

**BOARD OF FINANCE
BUDGET HEARINGS - PROPOSED BUDGET FY2019-2020
FEBRUARY 25, 2019**

The Board of Finance held a budget deliberations session on Monday February 25, 2019 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 6:00 p.m.

Board Members Present

Also Present

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

Mayor Benjamin G. Blake
Peter Erodici, Finance Director

(4459) Veterans, Ceremony & Parade Commission

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked for an explanation of other supplies and charges. Christine Smith, Vice Chairman, stated this account covers many things such as flags, secretary fees, envelopes, and stationary. Mr. Moulton asked if \$600 was sufficient to cover all expenses. Ms. Smith stated it was sufficient.

(8112) Elections

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked why expenses were from \$72,000 to \$105,000 last year and now \$130,000 is being requested. Kerri Rowland, Registrar state it was due to primaries and that most likely there are anticipating two primaries in the next election cycle. Ms. Roland stated that having a primary is like having two elections in one year. Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about the difference in cost between the 2018 and 2019 elections. Joanne Rohrig, City Clerk stated costs depend on the type of election. She stated that 2017 was a municipal election with no primary and the following years there was a State and Federal primary. Mr. Fitzpatrick asked why the increase request this year. Ms. Rohrig stated municipal elections are coming up this year and they are anticipating a presidential primary next year.

(4115) Registrar of Voters

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked what the \$1,500 voter registration covered. Kerri Rowland, Registrar stated it was for mandatory sessions for voters to come in and vote. J

(4129) City Clerk

Joanne Rohrig, City Clerk asked the Board to take a look at the seasonal temporary account. She explained she had to reduce the hours in order to increase the hourly wage. Mr. Rohrig stated that with the possibility of \$15 minimum wage she is requesting an increase in this account. Chairman Lema asked if there is only one seasonal temporary person. Ms. Rohrig stated that is only one person

working 12 hours per week. Chairman Lema asked what he job tasks entail. Ms. Rohrig reviewed the tasks, including coverage during lunch so the office can remain open. Mr. Fitzpatrick asked if the increase is assuming the \$15 minimum wage increase. Ms. Rohrig stated that is included. She also stated that she has reviewed the records and historically the seasonal temporary personnel earned \$20.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked if the indexing and recording is digital. Ms. Rohrig stated is contractual and the company wanted to increase the fees but was told it had to remain status quo. She further stated she is planning on having a discussion with the company and further negotiating the fees.

Chairman Lema asked if the office expected to see \$900,000 in conveyance tax fees this year. Ms. Rohrig stated it has been a slow year and is not sure they will get there, but is hoping for a lively spring.

(4111) Board of Aldermen

None.

(4116) MGAT

Kara Flannery, Chairman provided a brief summary of the committee's activities. She stated there are no requested increases.

(4141) Board of Finance

None.

(4146) Flood & Erosion Board

None.

(4147) Tree Commission

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked if the commission spends the \$1,000. Mayor Blake stated they provide several trees each year. He stated that last year the commission replaced a tree in the City Hall parkette. Mr. Fitzpatrick asked if Public Works does any of the tree work. Mayor Blake stated they do work together at times and that Public Works also has a tree program.

(4156) Conservation Commission

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked for an explanation of training expenses. Mayor Blake stated this is for state certifications.

(4162) Open Space

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked if this is just a salary account. Mayor Blake stated this provides for the Open Space and Natural Resource Agent.

(4410) Health Department

Deepa Joseph, Health Director provided and reviewed a handout. She stated they had a significant flu season last year with a lot more vaccinations and illnesses, but so far this year is a milder season. Ms. Joseph discussed the steps the department is taking to pursue voluntary national accreditation. She stated they have been working since 2016 on a strategic plan. As part of the process the department did community surveys to see what the public liked and what services they would like to see offered. Ms. Joseph discussed how the accreditation and offering of more services may mean increasing staff levels over the next 5 years.

Mr. Fitzpatrick what responsibility the Health Department has in the area of mental health. Ms. Joseph explained that Human Services was consolidated under the Health Department a few years ago. She also discussed how school nurses responsibilities have changed over time and that they are seeing more mental health issues. Mr. Fitzpatrick asked if the Health Department is working with Bridges. Ms. Joseph stated that Human Services does work with Bridges and that they are working to increase referrals and strengthen partnership.

Mr. Moulton asked if school nurses are in all public schools. Ms. Joseph stated they are, including St. Mary's and Laurelton Hal. Mr. Castignoli asked about the handout referencing 40% of children utilize nursing services. Ms. Deepa stated that is correct that over 40% require some type of nursing services. She reviewed the different services provided by the school nurse. Mr. Moulton asked if allergies fall under that 40%. Ms. Joseph stated that is included. She reviewed how school nursing works in to the strategic plan and staffing needs.

Ms. Joseph discussed the environmental health portion of the handout. Mr. Fitzpatrick asked who does water sampling for the beaches. Ms. Joseph stated the State does Silver Sands and the Health Department is responsible for the City beaches.

Mr. Moulton asked about pest control. Ms. Joseph stated that is contractual and has remained the same for a decade.

Mr. Fitzpatrick askew hay medical supplies are showing as negative in 17/18. Ms. Joseph stated that could be skewed depending on when the numbers are pulled. Mr. Erodici explained how it may have been impacted by the transition to MUNIS.

(4798) Education Health Services/School Nurses

Chairman Lema asked if all schools are staffed. Ms. Joseph stated they are fully staffed as of this week. Ms. Ranges asked if the hygienists travel. Ms. Joseph stated it is a mobile program and they travel between schools. Mr. Fitzpatrick asked how many computers. Ms. Joseph stated this is not a

new computer but to replace an older one. She reviewed how they try to keep the computers on a rolling program.

Mr. Castignoli asked for an explanation of seasonal temporary. Ms. Joseph stated it covers 3 clerks in the middle schools and high schools to assist the nurses. Mr. Fitzpatrick asked if they are nurses. Ms. Joseph stated they are clerical.

(8121) Health Services

Chairman Leman asked what this account covers. Ms. Joseph stated it is for VNA to cover physicals for students. She further stated that Dr. Carlson provides physicals for students in need in order to enter school.

(4417) Milford HSD Agency

Ms. Joseph reviewed a handout she provided. She reviewed the energy assistance program with an 83% approval rate. Ms. Joseph stated they also run the renter's rebate program and received 490 applications last year with 100% approved.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked who provides the services. Ms. Joseph stated there are 2 full time outreach works, but currently one position is vacant. Mr. Fitzpatrick asked where the positions are shown in the budget. Ms. Joseph stated this is a grant and the positions are not shown. Mr. Fitzpatrick asked who does the payroll. Ms. Joseph explained the payroll is done by the City. Mr. Erodici stated it is a Fund 90 on the City's financial system. Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about accountability for payroll. Mr. Erodici stated the employees are on the City's timekeeping system. Mr. Fitzpatrick asked how many others were grant employees. Mr. Erodici stated Employment & Training and CDBG. Chairman Lema asked if they were City employees. Mayor Blake stated they are by ordinance that was established back in the 1970's. Mr. Fitzpatrick asked if they are union positions. Ms. Joseph stated they are non-union positions. Chairman Lema asked if funds had been consolidated. Ms. Joseph stated they had been consolidated when they were moved under the Health Department and some savings had been realized across the two grants.

(8115) Veterans Grave Preservation Commission

Tom Cody, Chairman provided an overview of the Commission. He stated that annually beginning in May they coordinate with Ivy League Landscaping in West Haven to plant flowers for spring and summer. He stated they are responsible for the Memorial Day wreath placing. Mr. Cody stated the Milford cemetery is the oldest active cemetery in United States. He discussed planting areas that had been created at Kings Highway at Veterans Circle. Mr. Cody stated a couple of years ago they took on a major project to construct a handicap walkway around the monument. He discussed how they working to create a drainage system to resolve the water problems at the Kings Highway cemetery.

(8419) Milford Progress

Chairman Lema and Mr. Moulton recused themselves as being members of Milford Progress. John Knuff, Chairman, stated they annual grant for Milford Progress is \$7500. He explained that they have no expenses and they take on projects downtown. He reviewed the planters and they are hoping to begin phase two this coming spring. Mr. Knuff discussed sponsorships provided such as the farmers market. He reviewed how the committee provided economic development to the City. Mr. Fitzpatrick asked if Milford Progress provided the flags downtown. Mr. Knuff stated they did not, but they did provide the wreaths this year and that they are looking to beautify the train trestle in cooperation with Milford Fine Arts.

(8118) Milford Historic District

None.

(8120) Milford Historic District II

None.

(8422) Cemetery Association

Mr. Lema inquired about the West River Street property. James Beard stated that cremations are up and income is down so they have pushed back opening West River.

(8411) Borough of Woodmont

Christopher Schmeisser stated the Borough is doing well and the grant from the City is a rebate of taxes paid for that are of Milford to cover public works expenses. He stated they anticipate having similar costs they year. Ms. Schmeisser stated they work closely with the Mayor and Public Works to keep everything fiscally responsible. He discussed how capital projects cannot be paid for by grants and the Borough needs to save a reserve over time. Ms. Schmeisser reviewed how the reserve has been depleted over the past 3-4 years due to large snow events and they are trying to catch up. Mr. Fitzpatrick asked if the Borough keeps reserve funds. Mr. Schmeisser explained they had a health reserve account but had to spend down for beach replenishment and large snow events. They are trying to build up a reserve account again.

Mr. Castignoli asked if they could assess Borough residents. Mr. Schmeisser stated they cannot, but there is a tax. He stated that when FEMA funds did not come through they used reserve funds for sand replenishment. He also stated that funds are used for police during beach season. Mr. Schmeisser stated the Borough has not requested an increase in several years and they are doing their best to make ends meet.

(4520) Recreation Department

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked how many seasonal temporary employees. Paul Piscitelli, Recreation Direction stated approximately 200. Mr. Castignoli asked if Westshore Recreation is controlled under the

Recreation Department. Mr. Piscitelli stated they are in charge of Westshore and provided an overview of when it is used by the Boys & Girls Club.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked if the Recreation Department was involved in the splash pad. Mr. Piscitelli stated the Recreation Department supplies seasonal temporary employees at the splash pad. Mr. Fitzpatrick asked if the Recreation Department is responsible for the water expenses. Mr. Piscitelli stated he is responsible for the electricity not the water. Mayor Blake discussed plans for recycling water to the golf course across the street.

(4153) Park & Recreation Commission

None.

(4157) Harbor Management Commission (Fund 36)

Chairman Lema asked if there was improvement at the marina after the duck pond was dredged. Ray Swift, Operations Director stated it was hard to tell, but the marina is in good shape. He stated the redecking project is should be completed by the end of this week. Chairman Lema asked when the flagstone patio had been redone. Mr. Swift stated it was about 3 to 4 years ago that the stones were reset. He stated the marina is now 20 years old and it was time to do the work, it looks good and everything looks new. Chairman Lema asked who maintains the Hotchkiss Bridge. Mayor Blake stated the Harbor Commission provides the flowers and Public Works maintains. Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about the \$400 boat expense. Mr. Swift explained it was for outboard motor maintenance. Mr. Fitzpatrick asked for an explanation of channel markers. Mr. Swift stated that is the no wake buoys in the river.

(4131) Law Department

Chairman Lema recused himself as he a partner at Berchem Moses. Mr. Fitzpatrick asked if Miscellaneous Professional fees are to pay outside firms. Jonathan Berchem, City Attorney reviewed the purpose of the account and the types of fees paid. Mr. Fitzpatrick asked if outside firms are contracted or hired. Attorney Berchem stated they are hired. Attorney Berchem explained the only requested increase is in mileage because the department runs out of funds very early due to travel to the various courthouses. He explained that all the tax appeals are heard in New Britain and there is quite a bit of travel to that courthouse.

(4132) Ethics Commission

Attorney Berchem stated this account is the same level as last year with no increases.

Chairman Lema stated the Board would stand in recess until February 26, 2019. The Board recessed at 7:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Toni Jo Weeks", written over a horizontal line.

Toni Jo Weeks
Recording Secretary