

FINANCIAL AFFAIRS

FINANCE DEPARTMENT

In August of 2018, 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 FY17 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report. This is the fourteenth year the city has received this prestigious award. The city retained its AAA 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 \$9.6 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 \$5 million for FY18 and \$5.3 million for FY19. The city's operating expenditures increased \$1.1 million, a 1.3 percent increase, to \$85.5 million, and the Board of Education expenditures increased \$920,000, or 0.8 percent, to \$117.8 million. State aid to the city is approximately \$407,573 more than budgeted. Total state aid to the city decreased by approximately \$3,192,928. For FY19, the state has projected \$10 million in Education Cost Sharing funding; compared to \$9.2 million in FY18. 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 \$661,457 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 \$1,012,607 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 February 2018, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2017. 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 \$19 million compared to FY16. While total assets grew \$30 million, the liabilities grew \$26 million mainly due to an \$11 million increase in the Other Post Employment Benefits

(OPEB) obligation for the city and Board of Education and \$70 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 \$27 million to a deficit of \$136 million in the governmental activities in FY17. 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 FY17 on the Statement of Net Position at \$72 million (FY16: \$91 million). This is the tenth consecutive year the total net position has decreased. The Pension Trust Fund had net assets of \$333 million (FY16 \$315 million) with the city’s pension fund nearly 90 percent funded. The OPEB Trust Fund had net assets of \$6 million. The city’s total net position plus the trust assets listed above equals \$411 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 \$25.6 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 primary function of the Assessor's Office is custodian of the city’s Grand List. The ongoing maintenance of the Grand List encompasses development and maintenance of all assessments for both taxable and non-taxable real estate, motor vehicle, and business personal property, and the processing and administration of various property tax exemptions and benefits available to taxpayers. These programs include, but are not limited to, state and local options for the Veterans' benefits program, income based state and local exemptions for the elderly and disabled, reductions in assessments for farmland, forestland, and open space, and reductions for certain manufacturing equipment.

TAX OFFICE

Tax collections for the year closed at 101.29 percent. The overall collection efforts resulted in a current tax collection of \$179,069,150. Prior taxes totaled \$1,850,405 and interest and liens totaled \$1,723,044. The Tax Office expanded payment options, allowing taxpayers to pay their bills in the office with a credit or debit card as well as online.

PURCHASING DEPARTMENT

The Purchasing Department processed 2,237 purchase orders with a total value of \$20,796,465.18. The department also issued 36 invitations to bid and requests for proposals. In preparation for a new, citywide financial system, Purchasing updated key metrics and data within the system to ensure city departments have the vital information needed to order goods and services.

MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS (MIS) DEPARTMENT

The department completed a timekeeping system at the Health Department and Lisman Landing. The Tax and Assessor's Offices' application system was moved to a new Vision Appraisal server. Migration of a new financial system began, and WiFi was expanded to the first floor of the Parsons Government Center. The Library's Carrier Ethernet Network internet connection was converted from Optimum to the state's central "Nutmeg Network," and Virtual Towns and Schools upgraded the city's website.

PENSION AND RETIREMENT BOARD

The primary function of the Pension and Retirement Board is to oversee the management of the pension fund. This past year, the board received 27 applications of entry into the pension system and processed 11 withdrawals and refunds. A total of 34 employees retired from city service, bringing the total number of active participants in the plan to 683.

PUBLIC SERVICES

RECREATION DEPARTMENT

The Recreation Department provides the community with a well-rounded program of active and passive leisure services, meeting the needs of all population groups. The tennis court and playground at West Shore Recreation Center have been rebuilt and updated, playgrounds at Anderson Avenue and Meadowside Road were redone, and renovations began at the dog park at Eisenhower Park. Beachgoers continued to benefit from improvements made at Walnut Beach, as well as from sand replenishment at both Gulf and Hawley Avenue Beaches.

TRANSIT DISTRICT

In March, the district received delivery of three new 2018 Flyer Coaches, replacing three leased state vehicles, that will be used on the Coastal Link Service from Milford to Norwalk. A \$56,000 grant was obtained from the Federal Transit Administration, along with a \$14,000 city of Milford commitment, to fund the purchase and installation of 24 bike lockers at the eastbound parking lot at Milford station. These lockers provide a safe and secure place for commuters to lock their bikes while there. The district completed the architectural landscaping at the facility's exterior and entrance, including perimeter tree plantings and ground cover for soil retention of a bordering hilly area.

MILFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY

The Library continued to increase online offerings, making content and services more easily available to patrons, and WiFi service was upgraded, increasing speed for wireless users. During the past year, a new strategic plan to guide services over the next three years was established with the help of an outside consultant, an advisory council of community members, focus groups, individual interviews, a community survey, and feedback and advice from staff members. The resulting plan includes a revised mission statement of purpose and five broad goals that will guide services over the coming years.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

The Public Works Department is comprised of seven divisions and operates on an annual budget in excess of 18 million dollars. The Office Division performs customer service, dispatch, clerical, reporting, accounting, payroll, and a number of other administrative duties.

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 maintains the city's leaf pickup program and assists numerous civic organizations with various functions throughout the year. The division was also instrumental in the construction and completion of the city's new splash pad and pickle ball courts located at Eisenhower Park.

Building Maintenance Division

This division maintains all city buildings through a preventive maintenance program which includes security, maintenance, repair, and utilities at all

municipal buildings, the city green, and park and recreation areas. They also maintain 53 traffic lights throughout the city. The division responded to and completed over 166 work order requests in addition to regular work responsibilities.

Engineering Division

The Naugatuck Avenue drainage improvement project was substantially completed. The Department of Transportation (DOT) issued a Commitment to Fund the proposed pavement restoration project for Gulf Street and a portion of Cherry Street. The division is finalizing contract specifications and engineered drawings for this project, which will be funded through the State of Connecticut's Local Capital Improvement Program. Additionally, the division has been working with the City Attorneys' Office to resolve issues with the location of the easement for the Beaverbrook Plant's sewer outfall pipe, and is coordinating with DOT on the Flax Mill Lane Bridge replacement project.

Wastewater Division

The Wastewater Division consists of the Housatonic and Beaverbrook Wastewater Treatment Plants. The Housatonic Plant treats approximately 2 billion gallons of wastewater per year while the Beaverbrook Plant treats approximately 730 million gallons. Additionally, there are 43 pump stations and 250 miles of sewer lines maintained and operated by the division. The Rock Street and Welch's Point Road pump stations are being completely rebuilt.

Garage Division

The Garage Division seeks to provide exceptional value by utilizing the vast knowledge and experience of its employees to keep the city's fleet of vehicles running safely. The Garage Division is responsible for the repair and maintenance of 300-plus vehicles and pieces of equipment for the following departments: Police, Council on Aging, Highway, Parks, Sanitation, Building Maintenance, Wastewater, and municipal office vehicles.

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. The division made an easy transition in the garbage collection program from rear-loader trucks to one-arm bandits. The division also continued to promote Milford's green initiative by

providing a glass-only dumpster and a mattress recycling program at the Transfer Station. A partnership continued with the Sarah Recycling Program, affording physically and mentally challenged young adults a work experience opportunity while offsetting some of the state's costs for their disability payments.

HARBOR MANAGEMENT COMMISSION

With the assistance of the Harbormaster's Office and the Milford Department of Economic and Community Development, the Harbor Management Commission secured a grant from the State Port Authority which will allow for the complete re-decking of all the dock surfaces at the Landing. The Landing's refurbished patio area has been outfitted with new outdoor furniture.

OPEN SPACE AND NATURAL RESOURCE AGENCY

The following are just some of the initiatives that were administered through the Open Space and Natural Resource Agency: Volunteers planted 5,700 Cape American Beach Grass plants at the Walnut Beach CIRCA Dune grant project east of the Albert Monroe pier, and vegetation management of the invasive plants began; the Conservation Commission began working to develop restoration vegetation planting plans for the Walnut Beach areas adjacent to the expanded parking area and for recommendations at the 701 North Street parcel; volunteers helped nurture and care for the city's native gardens; open space mapping was done to benefit the 2018 Federal Emergency Management Agency's Community Rating System audit, which qualifies discounts for residents who have National Flood Insurance program policies; the city's Sustainable CT initiative progressed; and nine Community Development Block Grant projects continued through permitting and final design.

HUMAN SERVICES

HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Along with the Milford Department of Human Services/Youth and Family Services, and Employment & Training, the Health Department continued to be responsible for the administration of social service programs on the federal, state, and local level. The Environmental Health Division continued to assure a healthy community through quality environmental public health services and partnerships by providing continued protection, disease prevention, and promotion for the public's health. Public Health Nursing & School Health Services continued to provide Immunization Clinics, a Seasonal Influenza Vaccination Program, Influenza Like Illness Surveillance, Public Health Nursing, and an Oral Health Program, as well as attending Bloodborne

Pathogen Training. The entire department continued to move forward with its continued goal of community collaboration to eliminate duplication, streamline existing programs, and grow the culture of assistance to match the community's current needs.

Department of Human Services

The mission of the Department of Human Services (DHS) is to locate gaps in services, identify appropriate resources, and bridge potential areas of need within the community.

Milford Youth and Family Services

Milford Youth and Family Services is a resource to families and community partners for clinical assessment, referral, and affordable treatment services. This division provides individual, family, and group therapy services. There were a total of 186 intakes completed for treatment. Some of the challenges addressed included behavioral issues, truancy, anxiety, juvenile justice offenses, bullying/conflict resolution, separation/divorce, and grief work. No person is denied clinical treatment due to financial hardship.

Youth Services Network

Milford Youth Services Network maintains a partnership with other youth serving agencies in the city. The network maintained collaborations and programs throughout the city including the Milford Public Library and other community agencies such as the Reach Foundation's Shop with a Cop Program.

Employment and Training

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. In addition, Milford Employment and Training functions as a source of information about local, state, and federal social service programs and services throughout the area.

MILFORD COUNCIL ON AGING/ELDERLY SERVICES

This past year, the Milford Senior Center began three new classes including Zumba Gold, Laughter Yoga, and an iPhone class, bringing their total number

of weekly classes and presentations to 38. These classes and presentations offer opportunities for seniors to enhance their physical wellbeing while harnessing creative energies and mental abilities in a social environment. The center also continued their travel department, offering day trips in Connecticut and nearby Westchester to musicals, historical sites, and much more, as well as longer trips to other states and international destinations.

PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY

ANIMAL CONTROL DEPARTMENT

The department's feral cat program continued to trap, spay/neuter, and release cats through the volunteer efforts of both Milford and Orange residents in an effort to prevent the cat population from increasing. The Pet Food Bank was successful with over 100 families utilizing services. The department continued to set aside usable, in good condition cages, crates, and carriers for secondary needs should a disaster or emergency arise.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

This past year, the Fire Department responded to 9,244 calls for help. All department personnel are trained to fight many types of fires and maintain the skills to respond to all types of hazardous incidents in the safest manner possible. While maintaining their constantly evolving skill set, firefighters spend much of their effort providing emergency medical services. A new incident record documentation program began, integrating "fire" and "medical" responses into a single database. Fire Headquarters Squad 1 diligently trained to enhance its performance and service level in many specialized rescue techniques. The Marine Division added a new class of boat operators, and marine training was a constant priority. The Fire Marshal Division performed at improved capacity with all inspector positions filled and qualified.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

This past year, the Police Department witnessed a number of legislative items that were proposed or passed that mandated the need for additional training for law enforcement in a variety of areas. Many of the training regimes had already been embraced by the department; however, some require additional funding and scheduling to ensure proper implementation. As the city continued to grow, not only as a community but as a considerable attraction and destination point for countless visitors, there was an added necessity to

provide resources to ensure public safety, not only for Milford residents but for every person visiting or travelling through Milford. Over the past year, the department saw a number of officers retire. As these officers reached the end of their careers and moved on, there was a constant progression of highly trained, competent, and motivated officers to fill the vacancies.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING

SEWER COMMISSION

The Sewer Commission oversaw the following projects during the past year: the Welch's Point and Rock Street pump station upgrades projects were awarded to complete the design, Rock Street was completed in June 2018 and Welch's Point is scheduled for completion in December 2018; funding for the Beaverbrook Wastewater Treatment Plant's removal of approximately 120 linear feet of existing 16" aeration line below grade and replacement with 16" stainless steel aeration line above grade, was approved; and the Edgefield Avenue sanitary sewer rehabilitation and reconstruction project was completed.

ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

The department takes an integrative approach to positioning Milford as a place to live, work, and play, combining efforts with several departments and encompassing strategies through housing, community development, tourism, and business development. Marketing tools in the form of video and graphics, to attract more residents and businesses, were developed. Social media presence has increased significantly, increasing communication with residents and small business owners. A Tourism Task Force was created and has created relationships with industry leaders to further attract visitors to Milford.

DEPARTMENT OF PERMITTING AND LAND USE (DPLU)

DPLU reviews and regulates the city's built environment to preserve its unique appeal, and in its oversight of the Planning and Zoning Division, the Building Inspection Division, and the Inland Wetlands Division, provides oversight to virtually all property development activities in the city of Milford. The department ensures that construction is safe and consistent with state statutes, the state Building Code, the city's Zoning Regulations, the Plan of Conservation and Development, and Inland Wetlands regulations, and that natural resources are protected.

Building Inspection Division

The Building Inspection Division issued over 3,800 permits, with a construction value of over 91 million dollars, and performed over 6,700 inspections. Commercial construction was maintained at a moderate level and residential construction continued to be strong.

Planning and Zoning Division

The Planning and Zoning Division staffs the Planning and Zoning Board and the Zoning Board of Appeals. It enforces Zoning Regulations, manages the approval process for projects requiring zoning approval, and through DPLU, serves as the city's Floodplain Administrator. The Planning and Zoning Office also provides important coordination and guidance in administering amendments to the city's Zoning Regulations considered through the Planning and Zoning Board.

Inland Wetlands Division

The Milford Inland Wetlands Division held 15 public meetings, four (4) site walks and special meetings, and one (1) public hearing to evaluate proposed impacts on the city's natural resources. The division reviewed 15 applications, 16 pre-applications, seven (7) modifications, issued 16 jurisdictional rulings, processed approximately 684 findings of no significant impact, and issued two (2) violations. The total wetland area on all sites was 39 acres with 0.016 acres of wetlands proposed to be disturbed and 0.014 acres proposed to be mitigated or created.

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

CITY CLERK'S OFFICE

The City Clerk's Office added an e-recording service this past year, which allows the public to file their land recordings via an e-recording service. The service became a convenience for many banks, lawyers, mortgage brokers, etc. The office again partnered with several agencies such as the Milford Senior Center Food Bank, United Way of Milford, Toys for Tots, Milford Animal Control, VFW Post 7788, as well as others, to help the needs of the community. In June, over 2,500 dog licenses were issued by the office.

REGISTRARS OF VOTERS OFFICE

All preparations for the municipal election in November 2017, including poll worker training, testing of voting tabulators, set up of polling places, and completion of certifications, filings, and reports, as required, were complied

with. In addition, Supervised Absentee Balloting in nursing homes, high school registrations, and voter registrations were completed as mandated. As required, the annual canvass of voters began in January and was completed in June.

HUMAN RESOURCES (HR) DEPARTMENT

The HR Department includes the activities of the Civil Service Commission and the Pension and Retirement Board. The department maintained records on some 234 employees in the classified service, and certain records involving unclassified employees were similarly maintained. A combination of written and oral examinations were administered for 14 separate classifications, and there were 419 applications received for 20 positions filled. The office continued activities in the area of unemployment compensation, contesting eligibility, and attending fact-finding hearings.

LAW DEPARTMENT

The Law Department worked closely with the Finance and Human Resources Departments to publish a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for health care administration, which resulted in the city realizing a significant savings. The city settled approximately 50 Board of Assessment appeals filed in connection with the October 1, 2017 real estate revaluation. The department represented the city in several real estate matters, most notably, the acquisition of six acres on the Boston Post Road. In the labor arena, three expired collective bargaining agreements were settled through the negotiation process.