

**BOARD OF ALDERMEN  
BUDGET DELIBERATIONS SESSION – FY 2017-2018  
APRIL 10, 2017**

The Board of Aldermen held a budget deliberation session on Monday, April 10, 2017 in the aldermanic chambers of City Hall. Chairman Vetro welcomed everyone to the meeting regarding the Board of Finance's recommended budget for FY2017-2018. He asked those present to join in saluting our flag and reciting the Pledge of allegiance.

**1. Roll Call**

**Board Members Present**

B. Anderson  
E. Beatty  
B. Bevan  
M. Casey  
D. German  
A. Giannattasio  
J. Golden  
J. Grant  
M. Hardiman  
S. Shaw  
F. Smith  
N. Veccharelli  
P. Vetro  
R. Vitali

**Also Present**

Mayor B. Blake  
S. Fournier, Mayor's Admin. Asst.  
P. Erodicti, Finance Director

**Excused**

B. Bier

Chairman Vetro reconvened the Board in public session at 7:08 p.m.

**4812 Transit District** – Henry Jadach, Director was present for questions/comments.

Ald. Giannattasio asked about revenue from the parking lot and if a separate account would be set up for those monies.

Mayor Blake Explained this Board set up a separate reserve fund and any costs associated with the maintenance of the parking would be offset by the parking revenue.

Ald. Vitali asked how much revenue was gained by having a management company.

Mayor Blake stated the parking lot actually operated at a loss. He stated Mr. Jadach has an idea for the operation of the parking going forward.

Ald. Vitali asked about the increase of \$5,000 over the recommended amount.

Mr. Jadach explained it was due in part to contractual obligations. He stated the hope is the balance of the monies would come from the State and a small portion from the Federal government.

**4157 Harbor Commission** – Ray Swift, Harbor Manager was present for questions/comments. He commented this past winter was a normal one for them. He also spoke of the improvements at the landing, which included the new patio. Mr. Swift reported reservations are starting to come in for boat slips.

Chairman Vetro complimented Mr. Swift on his work at the landing and the overall upkeep.

Ald. Veccharelli asked if the new lines were going in with the docks.

Mr. Swift stated shackles were replaced over the winter. He stated the floats are back up now.

Ald. Grant asked about line item 4978 0706 Snow Thrower and noted it is in the budget every year.

Mr. Swift explained it is there most important tool that they use clearing and removing snow.

Ald. Bevan asked how many seasonal temps are employed at the Landing.

Mr. Swift stated 8-10. He stated on a weekend he needs a minimum of 6 working.

Ald. Golden asked about line item 4823 0000 General & Auto Liability.

Mr. Swift stated that number is put in for him. He stated when it is a lower number, it is a good thing.

Ald. Giannattasio asked if the overall budget is flat.

Mr. Swift replied he would say yes to that. He stated they try to do as much as they can with less. He stated they always end the year in the black, which is a good thing.

Ald. Giannattasio asked if raising the fees was a help to the budget.

Mr. Swift stated it was phased in, and that fact that they are in the black is a good thing.

**4142 Department of Permitting and Land Use** – Mr. Joseph Griffith, Director and Building Official was present for questions/comments. He stated the department's overall budget is an overall increase of \$86,000 due primarily to contractual salary increases.

Ald. Casey asked about the on-line permit process and if that was working out.

Mr. Griffith stated he will check with those individuals who are waiting and explain the process. We are trying to expand the online permitting to solar panels, and will continue to looking into other online permits.

Ald. Golden complimented Mr. Griffith for the upgrades and efficient system in place.

Ald. Grant asked about line item 4796 0000 Computer Software & Maintenance.

Mr. Griffith explained a part is the graphics programs they use. He also stated they have a number of computers in the department. He also spoke of the cost of the number of drawings they receive from a contractor. He stated that is the objective of the programs.

Ald. Shaw asked about permitting fees and the projection.

Mr. Griffith stated they carry over some of those monies from one fiscal year to the next.

Ald. Shaw stated in the revenue account the projection is \$675,000.

Mr. Erodici stated they take a conservative approach and try not to overestimate.

Ald. Vitali asked about some of the damage from storms and if those homeowners have completed their work.

Mr. Griffith stated there are some out there, but they continue to work with them.

Ald. Vitali asked about line item 4476 0000 Dangerous Building Costs.

Mr. Griffith stated it is when they are called in after a fire or any building damage and a building needs to be boarded out. He stated it allows them to call in a contractor.

Mayor Blake explained that is one of those accounts that roll over.

**4144 Zoning Board of Appeals** – Mr. Joseph Griffith, Director of Permitting and Land Use and Building Official was present for questions/comments.

No questions.

**4215 Management Information Systems (MIS)** – Jean Lasczak, Coordinator was present for questions/comments.

No questions.

**4193 Public Library** - Christine Angeli, Director was present for questions/comments.

Ms. Angeli commented during difficult economic times they tend to see an increase in activity at the library. Reading from a prepared statement she provided the Board with vital statistics of the library. She stated the overall budget represents less than a 1% increase, which is due to contractual salary obligations. She also pointed out two of the most popular services they offer are being cut by the State. She asked the Board for their full support of the budget.

Ald. Golden asked if less people are coming into the library because of the technology out there now.

Ms. Angeli stated their program figures show the library is heavily used. She stated not everyone has a computer at home. She stated their computer stations are full from the time the library opens until they close. Ms. Angeli also spoke about the connection with the library and the community.

Ald. Shaw asked about the Borrow It Program and the Deliver It Program and the amount they would be looking to recoup.

Ms. Angeli stated they just don't have that number right now.

Ald. Shaw asked about the programs and the numbers and the trajectory.

Ms. Angeli stated programming is on the rise. In 2010 she stated the number was 359, in 2014 it was up to 400 and the numbers continue to increase. She stated when times are tough; people tend to seek out the library for those resources.

Ald. Smith stated he and Ald. Grant are the aldermanic liaisons to the Board. He spoke highly of the work Ms. Angeli does and her staff. He spoke of the importance of the services the library provides to the community. He also spoke of the role of the Friends of the Library and how they have been an essential part of the library, along with the library board. Ald. Smith asked about line item 4703 0000 Bibliomation and asked if this was the second year of the program.

Ms. Angeli stated they actually started in August. She explained this is a new line item in the budget this year and pointed out their software line item has been decreased.

Ald. Smith asked for an overview of Bibliomation.

Ms. Angeli explained it is a library consortium that they belong.

Ald. Grant stated as a liaison he sees firsthand the work of Ms. Angeli and her staff. He encouraged residents to utilize the library as much as possible.

Ald. Giannattasio asked about the business programs that are put on by the library.

Ms. Angeli stated those programs are put on by staff and Economic Development. She explained the programs are very popular. She stated they also have a job van that comes in for mentoring.

**4153 Park, Beach and Recreation Commission** – Mr. Paul Piscitelli, Recreation Director and Dan Worroll, Chairman were present for questions/comments.

Mr. Worroll stated the budget is very simple.

Ald. Vitali asked about line item 4432 0001 Trees Shrubs & Lawn.

Mr. Worroll explained it is for upkeep on the Milford Green and that account will also be used for upkeep at the new soccer fields.

**4620 Recreation Department** – Mr. Paul Piscitelli, Recreation Director and Dan Worroll, Chairman Park, Beach and Recreation were present for questions/comments.

Director Piscitelli stated he wished to make the Board aware; the State of Connecticut is seeking another increase in minimum wage. He stated the increase results in a 48% increase to their Seasonal/Temporary account. He stated since 2009 that account has increased 60.67%.

Ald. Casey asked about line item 4117 0000 Seasonable/Temporary

Mr. Piscitelli explained that line item is used to pay for camp counselors, life guards and also Camp Happiness.

Ald. Golden asked about line item 4776 0001 Cell Phones in the amount of \$3,000

Mr. Piscitelli stated the department has 5 cell phones billed each month.

Ald. Vitali asked the current minimum wage.

Mr. Piscitelli stated it is \$10.10, which just went up in January.

Ald. Vitali asked the impact if that line item were cut.

Mr. Piscitelli stated it would be devastating. He stated they would have to reduce the activities the department offers, limit the number of kids attending the playground camps, and reduce lifeguards, as well as potentially closing buildings at night.

Ald. Shaw asked about the projection of \$40,000 for beach parking fees.

Mr. Piscitelli stated the fee increased from \$5.00 to \$15.00; however the volume of cars remained the same. He explained the projection is based on an average of 3 years.

Ald. Giannattasio asked about the minimum wage increase and its impact on the residents of Milford. He asked if increasing the fees for programs is something the department has considered.

Mr. Piscitelli stated the department has always made every effort to provide the best and most they can for the residents. He stated each year they need to be more and more creative with their seasonal/temporary account. He stated one of the reasons their programs are popular is due to their cost.

Ald. Veccharelli stated the minimum wage for this budget is from the Board of Finance. He asked when they would come into the problem.

Mr. Piscitelli stated the figure in Seasonal/Temporary line item is based on the current minimum wage. He stated if the wage increases in January, this line item would be impacted.

Ald. Veccharelli asked why the proposed minimum wage increase was not put into the budget.

Mr. Piscitelli stated he was not aware of the proposed minimum wage increase at the time the budget was developed.

Ald. Veccharelli asked approximately how much more would be needed to cover the deficit.

Mr. Piscitelli stated \$31,888.

Ald. Vitali asked about Camp Happiness and if the Board of Education provides any assistance.

Mr. Piscitelli stated the Board of Education did at one time but they stopped.

Ald. Giannattasio recommended the Recreation Department look into increasing program fees.

Ald. Veccharelli complimented Mr. Piscitelli and his staff for the work they do and making life good for our residents.

**4121 Golf Course** – Dan Worroll was present for Dick Austin, Chairman, who was unable to attend. Mr. Worroll stated the Golf Course is an enterprise fund. He stated the only change to the budget is a reduction in maintenance account and transferring those fees to the water account.

No questions.

**4116 Milford Government Access Television (MGAT)** – Ms. Flannery Flannery, Chairwoman was present for questions/comments. Ms. Flannery explained the role of MGAT and explained the changes over the last few years and the value of the programming to the community. She continued reading from a prepared statement citing the work of MGAT, how they receive their grant money and attempting to upgrade old, outdated equipment.

Ald. Casey asked if our neighboring towns have larger staff.

Ms. Flannery stated in the Town of Fairfield they record approximately 12 meetings per month. She stated they also have a staff. She stated in the Town of Orange they have 3 paid employees and in the Town of Woodbridge, their staff is town employees.

Ald. Casey commented Milford essentially does about the same with one paid person.

Ms. Flannery replied yes.

Chairman Vetro asked about live meetings.

Ms. Flannery explained the process.

Ald. Vitali asked if any of the grant funds have restrictions.

Ms. Flannery explained the grant she recently applied for does have restrictions. She stated their priority right now is a new server.

Ald. Vitali asked if the BOE shares in the cost of meetings, the cost of producing a meeting and the amount of time needed for producing a meeting.

Ms. Flannery stated the BOE does not provide any hard costs. As to cost per meeting, she stated it is hard to pin down an amount, but an average meeting is approximately 11 hours to produce at a cost of \$275.00.

Ald. Smith asked about the towns mentioned, it seems like the difference is 4X compared to what Milford receives. He asked why Milford is so underfunded.

Ms. Flannery stated there is a specific amount (\$100,000) of money that towns compete for. She stated last year they were awarded \$32,000 from the \$100,000 that Cable Advisory offers.

Ald. Giannattasio asked if the monies can be used for either equipment or labor.

Ms. Flannery replied yes, but it does depend on how the grant was applied for.

Ald. Vitali asked if there are other grants out there.

Ms. Flannery stated not that she is aware of.

Ald. Vitali asked if any of the other towns cost share their productions.

Ms. Flannery stated not that she was aware.

Ald. Grant asked the cost for the purchase they are looking.

Ms. Flannery stated they have a portion of the money. She stated one of their challenges is having two studios, one here and one at the BOE. She stated it was difficult to say exactly how much is needed.

Ald. Veccharelli asked if they receive money from the BOE.

Ms. Flannery replied no, but there was a request for specific coverage which the BOE contributed.

Ald. Veccharelli asked how much time is spent on a BOE meeting.

Ms. Flannery stated a BOE meeting is approximately 3 hours.

Ald. Veccharelli asked their total budget for this year.

Ms. Flannery stated the grant funding from CAC is \$32,550.

Ald. Veccharelli thanked Ms. Flannery for the work she does. He asked how many paid employees.

Ms. Flannery stated one paid full time and 3 volunteers, which include her, Nick and Andrea.

Ald. Veccharelli asked if in the other towns their BOE contributes.

Ms. Flannery stated Orange/Woodbridge is town meetings. Amity does their own BOE meetings.

Ald. Veccharelli asked a reasonable budget going forward.

Ms. Flannery stated her wish list would be to have Milford fund labor fully and then she could apply for grants for needed equipment.

Ald. Veccharelli asked the cost for a full year.

Ms. Flannery stated at this point they are at \$32,000, but it could be as much as \$37,000.

Ald. Veccharelli commented about the history of MGAT coming on board since he has been an alderman and the changes that have occurred. He thanked her for all of her efforts on behalf of Milford.

Ald. Bevan asked if there is a time period that the \$32,000 is expended.

Ms. Flannery stated they would like it be spent in the fiscal year, but this year they are holding over.

Ald. Bevan commented about the "Minute with the Mayor," which he stated has been well received.

Ms. Flannery stated it is not an MGAT production, but it is put on by the Community Development Department.

Ald. Smith recognized Ms. Flannery's sense of volunteerism and appreciated her efforts to move this committee forward.

#### **4146 Flood and Erosion Board**

Mayor Blake stated the only cost for this account is secretarial costs for their monthly meetings.

#### **4147 Tree Commission**

Mayor Blake stated in addition to secretarial fees, there is a line item for trees and shrubs.

**4156 Conservation Commission** – Ms. McAllister McAllister, Chair and Dan Drago, Vice Chair were present for questions/comments. Mr. Steve Johnson, Open Space Agent and Natural Resource Officer was also present. Ms. McAllister expressed her appreciation to the Board for their assistance. She stated members of the Commission have been visiting the 701 North Street property, looking at



potential open space. She distributed an overall report of their work to date. She continued with an explanation of the handout. Provide awareness of natural resources, public information to residents.

Ald. Bevan asked if they receive any grants.

Ms. McAllister stated they do not. Mostly volunteer work.

Ald. Shaw asked about the Planning and Zoning Board review.

Ms. McAllister stated it is generally when open space is associated with a particular project.

Mr. Johnson stated they provide their recommendations but it is done as a broad recommendation.

Ald. Grant expressed his appreciation for preserving open space and keeping Milford beautiful. He asked about long-term plans.

Ms. McAllister spoke of a new initiation regarding wildlife, beautification and similar initiatives. She also spoke of a recent conference she was able to attend and information she was able to receive concerning an app for a worksheet.

Ald. Beatty amplified the comments of Ald. Bevan and Ald. Grant. More information regarding the app she mentioned.

Ms. McAllister spoke of app.

Ald. Beatty asked about their mission statement.

Ms. McAllister referred to the handout she provided and stated the first paragraph is essentially their charge/mission statement.

Ald. Veccharelli commented the budget is lean. He shared some comments he has heard from his constituents regarding open space. He asked about identifying open space entrances.

Ms. McAllister a wonderful concern and she will address it with the Commission.

**4162 Open Space** – Mr. Steve Johnson, Open Space Agent and Natural Resource Officer. Mr. Johnson provided the Board with an overview of their work over the past year. He spoke of the value of education along with volunteerism. He spoke of engaging the community and the volunteer hours from residents.

Ald. Grant asked for an updated amount regarding grant money.

Mr. Johnson stated they received a dune grant from the University of Connecticut which was approximately \$7,800 for dune restoration. He added a group of volunteers did a dune planting last week. He also spoke of the criteria and competitiveness of those grants.

Ald. Shaw asked about the grant for the brochures

Mr. Johnson stated it was monies received from SCOG.

Ald. Veccharelli commented regarding the budget which is simply one person. He asked about his personal costs, i.e. reimbursement for travel, conferences, etc.

Mr. Johnson stated it is by choice and that he is not obligated to attend. He stated he chooses those opportunities that will bring value to Milford.

Ald. Veccharelli asked Mr. Johnson is he uses a city vehicle.

Mr. Johnson stated he does not and that he uses his own vehicle.

**4160 Housing Code Board of Appeals**

No questions.

**4998 Milford Promise, Inc. – no one was present.**

Ald. Golden and Ald. Veccharelli made and seconded a motion to recess at 10:00 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen A. Kennedy  
Recording Secretary