

Annual Report

City of Milford, Connecticut
2015 – 2016



*Benjamin G. Blake, Mayor
City of Milford*

MAYOR

BENJAMIN G. BLAKE



BOARD OF ALDERMEN

FIRST DISTRICT

Ellen Beatty
Anthony S. Giannattasio, Minority Leader
Brian Bier

SECOND DISTRICT

Janet A. Golden
Nick Veccharelli, Jr., Majority Leader
Jeremy Grant

THIRD DISTRICT

Frank J. Smith
Martin B. Hardiman
Michael S. Casey

FOURTH DISTRICT

Susan Shaw
Philip J. Vetro, Chairman
Daniel J. German

FIFTH DISTRICT

Bryan N. Anderson
Raymond G. Vitali
Bill Bevan

TO: *The Honorable Board of Aldermen*

FROM: *Benjamin G. Blake, Mayor*

In accordance with the provisions of Article 3, Section 2 of the Charter of the City of Milford, I hereby submit the *Annual Report* for the fiscal year 2015-2016.

I thank the members of the Board of Aldermen, past and present, for their cooperation during this past year.

I would also like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the hard work of all city employees who labor throughout the year to provide Milford's citizens with a safe, healthy and pleasant place to live. I know that they take pride in the work that they do and I greatly appreciate their efforts. Below is a list of all employees who have retired or passed away during this year.

Retirees July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016

Public Works Department

Ed Abel
Michael Gresko
Kelvin Harris
Donald Mohyde
Sean Pratt
Laurie Robinson
Joseph Sicotte
Steven Singer
Kevin Smith, Jr.
George Thompson

Health Department

Debra Britz
Kathleen Kaminski
Susan Klinger
Elle Renzoni
Christine Rosa

Board of Education

Douglas Brennan
Denise Ferency
Carol Hyatt
Patricia Kopchick
Maria Walter

Police Department

Edward Bethke, Jr.
William Cable II
Richard Frawley
William Localzo
Christopher Musante
Jeffrey Nielsen
Lee Robbins
Stephen Young

Fire Department

Jocelyn Duprey
David Eisenhandler
Robert Healey
Clinton LaPlant
Stephen Mantie
Scott Moran
Robert Staurovsky
Louis Tibor

Human Services

Lisa Diamond Graham

Permitting and Land Use

Thomas Raucci, Jr.

Employees Deceased July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016

Employment and Training

Kelli Goulart

Retirees Deceased July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016

Fire Department

Richard Adams
William Bahr
Janet DiPalma Smith
James Pocock
David Rizzo

Public Works Department

Dorothy Frigo
Gerald Girard
William Haisch
Bernadine Pelham
John Plank

Board of Education

Elias Acampora
Janet Frandsen
Jon Hyatt
Elaine SaNoguiera

Police Department

Robert Hokunson
Douglas Sherman
Daniel Sullivan
David Turner

City Clerk's Office

Alan Jepson

Deceased Supplement Recipients July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016

Fire Department

Richard Adams
William Bahr
Ann Kelley
James Pocock
Jahala Porto
David Rizzo
Rosalind Swanson
Ruth Walsh

Police Department

Robert Hokunson
Douglas Sherman
Daniel Sullivan
David Turner

CITY OF MILFORD
GENERAL FUND
UNAUDITED OPERATING RESULTS
BUDGETARY BASIS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2016

Total Estimated Revenues.....	\$ 206,455,317
Total Estimated Expenditures.....	(199,293,139)
Cash Advance to Fiscal Year 2016/2017.....	(3,500,000)
Operational Results.....	\$ 3,662,178*

*This amount is due, in part, to better than expected tax collections. Surplus revenues were offset by lower than expected fee and other income. There were also savings in the operating budgets of city departments due to prudent management. These savings were offset by using \$3,500,000 of fund balance in the FY17 budget. This was the same amount that was used for the FY16 budget.

FINANCIAL AFFAIRS

FINANCE DEPARTMENT

In June of 2016, the city was notified that it was awarded a Certificate of Excellence in financial reporting from the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada for its FY15 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report. This is the twelfth year the city has received this prestigious award. This past year, the city retained its AA+ Bond rating from Fitch and Aa1 and AA+ from Moody's and Standard and Poor's, respectively, with a stable outlook. The city finished the year with positive results of approximately \$7.1 million (audit adjustments could change this figure). This was accomplished with a combination of better than expected tax collections and expenditure savings in city departments along with surplus revenues. These better than expected revenues and lower than expected expenditures were offset by lower than expected fees, and other income. The use of fund balance was \$3.5 million for FY16 and \$3.5 million for FY17. The city's operating expenditures increased \$1.4 million, a 1.7 percent increase, to \$81.7 million, and the Board of Education expenditures increased \$2.4 million, or 2.1 percent, to \$117.3 million. State aid to the city is approximately \$322,000 less than budgeted. Total state aid to the city decreased by approximately \$706,320. For FY17, the state legislature voted to decrease the level of Education Cost Sharing funding by approximately \$150,000. The availability of financial information continued to allow each city department to manage expenditures to ensure that they did not exceed budget. This same ability allowed the Finance Department to optimize both the city's cash flow and investment earnings. The city collected \$656,007 for the debt service assessment, for the sewer renovation, from the \$25 surcharge in the sewer fee. Total sewer renovation loan repayment was \$2.8 million, of which approximately \$967,798 was paid for by the Debt Service Assessment and Debt Service Reserve Fund.

ANNUAL AUDITOR'S REPORT

The city's financial records are audited each year with the most recent audit being received December 2015, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2015. A citywide statement of net position, excluding pension and other fiduciary funds, and a statement of activities were presented as is required by generally accepted accounting principles. These statements were prepared on the accrual basis of accounting, which includes all current assets and liabilities, capital assets, infrastructure (roads, bridges, sewers, etc.), long-term obligations, accruals for interest income and interest expense, and depreciation. The city's net position decreased by \$4 million compared to FY14. While total assets grew \$9 million, the liabilities grew \$45 million mainly

due to a \$14 million increase in the Other Post Employment Benefits (OPEB) obligation for the city and Board of Education and \$38 million net pension liability. Unrestricted net position, the part of net position that can be used to finance day-to-day operations without constraints established by debt covenants, enabling legislation, or other legal requirements, decreased by \$11 million to a deficit of \$83 million in the governmental activities in FY15. The "Funds" financial statements, which follow the citywide statements, are required to be prepared on the modified accrual basis. The Funds statements only include current assets and liabilities. Information for long-term obligations and capital assets is disclosed in the notes to the financial statements, in financial schedules, and in the statistical tables. The Audit Report from the firm of Blum Shapiro & Company, P.C. placed the city's total net position for FY15 on the statement of net position at \$95 million (FY14: \$99 million). This is the eighth consecutive year the total net position has decreased. The Pension Trust Fund had net assets of \$335.3 million (FY14 \$354.3 million) with the city's pension fund nearly 96 percent funded. The OPEB Trust Fund had net assets of \$4.6 million. The city's total net position plus the trust assets listed above equals \$434.8 million. The city's General Fund (the fund covering city services and recording property tax revenues) ended the year with an unassigned fund balance of \$16.3 million. Copies of the audited financial statements are on file with the City Clerk, in the Library, and on the city's website (www.ci.milford.ct.us) under the Finance Department.

ASSESSOR'S OFFICE

The Assessor's Office continued its primary function as custodian of the city's Grand List. The ongoing maintenance of the Grand List encompasses the development and maintenance of all assessments for both taxable and non-taxable real estate, motor vehicles, business, and personal property, and the processing and administration of various property tax exemptions and benefits that are available to taxpayers. The Assessor and deputies are also responsible for inspecting all properties that have had new construction and/or improvements made so that updates can be made to real estate assessments.

TAX OFFICE

Total tax collections for the year closed at 101.61 percent. The overall collection efforts resulted in a current tax collection of \$174,615,913. Prior taxes totaled \$1,995,675 and interest and liens totaled \$1,247,713. Taxpayers may now find their total taxes paid out in the last calendar year, for their IRS filings, on the Tax Collector's website.

PURCHASING DEPARTMENT

The Purchasing Department processed 2,934 purchase orders with a total value of \$37,790,203 and issued 47 invitations to bid and requests for proposals. Purchasing implemented the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities new Small Business/Minority Business Set-Aside Law into the city's bid process. The new law is a contract award preference program for state-based small contractors and applies to any state-funded municipal public works contract in excess of \$50,000.

MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS (MIS) DEPARTMENT

The citywide Voice over Internet Protocol telephone system project was nearly completed with the exception of the Police Department. The Public Works Department's gas metering/monitoring system replacement to FuelMaster was completed. Implementation of Affordable Care Act reporting resulted in the successful generation and issuance of the new IRS Form 1095-C to employees and retirees and for filing with the IRS. The new financial/human resources payroll system upgrade was started.

PENSION AND RETIREMENT BOARD

The primary responsibility of the 15 member Pension and Retirement Board is to oversee the management of the pension fund. During the past year, the board received 54 applications of entry into the pension system and processed 20 withdrawals and refunds. A total of 38 employees retired from city service, bringing the number of people receiving pensions to 739.

PUBLIC SERVICES

RECREATION DEPARTMENT

The Recreation Department continued to upgrade many of its facilities. The outdoor basketball courts at Fowler Field and the playgrounds at Zimmerman Park, Trubee Doolittle Park, and Beardsley Street were all resurfaced. Installation began on an ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) ramp and egress at the Parsons Government Center gymnasium, and a new multipurpose floor was installed at the Fannie Beach Neighborhood Center. The Tri Beach Neighborhood Center also received a new multipurpose floor, a new parking lot, and an exterior makeover, and the West Shore Recreation Center had its exterior refurbished. In May, construction began on the fields on Orange Avenue which, when completed, will feature two full-size multipurpose

synthetic turf fields. These fields will be a premier sports complex for soccer, football, and lacrosse.

TRANSIT DISTRICT

The new transit hub at Westfield Connecticut Post officially opened on August 1, 2015, and accommodates all transit properties that service the mall. At the Transit District facility on Research Drive, the fueling station underwent a complete refurbishment with a new fuel delivery system, including a winterization package and a new computerized record keeping system. The program developed to eradicate the infestation of birds in the storage area was extended to the maintenance area and completed with an extensive netting system and exterior insulation replacement with eave guards. Safety upgrades to the parallelogram lifts and bus wash system were done.

MILFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY

The Library continued to meet its mission as an educational and cultural center. Library users availed themselves to the Library's physical collections, online offerings, reference services, and a myriad of programming options. Official operating policies were updated to reflect actual procedure and to provide optimal service. A review schedule was instituted so policies remain current. The Brain Station, a technology lab/makerspace, was opened for public use. Through grant funding, the Library was able to purchase a 3D printer, audio-visual creation and editing equipment, small electronics, and more.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

The Public Works Department works closely with other city departments and agencies, as well as state and federal agencies, in the execution of its \$18 million operation. In addition to many other duties, office staff respond to the public's queries regarding complaints, schedules, and other pertinent information. The office processes purchase requisitions, prepares payroll, and monitors and processes requests for time off for the office and divisions.

Highway/Parks Division

The Highway/Parks Division is responsible for the public's safe use and maintenance of all city streets, sidewalks, trees, parks/playgrounds, municipal buildings' grounds, beaches, tennis courts, ball fields, and greens. This division is also responsible for the city's leaf pickup program and assists civic

organizations/functions such as the Oyster Festival, Fire Muster, Woodmont Day, all parades, and most functions on the green.

Building Maintenance Division

This division is responsible for the maintenance of all city buildings through a preventive maintenance program. Their responsibility includes security, maintenance, repair, and utilities at all municipal buildings, the city green, and park and recreation areas. The division responded to and completed over 475 work order requests in addition to regular work responsibilities.

Engineering Division

The Engineering Division oversaw the completion of the design build project for the replacement of sanitary sewers at Darina Place and has been administering the Naugatuck Avenue Drainage Improvements project. Together with the Open Space and Natural Resource Agent and the Community Development Department, the Engineering Division advanced the design for the Beaverbrook trail and handicapped accessibility to the Beaverbrook boardwalk. A design engineer was selected and permitting plans were issued for the project.

Wastewater Division

The Wastewater Division was successful in saving money on electrical costs by restoring the aeration system and the ultra violet disinfection system back to an automatic mode. This also reduced carbon source chemical costs. The wastewater treatment system earned in excess of \$153,000 in nitrogen credits from the State of Connecticut's nitrogen removal program. Upgrades such as new pumps, new lifting systems, above ground fuel storage tanks, variable frequency drives, and emergency communication system upgrades were made to ten pump stations.

Garage Division

The Garage Division is responsible for the repair and maintenance of 300+ vehicles and pieces of equipment. Over 1,000 work orders were processed relating to these repair and maintenance requests. The division also manages the fueling station at the Public Works Department and operates a full in-house machine, welding, and fabrication shop, reducing the costs of some repairs to garbage trucks and other heavy equipment.

Solid Waste Division

The Solid Waste Division is responsible for the collection of garbage, recyclables, and bulky waste from residences and removal of garbage from public buildings, containers, beaches, and schools. This past year, the division collected 10,109.15 tons of residential garbage, 3,930.23 tons of residential recycling, 2,015.61 tons of bulk trash, 285 tires, and 976.79 tons of leaves. Residents brought 2,709.37 tons of garbage and recycling to the Transfer Station.

HARBOR MANAGEMENT COMMISSION

The past fiscal year was a financial success for the Milford Harbor Management Commission with approximately 1,200 vessels visiting Milford Lisman Landing. The commission and harbormaster were successful in recruiting the Army Corps of Engineers to dredge the mouth of the Milford Harbor. Approximately 16,000 yards of “good” sand was removed and deposited along the shore near Bayshore Beach, where, over time, it is expected to wash back up onto the shore, restoring the beach area.

OPEN SPACE AND NATURAL RESOURCE AGENCY

Milford’s open spaces and natural resources are vital environmental, social, and economic contributions that are a part of the quality of life valued in our community. Through grant projects, a dune area at Walnut Beach was restored with native vegetation, the Beaverbrook boardwalk replacement project began, and a water quality monitoring grant for the Wepawaug River was completed. The Open Space and Natural Resource Agent consulted with residents and various Milford departments regarding managing invasive and regulated species, and a report resulting from an invasive survey of the Orchard’s Golf Course was provided to the Golf Course Commission in October 2015. Partnering with Subway World Headquarters, a 3,100 foot walking trail at Mondo Ponds nature preserve was greatly improved.

HUMAN SERVICES

HEALTH DEPARTMENT

The Milford Health Department continued its mission to protect and promote the health of Milford residents by providing core services in the areas of school health, environmental health, community health, and public health emergency preparedness. The department continued to enforce the anti-blight ordinance,

public health code and housing code, investigated multiple food borne illness outbreaks, provided immunization clinics and vaccinations to the community on a routine basis, and supported local public health preparedness planning to enrich the Medical Reserve Corps. Pursuit of grant funding continued with over \$485,000 in new or continued grant funding being garnered over the past fiscal year.

MILFORD COUNCIL ON AGING/ELDERLY SERVICES

The Milford Senior Center offered its members 39 weekly classes that provided seniors the opportunity to maintain and expand their physical wellbeing and harness their creative energies and mental abilities, all in a social environment. Some new classes offered were: Stretch, Move, and Connect; Intro to Meditation; Drum and Rhythm Circle; Yoga; and Qi Gong. In April, the center honored 90 volunteers for their dedicated service during National Volunteer Month, and to mark National Older Americans Month in May, the center hosted an “Arts in Bloom” event celebrating the vibrant art created by members through a variety of mediums. Utilizing grant funds, the center received a new Meals on Wheels vehicle this past year.

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

The Department of Human Services is responsible for the administration of social service programs on the federal, state, and local levels for the city of Milford. The department’s mission is to locate gaps in service, identify appropriate resources, and bridge potential areas of need within the community.

Milford Youth and Family Services

Milford Youth and Family Services offered positive prevention-based programming, family therapy, and group therapy. The focus of services this past year generally encompassed three main areas including: onsite programs, school-based services, and community-based therapy services and programs. Program staff worked closely with Milford Public Schools to provide a School-Based Satellite Therapy program, group therapy programs at various schools, and consultation to school personnel for crisis-based situations.

Youth Services Network

Approximately 25 different youth-serving providers and agencies meet bi-monthly to collaborate regarding the scope of services to youth and their families and to discuss any obstacles, issues, and/or challenges encountered.

Additionally, a youth subcommittee, under the direction of the YMCA, continued to meet separately.

PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY

ANIMAL CONTROL DEPARTMENT

Thanks to the generosity of the community, donations to the Animal Control Department's Pet Food Bank assisted over 100 families with food for their pets. In conjunction with the City Clerk's Office, the department created a pamphlet to educate the public on dog laws and pet ownership responsibility. A major clean up of the outside of the property continued with the removal of most of the outside kennels and roofs.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

The Milford Fire Department is comprised of 113 fire personnel and 4 civilian staff members and has evolved into an all hazards public service department. All personnel are trained in not only firefighter, but a multitude of skills including but not limited to: hazardous materials, confined space, rope rescues, all water emergency responses, scuba diving, high angle, trench collapse, vehicle and machinery extrication, and so much more. The building of a new replacement for Engine #1 began over the past year. The new engine will have all the functions of a typical engine, but it will also have the compartment capacity to carry the array of equipment needed to begin the many aspects of the jobs previously listed. A totally rebuilt marine unit boat was placed in service and made a number of water rescues. A new jet ski was also used by the marine division for some water rescue incidents.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

During the past year, law enforcement nationwide continued to see a shift in the perception of police interactions with the community and the manner in which mainstream media and news sources depicted law enforcement in general. During this period, the Milford Police Department continued to maintain its commitment to being an elite organization and benchmark for excellence in law enforcement. In pursuit of these goals, the men and women of the department embraced one of the core organizational tenants of "continuous improvement." This philosophy is interwoven into every facet of the daily function of the department and the performance of every one of its members. Training and preparation for the current environment have included a Use of Force Summit, Active Shooter Training, Fair and Impartial Policing Training, and Cultural Awareness programs. In addition, the department

partnered with other law enforcement agencies to combat growing issues such as human trafficking, exploitation of minors, and the epidemic of drug overdoses throughout the state.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING

SEWER COMMISSION

The Sewer Commission oversaw the completion of the Indian River Interceptor replacement project and the Darina Place sewer repair-replacement project. The following projects were approved for funding: Welch's Point and Rock Street pump station upgrades, Edgefield Avenue sanitary sewer pipe lining rehabilitation, Edgefield Avenue and Seabreeze Avenue sanitary sewer reconstruction, and a Beaverbrook Wastewater Treatment Plant repair. The commission issued 218 permits for the city sewer system, 66 new connections, 22 of them commercial, 33 repairs, 60 disconnections, 54 reconnections, and 5 external grease traps.

ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

Real estate remains strong in the city with commercial space occupying close to 16 million square feet, 92 percent of which is occupied by businesses. Over the past year, 388 businesses started ranging from small home businesses, to doctors' offices, to new construction. Housing and construction permits are additional signs of economic strength and Milford has seen monumental gains. On the unemployment front, retail, manufacturing, and healthcare remain the top industry employment in Milford. Unemployment figures from May 2016, show that Milford has a 4.7 percent unemployment rate compared to 5.4 percent in the state and 4.5 percent nationally.

DEPARTMENT OF PERMITTING AND LAND USE (DPLU)

DPLU oversees the Planning and Zoning Division, the Building Inspection Division, and the Inland Wetlands Division. It also provides oversight to virtually all property development activities in the city of Milford, ensuring that construction is safe and consistent with state statutes, the state building code, the city's Zoning Regulations, and the Plan of Conservation and Development. DPLU also ensures that natural resources are protected.

Building Inspection Division

Commercial construction was maintained at a moderate level with the completion of the new Shoprite supermarket and the start of construction on

the Milford Lock Up Self-Storage facility. In addition, several new apartment/townhouse projects were completed or began construction. At Westfield Connecticut Post, Bar Louie and World of Beers were completed as well as multiple tenant fit-outs.

Planning and Zoning Division

The Planning and Zoning Division staffs the Planning and Zoning Board and the Zoning Board of Appeals. The Planning and Zoning Board meets twice a month to conduct site plan reviews, coastal area management approvals, and holds public hearings for Special Permit and Special Exception applications for residential and commercial properties. The following commercial projects were approved by the board this past year: city land swap with YMCA to construct new ball fields, self-storage facilities on Bridgeport Avenue and Schoolhouse Road, expansion of Stevens Ford, Launch Trampoline Park, an Asian market in the former M&M Farms site, and palliative marijuana dispensary facilities on West River Street and New Haven Avenue.

Inland Wetlands Division

The Milford Inland Wetlands Division held 21 public meetings, six (6) site walks and special meetings, and 12 public hearings to evaluate proposed impacts on the city's natural resources. The division reviewed 15 applications, five (5) pre-applications, two (2) modifications, issued 38 jurisdictional rulings, processed approximately 350 findings of no significant impact, and issued two (2) violations. The total wetland area on all sites was 282 acres with 3.66 acres of wetlands proposed to be disturbed and 5.4 acres proposed to be mitigated or created.

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

TOWN AND CITY CLERK'S OFFICE

This past year, the office began accepting credit/debit card forms of payment. In an effort to increase the number of dog licenses issued, numerous email reminders were sent, and a banner was erected on the green to remind the public that June was dog licensing month. This push for licensing had a very successful outcome. In conjunction with the Open Space and Natural Resource Agent and the Municipal Animal Control Officer, a brochure "Facts to Know about Your Furry Friends" was created and distributed to pet owners. The office also developed a quarterly newsletter offering the public a multitude of information about city government, city services, and other happenings within the city.

REGISTRARS OF VOTERS OFFICE

All preparations for the election in November 2015, the Presidential primaries in April 2016, and the processing of Primary Petitions for Republican U.S. Senate were completed. This included poll worker training, testing of voting tabulators, set up of polling places, and completion of certifications, filings, and reports as required. In addition, the Supervised Absentee Balloting in nursing homes, high school registrations, and voter registrations were completed as mandated.

HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

The department implemented some new initiatives, including but not limited to: the transitioning of retiree health benefits, the Medicare reimbursement process, and the life insurance process from the Accounting Department to a function of the Human Resources Department's Benefits Specialist; negotiated, designed, and implemented a high deductible health plan with a health savings account; in collaboration with the City Attorney's Office, negotiated successor collective bargaining agreements for the Public Works and Milford Employees Association unions; and entered into tentative agreements with the Milford Supervisors and Police Dispatchers unions. The department also drafted a Zero Tolerance Workplace Violence policy, and in collaboration with the Finance Department, completed the process of generating and transmitting 1094 and 1095 forms reports, related to the Affordable Care Act, to employees and the federal government.

EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING OFFICE

The Milford Employment and Training Office primarily runs three major programs, all of which are funded to serve those who are either economically disadvantaged, receive state assistance, or have substantial barriers to employment. These three programs include a Certified Nursing Assistant Program, a Summer Youth Program, and a Resume Power Program. The office functions as a source of information regarding local, state, and federal social service programs and services throughout the area. The goal is to provide state of the art training to all people who apply for their programs, be sensitive to their needs, and find quality jobs for all they serve.

LAW DEPARTMENT

The Law Department worked closely with the Recreation Department to facilitate a land swap with the Woodruff Family YMCA in order to construct

athletic turf fields on city owned property located on Orange Avenue adjacent to the YMCA. The department also worked with the Health Department on blight enforcement. Through those efforts, blighted properties on Pond Point Avenue and Ann Street were demolished and cleared of debris. In the labor arena, three of the six expired collective bargaining agreements were settled through the negotiation process, and negotiations began on two additional collective bargaining agreements.