

**BOARD OF FINANCE
BUDGET HEARINGS - PROPOSED BUDGET FY 2021-2022
FEBRUARY 22, 2021**

The Board of Finance held a virtual budget deliberations session on Monday, February 22, 2021 via Zoom. Chairman Lema announced the Board was out of recess and reconvened the budget deliberations meeting in public session at 5:38 p.m.

Board Members Present

Brian Lema, Chairman
Scott Moulton
Ray Arnold
Lauren Ranges

Also Present

Mayor Benjamin G. Blake
Peter Erodici, Finance Director

(4459) Veterans, Ceremony & Parade Commission

Chairman Lema stated this primarily for flags for a total of \$5,600.

(8427) Literacy Volunteers of So. Connecticut

Tami Jackson, Executive Director, discussed how this year was different due Covid. She stated the year ended with a \$20,000 deficit due to inability to hold fundraisers. Ms. Jackson stated students are still attending and some tutors choose to not work for various reasons. She stated there were 89 students with 20 waiting. Ms. Jackson stated the center had to adapt and pivot and moved to a virtual platform. She provided a brief description of how the center adapted and operated during the Covid pandemic. Mr. Moulton asked what the \$5,500 represented over entire budget. Ms. Jackson stated budget is approximately \$105,000. Mr. Moulton asked if the center is completely virtual. Ms. Jackson stated they are doing a hybrid following all guidelines. She provided a description of the safety precautions taken at the center.

(4520) Recreation

Bill Garfield, Recreation Director, stated he is available for any questions the Board may have. Mayor Blake stated Bill has been appointed Recreation Department and is doing a fantastic job. Mr. Moulton asked why increase for seasonal temporary. Mr. Garfield stated the seasonal temp account is the largest account for hiring camp, clinics, and buildings. He stated the account is impacted by increase in minimum wage. Mr. Garfield discussed lifeguard and beach rangers. Mayor Blake stated the biggest impact to the account is minimum wage increase. He stated the Recreation Department employs over 200 seasonal employees that are minimum wage earners with the biggest amount being hired over the summer months. Ms. Ranges asked if the natatorium is open. Mr. Garfield stated it is not open at the current time. Mayor Blake stated the natatorium is not being utilized by Recreation Department but is open for open swim and other activities. Mr. Moulton asked if there is a plan for activities offers. Mr. Garfield discussed activities that are being planned. He stated the biggest activity is basketball and it is expected that will continue to grow.

(4153) Park & Recreation Commission

None

(4111) Board of Aldermen

None

(4116) MGAT

Kara Flannery, Chairman MGAT, stated this year's budget is flat. She stated that due to events being cancelled last year there was a surplus and will again most likely this year. Ms. Flannery provided a summary of activities being covered by MGAT.

(4141) Board of Finance

None

(4146) Flood & Erosion Board

None

(4147) Tree Commission

None

(4410) Health Department

Deepa Joseph, Health Director, stated it's been a busy year at the Health Department. She provided Covid specific information. Ms. Joseph stated most of the past year was spent on Covid planning activities. She provided information on the amount of time staff spends on contact tracing. Ms. Joseph stated the vaccine clinic at Parsons Government Center has been operating since Decemberr 23rd. She stated all Health Department employees are involved in assisting the clinic and discussed the impact to staff due to Covid. Ms. Joseph stated the change in the budget under regular wages is the reinstatement of the Deputy Director position that was eliminated in 2015. She stated this year more than any other has shown the need for the position. Ms. Joseph stated that should the Health Director not be available the work is assigned, per state statute, to the Deputy Director. She mentioned that currently a neighboring community needs to provide such coverage. Ms. Joseph stated overtime has also increased due to overages caused by events that require sanitarian inspections. She stated an increase in seasonal temp is due to community health nurse. Chairman Lema thanked Ms. Joseph and her staff for the hard work over the past year. Mr. Moulton asked what type of credentials are required for Deputy Director. Ms. Joseph discussed the requirements required by state statute. She stated she previously held that position prior to becoming Director and provided a description of the work previously performed in the deputy director position. Mayor Blake

stated Ms. Joseph and her entire staff have done a fantastic job throughout the pandemic. He mentioned that it is his intent to reinstate the Deputy Director position.

(4798) Education Health Services/School Nurses

Mr. Joseph stated an increase has been requested in seasonal temp due to minimum wage increase.

(4121) Health Services

Ms. Joseph stated this account assists students entering the Milford School system obtain physical exams where they do not have a medical provider. She mentioned due to Covid and the inability to obtain physicals she expects there will be more requests in the future.

(4417) Milford HSD Agency

Ms. Joseph stated the budget request is flat. She stated Covid has impacted the most vulnerable residents who are served at Human Services. She discussed grant funding that was received through the Cares Act. Ms. Joseph stated it is anticipated there will be more requests in the future due to Covid.

(8115) Veterans Grave Preservation Commission

None

(8419) Milford Progress

None

(8118) Historic District Commission

None

(8120) Historic District Commission 2

None

(8422) Cemetery Association

None

(8411) Borough of Woodmont

Ed Bonessi, Warden, stated the Borough has requested \$249,000 which is an increase. He stated they hoped to receive grant funding for some projects. Mr. Bonessi stated they are looking for funds for engineering to have shovel ready projects. Mr. Bonessi stated the Mayor is recommending \$238,000 and the Borough will accept that amount. He stated that currently the Borough is \$15,000 over on the snow account and project a \$22,000 deficit for June 30th. Kit Schmeisser stated there have not been significant increases in 5 or 6 years.

He stated that currently they are unable to put money aside for capital projects. Chairman Lema asked what the total budget. Mr. Bonessi stated it is \$233,000. He discussed the responsibilities of the Borough. Chairman Lema asked what is total with Borough tax. Mr. Bonessi stated with tax it is approximately \$135,000. He provided a brief summary on how tax revenue is allocated. Mr. Schmeisser discussed the Mayor's recommended budget and how it is difficult in a year where there are significant storms resulting in extreme expenses. Mayor Blake stated that in the past when there have been significant storms the City has made money available to the Borough. He discussed Storm Isais being deemed reimbursable by FEMA. Mayor Blake stated it is anticipated that approximately \$1 million will be reimbursed to the City and distributed appropriately. Mr. Moulton asked if there is a reserve to cover the deficit. Mr. Bonessi stated the Borough used to have reserves. He discussed work on the groins that had to be completed and exhausted the reserve funds. Ms. Ranges asked if work is currently being done by the park. Mr. Bonessi stated it is gas company work that will be starting as soon as the weather allows. Kit Schmeisser discussed the lack of reserve accounts and the difficulties it presents. Ms. Ranges asked if Woodmont Day brings in revenue. Mr. Bonessi stated that is not Borough event.

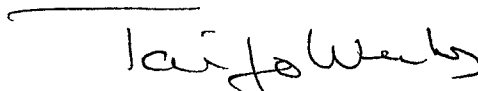
(8426) Boys & Girls Club

Megan Altomare, Executive Director, discussed the past year and how the club pivoted to provide services during Covid. She stated the club opened in a modified format in June. Ms. Altomare discussed after school activities and partnering with he Board of Education. She stated a club was opened in each of the 8 elementary schools. Ms. Altomare stated they are currently serving approximately 200. She stated the budget does reflect an increase.

Mr. Moulton and Ms. Ranges made and seconded a motion to recess until Wednesday, February 24, 2021 at 5:30 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Lema stated the Board would stand in recess until February 24, 2021. The Board recessed at 6:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Toni Jo Weeks
Recording Secretary