CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Mark A. Lauretti called the Special Meeting of the Board of Aldermen to order at 6:30 p.m. All those present rose and pledged allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

ROLL CALL

Alderman John F. Anglace, Jr., President – present
Alderman Lynne Farrell - present
Alderman John “Jack” Finn – present
Alderman Stanley Kudej – present
Alderman Noreen McGorty - present
Alderman John P. Papa – present
Alderman Eric McPherson - present
Alderman Anthony Simonetti – present

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Mayor Mark A. Lauretti, Judson Crawford, Board of A&T Member, Superintendent of Schools, Freeman Burr, Board of Education Finance Director, Allan Cameron, City Finance Director, Louis Marusic, Judson Crawford, Board of A&T Member, and media members.

Agenda items

1. Adoption of the Budget for Fiscal Year 2012-2013

Mayor Mark A. Lauretti states that there is no public portion component to this meeting, so those who wish to make comments, can do so after the meeting. Mayor Mark A. Lauretti introduces the first agenda item to be read by Alderman Anglace, for the Adoption of the Budget for Fiscal Year 2012-2013: Be it resolved by the Board of Aldermen of the City of Shelton, in accordance with Section 7.6 of the Charter, that the budget documents submitted by the Mayor on February 22, 2012 and subsequently modified by the Board of Apportionment and Taxation, be adopted subject to the following amendments/adjustments and that they be accepted as the official budget for the City of Shelton for Fiscal Year 2012-2013.

Mayor Mark A. Lauretti said to just read the account name and to not try to read off all these numbers. Then, Alderman Anglace pointed out to the rest of the board that everyone each has a copy of the adjustments, and that he will only read the account name.

Alderman Anglace now reads off the 2012-2013 BOA Changes to AT&T Budget:

The Current Levy, there was an increase of $2,429,353; under OEM Director Grant Reimbursement, there was a $7,500 increase; 100 Meadow Street Lease, a $1 increase for a net revenue change of $2,436,854.
On the expenditure side, Public Communications there was an increase of $7,000; Connecticut Conference of Municipalities Membership increase of $24,478; EMS Appeals increase of $48,000; Increments increase of $35,000; Aldermen Meritorious Awards increase for $400; Flag Day Picnic increase of $1; Other Outside Services increase of $4,500; Drug & Alcohol Commission for an increase of $1; Part Time Employees for an increase of $4,000; Bundle Billing for an increase of $1; Fire Company Allowance for an increase of $4,000.00; Road Maintenance for an increase of $1,000,000; Recycling Bins for an increase of $500,000; Board of Education for an increase of $536,627; Regular Payroll for an increase of $35,000; Part Time Payroll for a decrease of $8,000; Library Supplies for an increase of $2,000; Worker's Compensation Self Insurance for an increase of $100,000; Youth Programs for an increase of $200,000; Instruction Supply for an increase of $1,500; Housatonic Railroad Sewage License for an increase of $1,000; Housatonic Railroad Drainage License for an increase of $1,000; Christian Counseling for an increase of $2,000; Shelton Historical Society for a decrease of $2,400; Shelton Girl Scouts for an increase of $5,000; Long Hill Cemetery for a decrease of $2,000; Contingency General for a decrease of $66,254 making a net expenditure change of $2,436,854.00. Resulting in a total budget of $115,555,564 for fiscal year beginning July 1, 2012. The mill rate shall be established at 22.40 mills, with a collection date for fiscal year 2012-2013 to be July 1, 2012 and January 1, 2013 for real estate, July 1, 2012 for personal property taxes less than $5,000 and July 1, 2013 for personal property taxes equal to or greater than $5,000 and July 1, 2012 for the motor vehicle tax with the exception of those that carry their own collection date as determined by Statute under the Motor Vehicle Supplement. Any tax under $5 will be waived. Also be it resolved that the Board of Aldermen officially accepts in principle the Capital Improvements Program as submitted by the Mayor and further amended.

Alderman Anglace moved to motion, followed by Alderman Simonetti, who SECONDED the motion. Mayor Mark A. Lauretti officially moved to PASS and SECOND the motion.

Alderman Anglace said to the Mayor that he didn’t have a budget message for this budget, but looking this over not much has changed over the last several years, especially in the last year. While I make reference to my budget comments from last year and I submit that they are equally appropriate this year. I do want to thank on the behalf of the Board of Aldermen, the department heads that participated in the budget process, the Finance Director and his staff, the Board of Apportionment and Taxation, and everybody else that had a part in the public who commented with respect to the budget and I hope that the people will suspect to find that this budget responds to their need to cope with economic conditions as they are in the community, in the state and throughout the country. I think once again, we shown that Shelton can respond to the situation and we can work together to get through all of our problems; whether they are perceived or real, and certainly working with everybody throughout the year on the budget. Of course as you know, it is a spending plan and if things go awry then you would have to go and talk to the guy that is sitting on my left, the Mayor! Thank you very much.

Mayor Lauretti then asks the audience if there are any questions or comments that anyone wanted to make. Then, he says that he wanted to make a few comments in respect to some of the changes that have been made, because unlike in the years that have gone by, some of these changes are a bit more significant than what done in the past in terms of adjusting the budget off of what was originally presented, at least by myself. You will notice that in there was a $1,000,000 that we have put in for road maintenance that could be handled in different ways; but I think it’s important for residents and the decision makers to understand that we need to continue road improvements in the community. We do have monies that are bonded, that are available to us that will be utilized. This is going to help augment that. I will be suggesting to the board before the year is out, that there is possibly a referendum to be had for more road money for next year, because the issue of roads will never go away, ever in any community. That there will always be a need to work on and we need to step up a little bit more and I think you would have found that over the last year and a half. We made some changes in our Highways garage, in terms of the equipment that
we are purchasing, in terms of the work that we are doing in-house now, that we used to sub out. We are becoming more sophisticated and I think that is important for the town, just for the reason I stated before, the issue of road reconditioning and resurfacing will never go away. It will be a priority for every community so we need to get to the next level. I think that we are doing that, and these extra monies are certainly going to help. I hope that the residents will agree.

The point that I want to make is also to our Public Works area, at money that we put in for recycling. The board is familiar with, and soon the public will become more familiar that the city will be turning to single-stream recycling, which causes us to rethink on how to collect our garbage and our recyclables. The city is for the first time, going to be purchasing its own equipment. The monies in this budget will help us accomplish that task. The board, as you know, last month out of Section 7.16 to help us purchase trucks and purchase the recycling as well as the garbage collection bins. These are our one time capital items that will probably disappear from the budget next year. Nonetheless, we still needed to do that in my estimation because we are going to save a lot of money by doing roads in-house, we are going to save a lot, a lot of money by single stream recycling and by making the investments on the vehicles that we buy to help us pick up the recyclables and the equipment that is necessary that is associated with that. So, while these are still very hard economic times, nonetheless, I think the City of Shelton is in a position to do this because it will have a better impact for both our companies and our residents in the coming years. That pretty much sums up some of the bigger changes that you see here.

There is an addition of $100,000 in the Worker’s Compensation line item, which was probably lagging over the last couple of years. We made some increases to that line item two years ago, and another increase a year ago and we will do another one this year to help keep pace with some of those costs that are associated with Worker’s Comp.

Alderman Anglace said that he wondered if the Mayor would like to comment on the impact of this budget on the average residential homeowner. The Mayor thought that was a good point that Alderman Anglace pointed out.

The Mayor’s response was that we could not emphasize this enough because this is the year of reevaluation and typically, well in the last twenty years that I and we have been associated with reevaluation. There has been a property tax shift from commercial to residential. This year is very different. This year, the shift goes to commercial from residential, which means that as a guesti-mate, about ninety percent of our residential properties will see a tax reduction, even though there is an increase in the mill rate. Now having said that, you have to say to yourself where is the burden? The burden falls on our corporations and as I have explained to larger taxpayers in the corporate arena. They have been the recipients of this for twenty years in the shift in their direction. They have been the recipients of four years without a tax increase, and a tax reduction this year. While I recognize that it is painful, while I recognize that the State of Connecticut, our fellow government does not do much in the way of helping business in this country. We, meaning, myself and the Assessor looked at the area of our surrounding communities, and communities from across the state to see how the reevaluation was impacting other areas of the state and we think that Shelton is right in line with what is happening right in Fairfield County. Even our neighbors of Trumbull, Monroe, Fairfield, Milford; places like that, with being on par with seeing that same type of tax shift. Not even the shift, but the percentage of shift is almost uncanny as to how close it is, in terms of percentages between our community and other communities. So, it is the trend today and that is the way it is. Reevaluation is something that I have always believed in. We have always done it, because we thought it was the right thing to do, the fairest thing to do for all taxing property owners and this year it is no different. Unfortunately it comes at a very difficult time in our economic climate. So I think that will shed a little light on reevaluation and the impact that it has on this budget.

Alderman Anglace adds that the current mill rate is 18.75 mills and at a quick glance, you will see it popped up to 22.4 mills. You would think that when you saw that, that
would result in more taxes. The reevaluation, the downgrading of residential properties has made it such that it does not have the impact that you might think. It is far less than it's going to result in a savings for most taxpayers. It is easy to figure out. The Mayor adds that one other factor that affects reevaluation is grand list growth. I think it is fair to say that even though our grand list grew, it was very minimal. That is probably a big plus if you look at other municipalities around the state. We are still in the growing mode; I think that next year will be a lot better in terms of our grand list growth and I know that the year after is going to be even better than the next year. Just because of some of the things that are happening now, and things that are already in progress, like the Avalon project, that will be coming on the line in a year and a half and other projects that are in zoning right now are going to give us a shot in the arm, in terms of our grand list growth. So, we are in a good place, but that does not mean that we are not affected by the downward trend; we certainly are. Yet, we are in a better place than other folks, at least in our state.

Mayor Mark A. Lauretti asked if there were any other questions. All were in favor and none were opposed. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION WAS CARRIED 8-0.

2. **Funding for the Replacement of Commodore Isaac Hull Bridge Plaque**

Alderman Anglace announced to move to appropriate an amount of $2,200.00 for the replacement of the Commodore Isaac Hull Bridge Plaque located at the corner of Howe Avenue and Kneen Street with funding to come from **Contingency General Account #001-9900-900.99-00.**

Alderman Papa SECONDED the motion and Mayor Mark A. Lauretti officially moves the motion.

The Mayor held a brief discussion about this item. He said that this is pretty straightforward. Everybody understands what has been happening in a variety of communities around the state. This certainly, here too, economic times has dictated this type of activity but it also underscores what we are trying to do with recycling. Metals have become a commodity that we are now generating revenue from, and we are trying to do it citywide as part of our collection. The bad guys have also figured out that metals are a commodity and generate money. In desperation, these are the things that they do. We are going to be a little more diligent in the coming year to try to eliminate that type of activity through an increase of surveillance. It is something that we need to do here.

All were in favor and none were opposed. A voice vote was taken and MOTION WAS CARRIED 8-0.

**Adjournment**

At approximately 7:00 p.m. Mayor Mark A. Lauretti MOVED to adjourn, SECONDED by Alderman Anglace. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 8-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Brittany Gannon
Acting Clerk, Board of Aldermen
DATE APPROVED: ____________________

BY: ________________________________

Mark A. Lauretti
Mayor, City of Shelton
4. ADJOURNMENT

Alderman Anglace moved to adjourn at approximately 8:35 pm; seconded by Alderman McPherson. A voice vote was taken; the motion passed 5-0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brittany Gannon
Acting Clerk, Board of Alderman