El Shelter – Mrs. Toni Dolan, Executive Director, Shaileen Landsberg, Shawna Onukwugha and Jen Paradise, Shelter Program Director were present to answer questions/comments.

Mayor Blake stated this would Toni's last year presenting the budget for Beth El as she will be retiring in June. He thanked her for her years of service and dedication to Beth El and the Milford community.

Mrs. Dolan thanked the Board for their wonderful support over the years. She introduced Ms. Landsberg, from the Beth El Board of Directors, Ms. Onukwugha and Ms. Paradise. Mrs. Dolan reported they would be receiving a 5% cut from DMHS this year. She stated they have also been told to expect a cut in housing, but it was not official at this point. Mrs. Dolan stated they did not request additional money from the City this year, but question is how much longer than can provide the services they provide with the amount they receive. She stated they do the best they can with fundraising and that they have a very active Board of Directors. Mrs. Dolan stated the city's grant represents 12% of their total budget. She also stated she did not know what to expect from United Way. Mrs. Dolan stated they have not increased staff at the shelter, but have moved positions around. She also credited Ms. Paradise for being able to move 17 people from the shelter, which is

always the goal. She stated they continue with the no-freeze shelter, mandated by the State, but receive no funding. Mrs. Dolan explained the monies received from DMHS which pay for the shelter across the street.

Mr. Moulton asked about the income loss.

Mrs. Dolan stated that is their biggest deficit, so they had to compensate by raising money in other areas. She stated there is some grant money available, but it is specific to programs. She stated they do a lot of grant writing.

(4159) Veterans, Ceremony & Parade Commission– Tom Flowers was present for questions/comments. He stated the budget represents secretarial fees for their monthly meetings, office supplies, etc. He stated the bulk of the budget is for the purchase of flags which are placed on all veterans' graves.

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

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about the increase in this account.

Mrs. Rohrig explained the numbers are based on the election that is coming up this year. She stated this year there is a gubernatorial election so they anticipate primaries.

(4115) Registrar of Voters – Ms. Beverly Melzer and Mrs. Debra Fellenbaum, Deputy Registrar and Joanne Rohrig, City Clerk were present for questions/comments.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about OT and the increase in that account.

Ms. Melzer explained each year they ask for \$4,000.

Mayor Blake added it is based on training that is required for the registrars.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about line item 4167 0000 Voter Canvas.

Ms. Meltzer explained the process for a change of address. She also explained a new statute where someone who has moved, but not voted in the previous year could be canvassed and could be placed on inactive status.

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

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about line item 4112 0000 Overtime.

Mrs. Rohrig explained that account is used only for overtime the night of an election. She also reported they did get their security cameras.

(4116) MGAT – Ms. Kara Flannery, Chairwoman of MGAT was present for questions/comments. Ms. Flannery stated her budget represents a relatively small increase to put MGAT in a more sustainable position. She stated over the years they have not been able to meet their costs. She also reported last year they upgraded both studios, which will help to keep their costs lower by reducing production costs. Ms. Flannery explained the grant funding they receive which has helped. She spoke of some exciting upgrades such as live streaming events from city hall.

(4826) Boys & Girls' Club – Mrs. Megan Altomare was present to answer questions/comments. Ms. Altomare provided the Board with a handout which provided some background as to what they do at Boys & Girls Club. She stated they are excited with their growth since they opened and reviewed the statistics in the packet. Ms. Altomare stated they currently are utilizing two buildings for their club as they continue to grow. She also stated she was pleased to announce they now offer transportation, and they are nearly full for upcoming the summer camp program.

Mr. Castignoli asked about the original request which was reduced \$30,000 by the mayor.

Mrs. Altomare explained they requested additional money so they would be able to serve additional kids. She stated they also provide scholarships for those kids who are unable to pay.

(4610) Health Department– Ms. Deepa Joseph, Health Director was present for questions/comments. Director Joseph distributed a handout which she stated provided a snapshot of the work they do and shared some of what the department does and how they touch so many people's lives. She also reported the Health Department is in the process of applying for national accreditation and have completed the first two steps. She stated they are hoping to apply for the final step during the summer of 2019.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about line item 4977 0190 computer replacement and asked if the amount requested was for two computers.

Director Joseph replied yes.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked if there were any vacancies in the department.

Director Joseph stated there is one sanitarian position that is vacant.

(4998) Education Health Services/School Nurses– Ms. Deepa Joseph was present for questions/comments.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about line item 4977 0190 Computers and how many computers they anticipated.

Director Joseph explained the records of all students are kept electronically, so each school nurse has a computer.

Mayor Blake added this line item includes private schools such as Saint Mary's and Lauralton Hall.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked if all the school nurse positions were filled.

Director Joseph replied yes.

(4821) Health Services – Ms. Deepa Joseph was present for questions/comments.

Director Joseph explained this account is for the well child examinations that are provided to someone who cannot afford to have an annual physical done.

(4817) Human Services Department – Ms. Deepa Joseph was present for questions/comments. Director Joseph explained this department was consolidated a year ago. She distributed a handout showing outreach at various levels and provided an overview.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked how many employees are in this department.

Director Joseph stated there are two outreach workers, program coordinator, clinical coordinator and a secretary.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about the work they provide in the public schools.

Director Joseph explained there are outreach programs in each school, adding most of their therapists are interns.

Mayor Blake added there are many areas of expertise. He stated they work collectively together as one holistic group.

Director Joseph referred to the handout regarding their intake process as to their evaluation and needs.

Mr. Castignoli asked why only four schools and one high school take part in the program.

Director Joseph explained those are the schools that opted in.

(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.

Mayor Blake added it is a level budget from the previous year.

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

(4146) Flood & Erosion Board – Mayor Blake stated he would be happy to answer questions the Board may have. He also recognized as Steve Johnson, Open Space Manager and Acting Assistant Public Works Director who could answer questions as well. Mayor Blake stated the Flood & Erosion Board is responsible for managing 10 CDGB grants, with the assistance of Mr. Johnson who tracks and manages each project. Mayor Blake also pointed out the Board has completed the selection

process for many of the projects. He stated the Board is very active and work hard to get those areas that were damage during Storm Sandy and Irene completed.

(4147) Tree Commission – no questions.

(4156) Conservation Commission – Steve Johnson, Open Space and Natural Resource Agent was present for questions/comments. Mr. Johnson explained he is the liaison to this Commission and that a recommendation was made to reallocate funds from the secretarial account for education. He stated there are two new commissioners and the hope is they will take advantage of those workshops.

(4162) Open Space - Steve Johnson, Open Space and Natural Resources Agent was present for questions/comments. He stated the position continues to evolve in many different ways and that he continues to work in the community, in the schools with the enrichment programs, and pilot program in the middle school and high schools. He stated he also works with many volunteers. Mr. Johnson stated he is working to develop a team of people for the sustainable Connecticut project. He stated he also serves with the Hazardous Mitigation Program and in assisting Director Saley in the Public Works Department.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about grants.

Mr. Johnson stated he continues to work with the CDGB grants

(4813) Bridges -Barbara DiMauro, Director and Carlos Rodriguez, fiscal director, were present for questions/comments. Ms. DiMauro distributed the community impact report. She also spoke of the opioid epidemic and services they provide. Ms. DiMauro reported Bridges has begun offering ambulatory detox services and provided a brief explanation of the program. She also spoke of the rising epidemic of adult and youth suicide. She spoke of the drop services/programs that are available, young parents program came under their umbrella almost two years ago, identifying kids that need help with sexual help and safety. A big portion of funding comes from DMHS and Bridges has already had a 5% cut. She stated it has impacted them with layoffs, etc.

Mr. Castignoli asked about the communities served and if those communities contribute any funding.

Ms. DiMauro stated they get a small amount from West Haven and Orange. She stated the majority of people they serve come from Milford, approximately 52%.

Mr. Castignoli asked about the valley towns that are served.

Ms. DiMauro stated the programs offered in the Valley are funded by DCS.

Mr. Castignoli asked how much Orange contributes.

Mr. Rodriguez stated it is a contractual fee which is \$90,000.

(4815) Veterans Grave Preservation Commission – Mr. Tom Cody was present for questions/comments. He stated the Veterans Grave Preservation Commission takes care of the Revolutionary War section of Milford Cemetery, which is the oldest cemetery. He acknowledged Director Saley who is very helpful to their Commission. Mr. Cody spoke of some of the work of the Commission such as the Kings Highway Cemetery circle with plantings and lighting, the placement of wreaths during Memorial Day and Fourth of July. He stated they also place new flags every summer, and recently replaced the solar lights. Mr. Cody stated essentially the Commission oversees all the veteran graves. He stated their only income is what the City provides to them.

(4818) – Milford Historic District – No questions

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

(4822) Cemetery Association – No questions

(4620) Recreation Department – Mr. Paul Piscitelli, Recreation Director was present for questions/comments. He expressed his appreciation of the support from this Board.

Mayor Blake stated the seasonal temporary account is slightly higher which is reflective of the increase of minimum wage.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked how many employees they hire during the summer.

Director Piscitelli stated it is approximately 225.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked if the Recreation Department is responsible for collecting parking fees.

Director Piscitelli replied yes. He stated those monies go to the General Fund. He stated the fee is \$15 which was increased approximately two years ago.

Mr. Castignoli asked if there is a supervisor at West Shore Recreation.

Director Piscitelli stated they take over at 5:30 p.m., at which time there supervisor is present.

(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. Castignoli asked about marina fees (p. 108)

Mr. Swift stated a lower number

Mr. Castignoli asked about revenue from concessions.

Mr. Swift stated they receive revenue from the Scooby Doos and Gulf Beach concessions.

Ms. Secondi asked how many docks there are.

Mr. Swift stated there are approximately 40 with over 100 moorings. He spoke of a grant they recently received to re-deck the marina and floats. He stated with the help of Julie Nash and Mr. Bruce Kuryla they obtained a \$400,000 grant.

Mr. Castignoli and Mr. Fitzpatrick made and seconded a motion to recess. Motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Lema stated the Board would stand in recess until February 26, 2018. The Board recessed at 7:51 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen A. Kennedy
Recording Secretary