

**BOARD OF FINANCE
BUDGET HEARINGS - PROPOSED BUDGET FY2019-2020
FEBRUARY 26, 2019**

The Board of Finance held a budget deliberations session on Tuesday February 26, 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 5:40 p.m.

Board Members Present

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

Also Present

Mayor Benjamin G. Blake
Peter Erodici, Finance Director

(4593) Public Library

Chris Angeli, Library Director stated that the budget presented is flat. She stated the library offered over 600 programs this past year with approximately 20,000 attendees. Also, circulation is up approximately 10%.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked with the new addition will there be the need for additional staffing. Ms. Angeli stated it would not require additional staffing. Mr. Fitzpatrick asked if seasonal temporary was for additional summer staff. Ms. Angeli stated this is for year round part time. She also stated there are 15 full time employees and the remainder is staffed by seasonal temporary staff that is used for coverage such as vacations. Mr. Fitzpatrick asked how many seasonal temporary employees. Ms. Angeli stated there are 15 on the roster and approximately 5 of those work more hours.

Chairman Lema asked when the new addition would be constructed. Mrs. Angeli stated it is a grant to renovate the children's department and two media rooms and that it is in the beginning stages. Chairman Lema asked if the footprint of the building would be expanded. Ms. Angeli stated all construction is within the existing building.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked how many library assistants are working at a time. Ms. Angeli stated they all work 37.5 hours and it varies as the library is open approximately 50 hours a week.

(4133) Probate Court

Judge Beverly Streit-Kefalas stated that because the probate court is consolidated with Orange the overall budget is shared on a pro-rata basis with Milford paying 75% and Orange 25%. Judge Streit-Kefalas stated that most expenditures are paid through the State of Connecticut probate fees and the City is responsible for operating supplies. Mr. Fitzpatrick asked where the probate fees go. Judge Streit-Kefalas stated the fees are paid through the State of Connecticut probate administration fund which pays for computers, staffing, insurance, etc.

Mr. Castignoli asked that the total budget is \$23,071 and Milford pays 75% of that figure. Judge Streit-Kefalas stated that is correct, and that Orange traditionally adopts the budget set by Milford and then forwards a check for their portion.

Chairman Lema asked if the current courtroom space works. Judge Streit-Kefalas stated it is very tight. She further stated that hearing room is her office and it can be challenging. They considered having hearings in the conference rooms, but they are not equipped with computers and the logistics are too challenging.

(4142) Department of Permitting & Land Use

Joseph Griffith, Director of DPLU provided handout. Mr. Griffith reviewed the handout and the offices under the DPLU. He stated that the budget this year is coming in representing a decrease that includes a \$1,400 increase in salaries, and operational expenses showing a decrease. Mr. Griffith stated that he has been consolidating operational expenses that are in common under DPLU and certain line items unique to a division have been left. Mr. Griffith stated they department continues to generate approximately 1.1 million in fees. He discussed how the department is looking to upgrade technology that is not included in this budget, but that will be coming to the Board as a separate expenditure. Mr. Griffith stated the immediate need is for permitting software and in 2022 the Plan of Conservation and Development which is a multi-year task. He stated they are pushing it off one year, but will be looking to hire a consultant to help put the plan together. Mr. Griffith discussed the building inspector vacancy and plans for hiring.

Mr. Castignoli asked if there is a special certification for building inspectors. Mr. Griffith state there is a required state certification. He further stated that the City requires the highest level certification. Mr. Fitzpatrick asked which building inspector position was available. Mr. Griffith stated building inspector A.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked how many computers were in DPLU. Mr. Griffith stated there are 16 desktops at the employee stations and various other locations such as the front desk in the hall and customer counters. Also, there are 8 laptops/tablets. Mr. Fitzpatrick asked if they are being replaced on a regular basis. Mr. Griffith stated they try to do so.

(4144) Zoning Board of Appeals

None

(4123) Community Development

Julie Nash, Director of Community Development stated this is the first time she has come in with an increase. She discussed the work that has been done on a tourism website and the costs associated with it. Mr. Fitzpatrick asked if that would be under Facebook, YELP or something similar. Ms. Nash stated it has not launched yet, but the more you pay the more people you reach. She discussed talking with press consultants help navigate where is the best place to post and that it is important to make sure money is spent thoughtfully and reach as many as people as possible.

(4155) Economic Development

None

(4119) Human Resources Department

Tania Barnes, Human Resources Director provided an overview of the department. She stated there are increase requests in the budget. Ms. Barnes discussed upgrading to the MUNIS financial system and conversion of the payrolls system. She stated that for the past 8 months she has served as a co-project manager for the payroll implementation portion of MUNIS. Ms. Barnes stated she has requested the addition of an HR Assistant at entry level to support the 3 professional positions in the department. She discussed the responsibilities of the HR Assistant and that it would be clerical in nature. Mr. Barnes reported that over the past year the department has recruited over 24 positions, reviewed over 700 applications, plus an additional 500 through Indeed. She stated that each applicant received a letter. Mr. Barnes stated that she would like the generalist to do more high level work with an assistant doing the clerical based work. Ms. Barnes reviewed the various programs that are organized through the department such as wellness and employee of the month.

Ms. Ranges asked if the new position would be part or full time. Ms. Barnes stated it would be full time at 37.5 hours.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked why the medical line item increase. Ms. Barnes stated this is to pay for independent medical exams for disability type pensions. She explained that exam can be expensive and there were 4 last year and 2 pending. Mr. Fitzpatrick asked for an explanation of miscellaneous professional fees. Ms. Barnes state this is for arbitration fees. She further stated that the fee went from \$25 to \$200 and last year there were approximately 16 arbitrations. Mr. Fitzpatrick asked who handles the arbitrations. Ms. Barnes stated it is a joint effort between herself and the City Attorney's Office.

(4145) Pension Board

None

(4151) Civil Service Commission

None.

(4401) Council on Aging.

Janice Jackson, Director Council on Aging read from a prepared statement. Mr. Fitzpatrick asked how many members. Ms. Jacksons stated approximately 3000 with a membership fee of \$15 per year. Ms. Jackson provided information on the lunch program. Mr. Fitzpatrick asked where the lunches are prepared. Ms. Jackson stated at the Senior Center.

(8103) Milford Arts Council

Paige Miglio, Executive Director discussed how the website and logo have been revamped and rebranded to promote the fine arts council. She stated they held over 220 events last year with approximately 12,000 attending. She discussed the work done at the firehouse gallery and the exterior renovations. Ms. Miglio discussed the council is working to change the inside of the gallery with the hope of engaging the public of all ages. She stated the council continues to work with City on economic development and chamber events and with the library. Mr. Miglio also stated that they council works with various organizations for fundraising such as the Get in Touch Foundation in May and the Network of Executive Women. She stated the budget remained flat this year after small raise last year that covers about 1/3 of the budget. Mr. Fitzpatrick asked who else gives grants to the council. Ms. Miglio stated they receive a small \$500 grant from the State and Devon Rotary provided \$3,500 for the mural on the wall of the Firehouse Gallery. She also stated the approximately 2/3 of their budget comes from corporate sponsors and the balance is from events.

(8107) Regional Mental Health

None

(8412) Transit District

Henry Jadach, Executive Director provided an overview of the Transit District. He stated the Transit District is in charge of buses, ADA vans, vans for the elderly and the train station. Mr. Jadach commented on the new bus hub with heated shelters at the mall and that this year they will be replacing shelters downtown.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked if there had been an increase in passengers to the mall. Mr. Jadach said there was a small increase. He commented that a few years ago a survey indicated 40% of employees took a bus to the mall.

Mr. Moulton asked why an increase was requested from \$345,242 to \$360,000. Mr. Jadach stated this was due to contractual obligations. Mr. Castignoli asked how much of the District's budget is from revenue. Mr. Jadach stated approximately 20% is from revenue. Mr. Castignoli asked if the fee from parking go into the revenue. Mr. Jadach stated those funds are separate and can only be used for certain things such as the salary for the parking attendant and maintenance. The parking is self-sustaining.

(8425) Beth El Center

Jennifer Paradis, Executive Director provided a handout and read from a prepared statement. She stated Beth El has experienced an increase for shelter and food. Ms. Paradis commented that the Beth El Center also operates as a warming center and the need is rising. She reviewed the many services provided by the Beth El Center to assist with homelessness such as outreach efforts and other support services. Ms. Paradis discussed collaborative efforts with other service provider. She stated they are starting to see a reduction in the volume of folks encamping. Mr. Paradis stated that

the majority of the 90 day shelter program individuals and 95% of the non-freeze are Milford residents.

She stated they are asking for sustained funding and do not what to expect from the Lamont budget. There is concern that cuts in the budget may affect the work provided by the Beth El Center. Ms. Paradis stated that the State analytics data shows they are efficient with the dollar and want to serve more individuals. She stated the outcomes are increasing and they are operating cost effectively, I fact the Beth El Center is one of the most cost effective in state.

Mr. Moulton asked if surrounding city or towns provide funding. Ms. Paradis stated the Milford is the only one that provides funding. Chairman Lema asked if West Haven has a shelter. Mr. Paradis stated they do not. She further stated there are veteran services that are contracted out and Beth El holds that contract as a day shelter but no overnight beds.

(8426) Boys & Girls' Club

Megan Altomare, Executive Director stated the Boys & Girls Club had a bus year with a 12% increase in the number of members served. She stated that in October the club will have be in existence for 10 years and they have grown from 30 members to 550. Ms. Altomare provided a handout that reviewed the accomplishments over the past year. She stated currently there are 81 members registered for summer camp and that she is hoping to obtain classroom space at Simon Lake. Ms. Altomare stated that an endowment fund has been set up for sustainability and their large fundraiser last with was the gala which is scheduled again this year on April 24th. Ms. Altomare stated the club is exploring the possibility of purchasing a stand along facility. She stated that membership is up and they now included kindergartners. Ms. Altomare provided a review of demographics and statistics. She stated they are always looking for grants to expand programming and that all programs are included in the membership fee of \$200 per year of which 26% are scholarship. Mr. Altomare stated the Boys & Girls Club Board is focused on growth, making sure the club is sustainable and keeps moving forward. She stated a goal for next year is to expand transportation from schools. Mr. Altomare stated they have requested an increase due to additional number of members being served. She stated they continue to look for new funding sources and are being cut 40% by the State.

Mr. Castignoli asked how much the State cut their budget. Ms. Altomare stated they went from \$34,000 to \$17,000. Mr. Fitzpatrick asked how many are employed. Ms. Altomare stated there are 4 full time and depending on the time of year there are 23 part time and 37 part time over the summer. Mr. Fitzpatrick asked what other revenue sources they have. Ms. Altomare stated grants and special events. Mr. Castignoli asked if the club partners with the YMCA. Ms. Altomare stated they are not currently partnering. Megan Altomare, Executive Director

(8427) Literacy Volunteers of So. Connecticut

Tammy Jackson thanking the Board for their support. She stated there has been a 12% increase this year and they are becoming more diverse than most people realize. She this year will be the 25th anniversary and they will be hosting an international festival this summer. Ms. Jackson stated there are 72 tutor and 1 paid staff member. She provided a handout and read from a prepared statement. Ms. Jackson stated that 76% of the students are women. She discussed the lunch and learn program that was created this year.

Mr. Moulton asked how people find the literacy center. Ms. Jackson stated they have a 7 language mailer that is put out a few times a year. She stated they can also be found by computer searching and a lot is simply word of mouth.

(8428) Milford Historic Preservation Commission

None.

(4121) Golf Course (Fund 18)

Dan Worroll stated the budget is the same as last year. Mr. Fitzpatrick asked if there has been an increase of usage at the golf course. Mr. Worroll stated the rounds have been down the past two years, but weather plays a big part.

(4210) Police Department

Keith Mello, Police Chief stated the overtime account is severely underfunded and that it does not meet what a department this size needs. He stated will be short this year as they are every year. In the past they made it up with surplus in the regular wage account, but do not think they will make it in this budget. Chief Mello stated the overtime s by contractual obligations. He stated they do not meet the training obligations but find ways to do taking from other accounts. Chief Mello discussed budgets of other towns such as Hamden and Fairfield. Mr. Castignoli asked what the budgets of the other towns are. Chief Mello stated they are approximately 1 million more than Milford's. He stated that every year he looks at what other police departments are doing and Milford is far below. Joe c what is their total budget.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked in the other towns do special event pay for police officers. Chief Mello stated he did not have that information only because he only has raw information as to Fairfield. Chief Mello reviewed the types of services provided by the police department. Mr. Fitzpatrick asked if there were currently any vacancies. Chief Mello state there is one vacancy due to retirement. He discussed how long it take a new officer to actually start and that it still has to be funded, paid for and fill while that new officer is training. Mr. Fitzpatrick asked if hired from another department does the new hire go through training. Chief Mello stated lateral hires do not go through training and discussed statutory requirements to hire a later. He stated they prefer to hire new officers that they can train from the ground up and that they look for people with a passion for this line of work.

Mr. Castignoli asked if there are minimum manpower requirements. Chief Mello stated there are not but they have to hire at 60% and that the funds come from the overtime account. He stated that if it's a vacancy the funds come from overtime, if its vacation some funds come from the vacation account and 4 hours come from overtime. Chief Mello stated this year there was overtime due to the large number of car break-ins. He stated it was difficult to address the problem and a task force was put together for prevention and to work solving cases. He stated another overtime expense is around the library because want people to feel safe and that Swat can cost \$5,000 to \$10,000.

Mr. Castignoli asked if they are responsible for the rest stops on the highway. Chief Mello stated they will respond to a call because of proximity, but ultimately it is the responsibility of the State Police. Mr. Fitzpatrick asked how many canines. Chief Mello stated 4 canines in total, 1 on patrol and 3 on narcotics. Mr. Fitzpatrick asked if a dog was used in another town would that town reimburse the City. Chief Mello stated they would not that crime knows no bounds. He reviewed how they provide mutual aid and train together.

Chief Mello stated it may look like overspending, but if you were to look at the contractual obligations and compare with similar agencies one would see they are not overspending. He stated he does not want any surprises should he eventually have to come back to the Board and say there is not enough.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked why communications has increased from \$10,000 to \$162,000. Chief Mello stated that is Motorola system that must be upgraded by July. He stated that all of the support costs were put into year 5 and they are now due. Chief Mello stated that they took a lower level of support and this is a mandatory upgrade. Chairman Lema asked if this is the baseline going forward. Chief Mello stated it is because upgrade is necessary. He stated they could choose to pay for it every year or put it in year 5 and they wanted to keep reoccurring costs down so that is why it was pushed out. Mr. Fitzpatrick asked if this was bondable item. Mayor Blake stated you may bond for equipment but not maintenance, which is an outlay expense.

Mr. Moulton asked why an increase in tests and evaluations. Chief Mello stated that account is underfunded and this account is to pay for promotional exams. He stated that promotional exams are given every 2 years and there is an increase when giving the exam.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked how many SRO's. Chief Mello stated there are 5. Mayor Blake stated an SRO is not assigned to the Academy, but they split their time. He further stated that when a police car is at the Academy it could be in response to an incident.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked for an explanation of supplemental funds. Chief Mello stated that is a surcharge for private duty that helps to pay for administrative expenses. He provided an explanation as to how private duty is invoiced.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about forfeitures. Chief Mello discussed reporting and use requirements for forfeitures. Mr. Castignoli asked how many new cruisers are being purchased. Chief Mello stated he will have to see how the bids come in, but believes the budget will allow for 5 and they will see where they can supplement from other accounts. Mr. Fitzpatrick asked if that would include the equipments. Chief Mello stated that would be an additional expense. Mr. Moulton asked if the department uses body worn cameras. Chief Mello stated they are and that is a recurring expense. Mr. Castignoli asked if the radar speed signs are the signs that can be moved around. Chief Mello stated they are and they have an impact on people slowing down. He also stated that some can provide data in real-time.

(4240) Animal Control

Scott Ellingson, Animal Control Officer stated the budget is the same as last year except for adding a monitor to the computer request.

Mr. Castignoli asked if they respond to raccoons. Mr. Ellingson said only after the police shoot one. He stated that if people call about one in their garbage can they tell them to tip the can and they will come out on their own. Mr. Ellingson said they only deal with wildlife if it is a public hazard.

Mr. Lema asked how many calls they get from Orange. Mr. Ellingson said most calls are from Milford. Mr. Castignoli asked if they deal mostly with dogs. Mr. Ellingson stated that dog bites, licensing, and roaming dogs are their main focus.

Chairman Lema asked about the condition of the shelter. Mr. Ellingson stated there are some repairs going on to bring it up to speed. Chairman Lema asked if those expenses are included in the budget. Mayor Blake stated they are operational expenses that come from Public Works.

Chairman Lema stated the Board would stand in recess until March 7, 2019. The Board recessed at 7:20 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