

**BOARD OF FINANCE  
BUDGET DELIBERATIONS - PROPOSED BUDGET 2014-2015  
FEBRUARY 24, 2014**

The Milford Board of Finance held a budget deliberations session on Monday, February 24, 2014 in Conference Room B of the Parsons Complex. Chairman Lema reconvened the session at 6:33 p.m.

Board Members Present

Brian A Lema, Chairman  
Joseph J. Fitzpatrick, Jr.  
Scott Marlow  
Mickel Montano  
Joseph Castignoli

Also Present

Mayor Benjamin G. Blake  
Peter Erodici, Finance Director

Chairman Lema stated the police department had a conflict and requested to be heard at the beginning of the meeting. He stated he would entertain a motion to re-order the agenda and bring forward department 4310 – Police Department.

Mr. Marlow and Mr. Fitzpatrick made and seconded a motion to re-order the agenda and bring forward department 4310 – Police Department. Motion carried unanimously.

**(4310) Police Department** – Chief Keith Mello and Assistant Chief Tracy Mooney were present. Chief Mello stated the increase shown in their budget reflects the contractual wage increase. He stated the department is already underfunded in certain overtime categories, but they look to get those wages from other accounts. He stated with regard to their regular overtime they expect to be approximately \$150,000 short, in training, he stated those funds would be depleted in six months, gas and propellants, he stated he will fall \$40,000 short and in the holiday account he expects a \$45,000 shortfall. He stated there are other accounts he should be able to tap into.

Mr. Castignoli asked why the accounts the chief mentioned were underfunded.

Chief Mello stated in his seven years as chief there has not been a budget that has been fully funded. He stated the department is seldom at full staff and that they find other areas to tap into. Chief Mello also stated they seek grants whenever possible and that the department receives donations. He asked the Board not to cut the budget any further.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about line item 4941 0200 Lightbar.

Chief Mello stated the department at one time had Crown Victoria vehicles which they no longer make, so they have had to retro fit their vehicles. He stated they cannot get on a replacement cycle until all vehicles have been retrofitted.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about line item 4971 0000 Vehicles & Equipment.

Chief Mello stated that is part of the equipment package for the cars. He stated it should dissipate after the third year at which time they hope to be on a replacement cycle.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about line item 4971 0214 Police Cruisers.

Chief Mello reiterated they no longer use the Crown Victoria vehicles, so they are in the process of replacing those vehicles. He went on to explain the replacement cycle of their vehicles.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about line item 4977 0118 Camera, noting it was a large increase from last year.

Chief Mello stated the cameras are for the patrol cars and used to document evidence. He stated they have more cameras that need replacing this year.

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

Chief Mello stated they are fixed costs. He also pointed out they have added CAD software since the police department absorbed the Fire Department dispatch.

Chairman Lema asked if the MIS is fully operational.

Chief Mello replied yes, adding it is a very intricate, sophisticated system.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about line item 4792 0000 Marine Patrol Expenses.

Chief Mello explained the grant they received. He stated they keep the boat in the water all year round and this line item is for slip fees.

Mr. Marlow asked how much the department receives in grants.

Chief Mello stated the department receives formula grants every year which total approximately \$22,000-25,000. He also stated they there are a number of other grants they apply for such as a Homeland Security Grant, DWI grant, traffic, etc. He also stated it was important to understand that the grants do not supplant the budget.

Chairman Lema asked about line item 4944 0001 Personal Protective Equipment.

Chief Mello stated this goes to post 9/11 and that the equipment has not been replaced since then. He stated the equipment is more than 10 years old and need to be replaced.

**(4159 Veterans, Ceremony & Parade Commission** – Tom Flowers, Chairman was present for questions/comments. He stated their biggest account is 4798 0000 Other Supplies which is used for wreaths and flags which are placed on the monuments on Fourth of July, Memorial Day and Labor Day.

Mayor Blake noted Mr. Flowers is a long time committee member who recently took over as Chairman for Bill Kates.

**(4801) Council on Aging** – Janice Jackson, Director, Mary Allen Herma and Philip Caporusso, Chairman of the Finance Committee were present. Ms. Jackson provided a general informational sheet for the Board. She stated they have 43 employees which is 20 less since 2001. She also pointed out there have been no increases in staffing since 2007. Ms. Jackson stated they are projecting a \$23,000 deficit for 2014. She spoke of increasing needs at the facility. She stated they are always looking for ways to do things for less. She spoke of going to a bi-weekly payroll system, which was a savings. She also stated when someone retires they try to replace that position for less or when possible, with a volunteer. Ms. Jackson stated they received approximately \$8,000 from class donations. She also stated they have a membership of 340 and membership fees are \$10.

Dr. Caporusso stated they also receive monies from the United Way, but that they were expecting a cut this year.

Ms. Castignoli asked Ms. Jackson if they were working with their insurance company to lower their insurance rates. He recalled last year a slip and fall incident that was mentioned.

Ms. Jackson stated they have implemented safety wherever they can. She also stated they went out to bid for their insurance, but unfortunately they did not receive many bids because they are a senior center.

Chairman Lema asked with regard to demographics if there were any trends with seniors.

Ms. Jackson stated you are eligible to join after age 55. She stated they are seeing senior citizens move from other areas to Milford because of the services offered in Milford.

Mr. Marlow asked about the possibility of consolidating services with other agencies in town.

Ms. Jackson stated they are a member of the Connecticut Food Bank and therefore able to purchase food at a lower rate.

Dr. Caporusso stated there is one full time volunteer with the food bank, with other part-time volunteers.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked if part-time employees were insured.

Ms. Herma stated no, only full time employees.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked the number of drivers and if they are full time or part time.

Ms. Jackson stated they have three full time employees; the others are part time. She also stated they have two substitute/back up drivers.

**(4803) Fine Arts Council** – Paige Miglio, Executive Director and Dolores Hannon, Co- President were present. Ms. Miglio stated their budget does fluctuate slightly, but that they do make every effort to bring in additional monies. She spoke of the grants they are seeking. She stated they now have a corporate sponsor in Milford Bank. She stated they have three main fundraisers which are Oscar night, Kentucky Derby event and their craft fairs. Ms. Miglio spoke about their building which has had some major issues. She stated they had major water damage to their basement. She stated they are working on a plan to fix the outside of the building and remodeling the basement to make it more efficient. Ms. Miglio also stated they are working with the 375<sup>th</sup> Celebration Committee and also with the Tree Commission.

Ms. Hannon stated they also have their center on Naugatuck Avenue and that they collaborate with Walnut Beach Association.

Chairman Lema asked their total budget.

Ms. Hannon stated it is approximately \$100,000.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked who is helping with the building repairs.

Ms. Miglio stated they are working with Milford Transit.

Ms. Hannon added they have also developed a facilities committee.

**(4807) Regional Mental Health** – Kristy Barber, Director of the Southern Connecticut Regional Board was present. She stated she was here tonight for Claire Phelan. Ms. Barber spoke of the advocacy for mental health and the community and legislative advocacy.

Mr. Castignoli asked how many towns participate.

Ms. Barber stated there are 37 towns and that it is based on population.

**(4812) Transit District** – Henry Jadach, Executive Director was present for questions/comments. Mr. Jadach stated they provide local bus service as well as daily service to Norwalk. He also stated they run the parking program at the train station. He stated they have over 450,000 riders per year. Mr. Jadach stated their overall budget is \$4,000,000. He stated he asked for a slight increase to help with contractual obligations, which is a 2% wage increase.

Mayor Blake asked about the wait list for commuters.

Mr. Jadach stated it is about 600-700, but since West Haven opened it has decreased slightly.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked where additional funds come from.

Mr. Jadach stated mostly from the State of Connecticut.

**(4133) Probate Court** – Judge Beverly Streit Kefalas was present for questions/comments. Judge Streit Kefalas stated her budget is Milford's share of the budget which is based on per capita. She stated the only change is that there has been an increase in copying charges. She explained due to a rules change in the Practice Book they are sending out more notices.

**(4131) Law Department** – City Attorney Jonathan D. Berchem was present for questions/comments.

Chairman Lema stated he would recuse himself from this department and the Ethics Commission and turned the meeting over to Vice Chairman Marlow.

Attorney Berchem stated there are no changes to his budget other than contractual wage increases and the addition of the Risk Manager to his department.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked where that position came from.

Mr. Erodici stated the Risk Manager reported to the Finance Director but was located in the Personnel Office.

Attorney Berchem stated based on his daily interactions with the Risk Manager it made sense to have here in his office. He stated the City Attorney's office is here to make sure they defend the City to its fullest.

**(4131) Ethics Commission** – City Attorney Jonathan D. Berchem was present for questions/comments.

Attorney Berchem stated the only change is the request for \$100 for training expenses. He stated there are some new members that have never had any training, adding it is a very important task to serve on this commission. He stated it is important for them to be as prepared as possible.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about any surplus from this account.

Mr. Erodici stated if there was any surplus from this account it would go to the City's general fund, fund balance.

**(4193) Public Library** – Christine Angeli, Library Director was present for questions/comments. Ms. Angeli stated it is a gem of a library, with over 180,000 visits this past year. She stated the library operates efficiently and offers a great deal of services.

Mr. Marlow asked about line item 4980 0165 Books.

Ms. Angeli stated it is new books. She stated circulation of materials is up 2%.

Mr. Castignoli asked about line item 4796 0000 Computer Software & Maintenance and if it was contractual.

Ms. Angeli replied yes and spoke of the various contracts.

Chairman Lema asked about the library building itself and if it fell under the Public Works department as far as maintenance, etc.

Mayor Blake stated yes.

Ms. Angeli spoke about the request for additional funds for computers. She stated most of the computers in the library run on Windows 7 or XP. She also stated part of that account is licensing upgrades.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about the library assistant position and if that increase was due to a step increase.

Ms. Angeli responded yes. She also noted they are down one position.

Mr. Castignoli asked about line item 4796 0000 Computer Software & Maintenance. He noted the Mayor's recommended amount and asked if it would be enough.

Ms. Angeli stated it would get them off the repair cycle and get them on a replacement cycle, which is very important. She spoke about the public's use of their PC's which is more than 17,000 uses. She stated their computers are heavy used, so this is very important to them.

**(4123) Community Development** – Julie Nash, Community Development Director was present for questions/comments. Ms. Nash stated they did not ask for any increase. She explained what is reflected is the same as previous years, but that the accounts were changed.

**(4155) Economic Development** – Julie Nash, Community Development Director was present for questions/comments.

Mr. Marlow asked the difference between Economic Development versus Community Development.

Ms. Nash explained community development administers the community development block grant and economic development works with the businesses.

**(4610) Health Department** – Dr. McBride was present, along with Mr. John Quinn, President and CEO of the Visiting Nurse Association. Dr. McBride spoke of the transformation of the role of environmental health where it was once restaurant inspections and septic systems and what it is today. He stated another role of the sanitarians is preparedness work, i.e. clinics, educational work and responding to white power incidents. He also provided the Board with information regarding blight and the work of the health department in this area.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked if all positions are full at this time.

Dr. McBride replied yes.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about the \$5,000 increase for the administrative nurse.

Mayor Blake explained last year that position was reduced. He stated the current rate includes the 2.25% wage increase, plus step increase. He stated overall it is neutral.

**(4998) Education Health Services/School Nurses** – Dr. McBride was present for questions. Dr. McBride stated this account is basically the same as last year. He pointed out there is a nurse in every school.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about line item 4732 0000 Medical Supplies which appeared to be a \$4,000 increase.

Dr. McBride stated he would get back to the Board as he did not have that information with him.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about line item 4977 0100 Computers

Dr. McBride stated the computers are outdated and breaking and need to be replaced.

Mayor Blake pointed out the computers are for each school.

**(4821) Visiting Nurse Association** – Mr. John Quinn, President and CEO was present for questions/comments. Mr. Quinn provided the Board with its annual report. He stated they have 154 employees and 17 of them live in Milford. He stated this past year with the funds provided by Milford they were able to add to the well child program.

Dr. McBride added the VNA is terrific to work with. He stated they provide an effective outlook going forward for new parents, home visit program, etc.

Mr. Quinn thanked the Board for their continued support.

**(4340) Animal Control** – Scott Ellington, Acting Animal Control Officer and Janet Perreault were present for questions.

Mayor Blake stated that Rick George had retired and that the whole department has done a great job stepping up. He stated Mr. Ellington is serving as the Acting Animal Control Officer.

Chairman Lema asked Mr. Ellington if they were impacted by Storm Sandy.

Mr. Ellington stated the building was evacuated, but the building held up well.

Mr. Castignoli asked if they pick up animals other than dogs.

Mr. Ellington stated not generally. He explained what happens if the police have to shoot an animal or if someone comes in contact with animal.

Chairman Lema asked how the partnership was Orange was working out.

Mr. Ellington stated it is working out quite well. He stated the residents of Orange are quite happy with their services.

Chairman Lema asked about the kennel keeper/Asst ACO position and if it was currently filled.

Mayor Blake stated the only vacant at this point is that of the Warden, which he explained is temporarily being filled by the Assistant Animal Control Officer.

**(4420) Public Works** – Mr. Richard Tomasco, Acting Public Works Director was present for questions/comments.

Mayor Blake pointed out the Clerk A position in this department is still vacant.

**(4421) Highway-Parks Division** – Mr. Richard Tomasco, Acting Public Works Director was present for questions/comments.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked if all position were filled at this point.

Mayor Blake replied yes.

Mayor Blake stated a laborer position was recently filled.

Mr. Tomasco stated they had another retiree just this past Thursday. He stated it is very important to have someone qualified position in the position.

**(4423) Building Maintenance Division** – Mr. Richard Tomaco, Acting Public Works Director was present for questions/comments. Mr. Tomasco stated the only position open at this point is the carpenter maintenance.

**(4429) General Garage** Mr. Richard Tomasco, Acting Public Works Director was present for questions,

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about 4331 0000 Gas & Other Propellants, noting this line item was up \$50,000.

Mr. Erodicti stated they used a significant amount in the energy reserve account.

Chairman Lema asked about line item 4978 0352 6 Post Lift.

Mr. Tomasco stated this lift is for another lift that was to be replaced.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked if all positions were filled.

Mayor Blake replied yes.

Mr. Tomasco added there may be retirements coming down the road.

**(4431) Solid Waste Operations** – Mr. Richard Tomasco was present for questions/comments.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked if the waste removal account was the same.

Chairman Lema noted the account appears to be up \$80,000 from last year.

Mayor Blake stated last year they had about 20,000 tons of solid waste. He also stated the current contract will be expiring June 30, 2014, at which time the City would go out to bid for another contract. He also stated the transfer station is run by Enviro and that their contract is up July 1, 2014.

Chairman Lema asked about any projected upgrades to the transfer station.

Mr. Tomasco stated not at this time, but pointed out the building had some damage from the last storm.

**(4426) Wastewater** – Mr. Richard Tomasco, Acting Public Works Director and Mr. Jim Cooper, Superintendent were present for questions/comments.



Mr. Erodict pointed out there would be a technical correction regarding line item 4201 9999 Longevity: General.

Mr. Cooper addressed line item 4741 0001 Nitrogen Credits stated they hope to be on top of this after a slight increase.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked if all positions were filled.

Mr. Cooper responded yes, but that there may be a retiree this summer.

Chairman Lema thanked Mr. Tomasco and Mr. Cooper for their patience this evening.

Being no further business the Board recessed at 8:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen K. Huber  
Recording Secretary