

**BOARD OF FINANCE
PROPOSED BUDGET 2016-2017 – FINAL VOTING SESSION
MARCH 2, 2016**

The Milford Board of Finance held a budget deliberations session on Wednesday, March 2, 2016 in Conference Room B of the Parsons Complex. Chairman Lema reconvened the budget session at 6:13 p.m.

Board Members Present

Brian A. Lema, Chairman
Joseph J. Fitzpatrick, Jr.
Lauren Secondi
Mickel Montano (6:25 p.m.)
Joseph Castignoli, Vice Chairman

Also Present

Mayor Benjamin G. Blake
Peter Erodici, Finance Director

Chairman Lema reconvened the Board of Finance budget hearings at 6:13 p.m. He stated tonight's meeting was for the final meeting of this year's budget sessions and that the Board would vote on a recommended budget. Chairman Lema stated as this Board has typically done, they would go through each page of the budget book, starting with the city side of the budget.

Vice Chairman Fitzpatrick and Mr. Castignoli made and seconded a motion to approve the Mayor's recommended budget as presented for Acct. 4111 Board of Aldermen. Motion carried unanimously.

Vice Chairman Fitzpatrick and Mr. Castignoli made and seconded a motion to approve the Mayor's recommended budget as presented for Acct. 4112 Elections. Motion carried unanimously.

Vice Chairman Fitzpatrick and Mr. Castignoli made and seconded a motion to approve the Mayor's recommended budget as presented for the following accounts: Acct. 4115 Registrar of Voters, Acct. 4116 Milford Gov't Access TV, Acct. 4121 Mayor, Acct. 4122 General Expenses and Acct. 4129 City Clerk. Motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Lema stated he would be recusing himself from voting on Acct. 4131 Law Department's budget as his law partner is the City Attorney. He turned the meeting over to Vice Chairman Fitzpatrick.

Mr. Castignoli and Vice Chairman Fitzpatrick made and seconded a motion to approve the Mayor's recommended budget as presented for the following account: Acct. 4131 Law Department. Motion carried 4 yes (Fitzpatrick, Montano, Secondi, Castignoli and 1 recused (Lema)).

Chairman Lema resumed as chair.

Vice Chairman Fitzpatrick and Mr. Castignoli made and seconded a motion to approve the Mayor's recommended budget as presented for the following accounts: Acct. 4132 Ethics Commission, Acct. 4133 Probate Court and Acct. 4141 Board of Finance. Motion carried unanimously.

Vice Chairman Fitzpatrick and Mr. Castignoli made and seconded a motion to approve the Mayor's recommended budget as presented for the following accounts: Acct. 4142 Permitting and Land Use, Acct. 4143 Board of Assessment Appeals, Acct. 4144 Zoning Board of Appeals, Acct. 4145 Pension Board, Acct. 4146 Flood and Erosion Board, Acct. 4147 Tree Commission, Acct. 4151 Civil Service Commission, Acct. 4153 Park, Beach and Recreation Commission, Acct. 4155 Economic Development Commission, 4156 Conservation Commission, Acct. 4159 Veterans, Ceremony & Parade Commission, 4160 Housing Code Board of Appeals, Acct. 4161 Housatonic River Estuary Commission and 4162 Open Space. Motion carried unanimously.

Vice Chairman Fitzpatrick and Mr. Castignoli made and seconded a motion to approve the Mayor's recommended budget as presented for the following accounts: Acct. 4193 Public Library, Acct. 4210 Finance Department, Acct. 4215 Management Information Systems (MIS) and Acct. 4219 Personnel.

Vice Chairman Fitzpatrick and Mr. Castignoli made and seconded a motion to approve the Mayor's recommended budget for the following accounts: Acct. 4310 Police Department, Acct. 4320 Fire Department, Acct. 4331 Civil Preparedness, Acct. 4340 Animal Control and Acct. 4360 Lighting, Hydrants, Water. Motion carried unanimously.

Vice Chairman Fitzpatrick and Mr. Castignoli made and seconded a motion to approve the Mayor's recommended budget for the following account: 4420 Public Works Office, with the following changes, line item 4111 0000 Regular Wages to read \$339,863, line item 4111 9942 1/5 Fiscal Week to read \$1,694 for a new subtotal in Personal Services of \$345,557 and a new department total of \$352,193.

Chairman Lema pointed out a budgeted position addition of Superintendent of Public Works for a recommended salary of \$82,979, including a change to the Contractual Wage Adjustment to read \$1,200, with a new Position Totals to read \$339,863.

Motion carried unanimously.

Vice Chairman Fitzpatrick and Mr. Castignoli made and seconded a motion to approve the Mayor's recommended budget for the following accounts: Acct. 4421 Highway/Parks, Acct. 4423 Building Maintenance, Acct. 4424 Engineering and Acct. 4429 General Garage. Motion carried unanimously.

Vice Chairman Fitzpatrick and Mr. Castignoli made and seconded a motion to approve the Mayor's recommended budget as presented for the following accounts: Acct. 4431 Solid Waste, with the following changes, line item 4111 0000 Regular Wages to read \$1,397,396, line item 4111 9942 1/5 Fiscal Week to read \$6,944 for a new subtotal in Personal Services of \$1,916,840 and a new department total of \$4,435,129.

Mr. Erodici pointed out, as has had been discussed at the technical meeting, the elimination of the Working Leader position and Laborer position, and the title change of Foreman to Assistant Public Works Director, which resulted in a Contractual Wage Adjustment reduction to \$8,700 and a new Position Total of 29 in the amount of \$1,397,396.

Motion carried unanimously.

Vice Chairman Fitzpatrick and Mr. Castignoli made and seconded a motion to approve the Mayor's recommended budget for the following: Acct. 4503 Public Debt.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked if budget item was likely to change.

Mr. Erodici stated there were no changes to this point. He stated it might be worth thinking about whether or not to leave some savings to offset expenditures if the State budget numbers change.

Mayor Blake stated the legislative session is expected to adjourn prior to the Board of Aldermen final vote. He added he agreed with Mr. Erodici that the Board allow for a slight cushion.

Chairman Lema commented at this point in the process, this Board usually does not have the numbers from the State.

Motion carried unanimously.

Vice Chairman Fitzpatrick and Mr. Castignoli made and seconded a motion to approve the Mayor's recommended budget for the following accounts: Acct. 4610 Health Department and Acct. 4620 Recreation Department. Motion carried unanimously.

Vice Chairman Fitzpatrick and Mr. Castignoli made and seconded a motion to approve the Mayor's recommended budget for the following: Acct. 4710 Employee Benefits, with the following changes: line item 4712 9925 Training: Local 1595 should read \$5,000 for a new subtotal in Operational Expenses of \$23,200 and a new department total of \$22,684,177. Motion carried unanimously.

Vice Chairman Fitzpatrick and Mr. Castignoli made and seconded a motion to approve the Mayor's recommended budget as presented for the following accounts: Acct. 4720 Insurance and Bonds, Acct. 4740 Claims and Refunds, Acct. 4790 Benefit & Salary Reserve, Acct. 4799 Unallocated Contingency, Acct. 4801 Council on Aging, Acct. 4803 Fine Arts Council, Acct. 4805 C-Med and Acct. 4807 Regional Mental Health Board. Motion carried unanimously.

Vice Chairman Fitzpatrick and Mr. Castignoli made and seconded a motion to approve the Mayor's recommended budget as presented for the following account: Acct. 4811 Borough of Woodmont.

Mr. Fitzpatrick stated he wished to make an amendment to this account, reducing the recommended amount to \$220,000. Mr. Castignoli seconded the motion.

Chairman Lema stated he would recommend the Mayor's recommendation and therefore would vote against the amendment.

Mayor Blake reminded the Board that Woodmont is a shoreline community that has been hit hard with storms in recent years. He spoke of basin drains, damage to the guardrails by the park. He stated there have been extra costs to the Borough.

Mr. Fitzpatrick stated the reason for his amendment is that he felt the Borough should go out to bid for their contracts to make sure they are getting the best prices. He expressed his disappointment they do not do have them go out to bid on their contracts.

Mr. Castignoli asked about their reserve funds.

Mayor Blake stated their reserve funds are through taxes, which are used strictly for Borough projects only. He explained they are reimbursed from the grant they receive from the city for lighting, public works projects, etc. He also noted there are projects they are looking to get done.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked if the Borough has increased their taxes.

Mayor Blake explained the Borough's mill rate is a percentage of the overall city mill rate

The amendment failed 2 yes (Fitzpatrick, Castignoli) and 3 no (Lema, Montano, Secondi)

Mr. Castignoli made and Ms. Montano made and seconded a motion to approve the Mayor's recommended budget as presented for the following account: Acct. 4811 Borough of Woodmont.

Motion carried 4 yes (Lema, Castignoli, Secondi, Montano) and 1 no (Fitzpatrick)

Vice Chairman Fitzpatrick and Mr. Castignoli made and seconded a motion to approve the Mayor's recommended budget as presented for the following accounts: Acct. 4812 Transit Authority, Acct. 4813 Bridges, Acct. 4815 Veterans Graves, Acct. 4816 Milford Flotilla 73, Acct. 4817 Human Services Department and Acct. 4818 Historic District. Motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Lema stated he sits on the Milford Progress Board and therefore would abstain from voting. He turned the meeting over to Mr. Fitzpatrick.

Mr. Castignoli and Vice Chairman Fitzpatrick made and seconded a motion to approve the Mayor's recommended budget as presented for Acct. 4819 Milford Progress, Inc. as presented. Motion carried 4 yes (Fitzpatrick, Castignoli, Montano, Secondi) and one abstention (Lema).

Vice Chairman Fitzpatrick turned the meeting over to Chairman Lema.

Vice Chairman Fitzpatrick and Mr. Castignoli made and seconded a motion to approve the Mayor's recommended budget as presented for the following accounts: Acct. 4820 Historic District II, Acct. 4821 Health Services/VNA and Acct. 4822 Cemetery Association, Acct. 4825 Beth El Shelter, Acct. 4826 Boys & Girls Club, Acct. 4992 Private School Textbook, Acct. 4993 Education Audit Fees, Acct. 4994 School Debt and Acct. 4995 Employee Benefits Non-Teaching. Motion carried unanimously.

Vice Chairman Fitzpatrick and Mr. Castignoli made and seconded a motion to approve the budget for Acct. 4996 Education Operations as follows: line item 4001 0000 Lump Sum Appropriations to read \$91,786,950 for a new sub-total in *Education Operations* of \$91,786,950 and a new department total of \$91,786,950.

Ms. Secondi stated she would be recusing herself from discussions and voting on the education budget as she is employed by the Board of Education.

Mr. Fitzpatrick and Mr. Castignoli made and seconded a motion a motion to reduce the budget request by \$230,000.

Mr. Erodici stated the \$230,000 reduction would represent a 0.6 % overall budget increase over last fiscal year.

Mayor Blake cautioned the Board there is still the unknown from the State as to funding. He noted there has been talk of reductions at the State level. He also pointed out the closing of Saint Gabriel's School, could result in an additional 100 students. Mayor Blake also stated a speech and language lab at West Shore and East Shore was proposed.

Chairman Lema commented the Board of Education gave a very good presentation and requested a responsible budget which he stated was well thought out. He stated he would be opposed to the amendment to reduce the budget.

Mr. Castignoli stated he would amend the request by reducing the requested amount by \$175,000 for a new department total of \$91,611,950

Mayor Blake stated he has spoken with colleagues and reiterated there is still the unknown as to what funding will be coming from the State.

Mr. Fitzpatrick stated he did want to spend additional monies on new programs until current programs are working. He also spoke of the energy funds, transportation accounts.

Chairman Lema stated in the Board of Education presentation the school system demonstrated good performance over the last few years. He also pointed out it is the Board of Education's statutory responsibility to spend their money accordingly, but felt that they did sharpen their pencil with the budget they requested. He also spoke of the natural gas request as being reasonable. Chairman Lema stated he would be against the cut.

Mr. Castignoli withdrew his amendment.

The amendment to reduce the budget by \$230,000 failed 3 no (Castignoli, Lema, Montano) 1 yes (Fitzpatrick) and 1 abstention (Secondi).

Mr. Castignoli and Vice Chairman Fitzpatrick made and seconded a motion to reduce the original requested budget by \$175,000 for a new department total \$91,611,950.

Mr. Erodici stated that amount represented an increase of .66% over the current budget.

Dr. Feser commented the energy numbers were not specific because they are still waiting on the various incentives and so the final numbers are dependent upon those numbers.

Mr. Erodici clarified there was a mistake in last year's budget, which was added back in, which kept the budget flat and that they needed to project for the new year.

Mr. Castignoli commented the explanation this Board received from Mr. Richetelli just was not articulated to his satisfaction, which was one of the reasons he would support the reduction.

The motion failed 2 no (Lema, Montano) and 2 yes (Castignoli, Fitzpatrick).

Chairman Lema stated he would not be in favor of a higher reduction.

Ms. Montano stated she would not recommend cutting the Board of Education's proposed budget by any more than \$90,000.

Ms. Montano and Chairman Lema made and seconded a motion to amend the original request of Acct. 0010 4996 Education Operations to reduce the request by \$90,000 for a new subtotal in Education Operations of \$91,691,950 and a new department total of \$91,691,950.

Mr. Erodici stated the \$90,000 reduction represents a budget increase of 0.75%.

Mr. Fitzpatrick stated there are a lot of items in this budget that just don't need to be done, i.e new programs, etc.

Mr. Castignoli stated there is a fund balance. He asked Mr. Erodici about any reserve balance.

Mr. Erodici stated funds from the reserve balance cannot be transferred. He stated there is no history on the \$2.7M grant, which is only the governor's proposed budget, which is based on sales tax revenues.

Mr. Castignoli stated he can only operate with the figures that are in front of him.

Chairman Lema reiterated there are just so many numbers this Board does not have at this stage of the voting and that the aldermen would have more information at the time they vote.

Mayor Blake reminded the Board the grant they receive is what they get, they can't come back for additional funds.

Amended motion to reduce the budget by \$90,000 failed 2 no (Castignoli/Fitzpatrick) and 2 yes (Lema, Montano).

Chairman Lema asked if any member of the Board wished to present a new number.

Mr. Castignoli stated he would recommend the reduction of \$175,000, stating he felt it was a justifiable reduction. He reiterated he felt the numbers presented during the budget just were not supported.

Mr. Castignoli and Vice Chairman Fitzpatrick made and seconded a motion to amend the original request of Acct. 0010 4996 Education Operations to reduce the request by \$175,000 (a reduction of .66%) for a new subtotal in *Education Operations* of \$91,611,950 and a new department total of \$91,611,950. Motion carried 3 yes (Lema, Fitzpatrick, Castignoli) and 1 no (Montano), with 1 abstention (Secondi).

Vice Chairman Fitzpatrick and Mr. Castignoli made and seconded a motion to approve the Mayor's recommended budget as presented for the following accounts: Acct. 4997 Education Health Insurance Contribution and Acct. 4998 Education Health Services: School Nurses. Motion carried unanimously.

Vice Chairman Fitzpatrick and Mr. Castignoli made and seconded a motion to approve the Mayor's recommended budget as presented for Acct. 4154 Sewer Commission. Motion carried unanimously.

Vice Chairman Fitzpatrick and Mr. Castignoli made and seconded a motion to approve the Mayor's recommended budget for Acct. 4426 Wastewater, with the following changes: line item 4112 9902 State License Stipend in the amount of \$43,000 for a new subtotal in Personal Services of \$1,942,871 for a new department total of \$6,419,341. Motion carried unanimously.

Vice Chairman Fitzpatrick and Mr. Castignoli made and seconded a motion to approve the Mayor's recommended budget as presented for the following: Acct. 4790 Benefit and Salary Reserves and Acct. 4799 Unallocated Contingency. Motion carried unanimously.

Vice Chairman Fitzpatrick and Mr. Castignoli made and seconded a motion to approve the Mayor's recommended budget 0012 0000 Sewer Fund (Revenues) with the following change: line Sewer Use Fees to read \$7,230,022 and a new Revenues Total of \$8,177,522. Motion carried unanimously.

Vice Chairman Fitzpatrick and Mr. Castignoli made and seconded a motion to approve the Mayor's recommended budget 0012 0000 Sewer Fund (Expenditures) with the following change: Total budget now reads \$8,177,522.

Mr. Erodici stated the change represents the change on the expenditure side.

Motion carried unanimously.

Vice Chairman Fitzpatrick and Mr. Castignoli made and seconded a motion to approve the Mayor's recommended budget as presented for the following account: Acct. 4157 Marina Enterprise Revenue. Motion carried unanimously.

Vice Chairman Fitzpatrick and Mr. Castignoli made and seconded a motion to approve the Mayor's recommended budget as presented for the following account: Acct. 4157 Harbor Management Commission. Motion carried unanimously.

Vice Chairman Fitzpatrick and Mr. Castignoli made and seconded a motion to approve the Mayor's recommended budget as presented for the following account: Acct. 4157 Harbor Management Commission (Revenues).

Vice Chairman Fitzpatrick and Mr. Castignoli made and seconded a motion to approve the Mayor's recommended budget as presented for the following account: Acct. 4157 Harbor Management Commission (Expenditures). Motion carried unanimously.

Vice Chairman Fitzpatrick and Ms. Secondi made and seconded a motion to approve the Mayor's recommended budget as presented: Acct. 4121 Golf Course (Revenues).

Vice Chairman Fitzpatrick and Ms. Secondi made and seconded a motion to approve the Mayor's recommended budget as presented: Acct. 4121 Golf Course (Expenditures). Motion carried unanimously.

Vice Chairman Fitzpatrick and Ms. Montano made and seconded a motion to approve 0010 0000 General Fund Revenue, with the following changes: line item 3111 0000 Current Taxes to read \$95,189 for a new subtotal in *State Education Grants* of \$11,676,732; and line item 3643 0000 State Realty to read \$196,625, line item 3643 0001 State Realty – Pequot to read \$381,746 and line item 3647 0000 Private Exemptions to read \$423,111 for a new subtotal in *State PILOT Grants* of \$1,576,285; and line item 3658 0000 Prop. Tax Relief-Mun Rev Share to read \$2,700,000 for a new subtotal in *General Purpose State Grants* of \$2,795,000 for a new Total Revenue of \$204,941,392, as recommended by the Board of Finance.

Mayor Blake stated with this budget recommendation to the Board of Aldermen there would be a reduction to the taxpayers.

Chairman Lema thanked the mayor for a budget that was reasonable to work with. He also thanked the entire Board for their due diligence throughout the budget sessions.

Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Erodict commented the overall tax rate will decrease. He stated the new mill rate would be 27.88, which he stated is a decrease of .50 mills.

Being no further business to discuss, Mr. Castignoli and Ms. Montano made and seconded a motion to adjourn the budget deliberation sessions regarding the budget for fiscal year 2016-2017. Motion carried unanimously.

The Board adjourned at 7:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen A. Kennedy
Recording Secretary