Call to Order / Pledge of Allegiance

Aldermanic President John F. Anglace called the Public Hearing on Ordinances to order at 7 p.m. immediately following the Special Meeting of the Aldermanic Finance Committee.

Roll Call

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

PUBLIC SESSION

1. AMENDMENTS TO CHAPTER 14 OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES STREETS, SIDEWALKS AND OTHER PUBLIC PLACES (SEC. 14-9; 14-15; 14-51; 14-64; 14-65)

Alderman Anglace asked four times if any member of the public wished to address the Board on this item.

For the record, we did receive a letter from Robert Kulacz, City Engineer dated January 24, 2014 that I will submit for the record.

Being no persons wishing to address the Board, Alderman Kudej MOVED to close the hearing on this matter; SECONDED by Alderman Simonetti. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 7-0.

Alderman Anglace declared the public hearing closed on this matter.
2. PROPOSED PENSION BOARD ORDINANCE

Alderman Anglace stated, this is an ordinance that seeks to capture some control over the City pension plans, and 401k plans, creating a Pension Board to oversee all this and assume fiduciary responsibility.

Alderman Anglace asked three times if any person wished to speak.

Alderman Simonetti asked if they would be reporting to the Mayor or to the Board of Aldermen?

Alderman Anglace stated, if it doesn’t say that then it would have to be added as a change to the Ordinance. Discussion on that would be appropriate.

It says the Mayor is a member, the Finance Director is a member, and three members shall be appointed by the Mayor which members shall have experience in financial services and pensions. This is strictly an administrative function, not a legislative function. I would think the appropriate person to Chair this would be the Mayor.

Alderman Simonetti asked, this is just an advisory group and they wouldn’t have any control over the pension itself?

Alderman Anglace replied, they would be acting in a fiduciary capacity as a group. They would be making decisions. Obviously some of our pensions, the employees who are members of that make the decisions where to invest their money. So that is not made by the Pension Board. There are some pensions outside the scope of the City. The Police Department pension, the Teachers’ pension for example, those are State controlled; we have no say in that. This would be only for local pensions that are not otherwise controlled by other entities.

Alderman McGorty stated, so this Pension Board would actually serve as an oversight to the outsource folks that actually manage the assets or invest on behalf of the employees?

Alderman Anglace stated, when this proposed Pension Board Ordinance was drafted, I said it’s going to provoke more questions than it answers, and I was right. The Mayor’s comment to me was that, that is entirely the reason, to bring out these points. It is our responsibility to ferret them out and include them in this, before we vote on it, revise it, add what we think has to be added. Each of you that has ideas should write them in so we can incorporate them. They are good thoughts; good suggestions.

Alderman Papa asked, who is doing this presently?

Alderman Anglace replied, no one. There is no oversight. All the 401k plans are set up and many years ago we brought in companies under RFQs and they presented what they had and what they would offer our people in terms of investment vehicles. As you know, our people contribute and the City contributes a share, and then this money, at
the discretion of the employee, is invested in one of the funds. They pick the funds. A pension board would not have oversight over that but they could make suggestions on bringing more...

Alderman Papa stated, the Board of Education has already recommended for people that are in a 403b, groups and companies that they could invest in, and I guess they’re approved by the Board of Education that they’re viable financial institutions.

Alderman Anglace stated, if by the next meeting of the Board of Aldermen we are not ready, we can postpone this and work on it for a month. We can refer it back to Finance Committee to develop it further.

If you have somebody you want to recommend, you tell the Mayor. Anybody could volunteer to be on it. We also have to build in here, it says, “they shall have charge of the general direction and management of the pension and retirement funds managed by the City. That the City shall furnish such advisors, brokers, clerical, legal or actuarial as the Pension Board members shall consider necessary to carry out the purpose of this article.” We also have to be sure we all understand that we’ve got to provide, if they’re going to handle fiduciary responsibilities, that we’ve got to insure them.

Alderman McGorty stated, that’s what I was leading to, are they oversight only – are they just making sure that the financial institution is providing documents and investing on your behalf as opposed to making decisions that could impact.

Alderman Anglace stated, I think the intent, the way this is written, is to provide oversight because there is absolutely none now. Every so often there probably should be information sessions, new investment opportunities, that should be looked at. This group would do that on behalf of all the employees.

Alderman Kudej stated, and if they’re dealing with union retirements then unions should be represented on that Board.

Alderman Anglace agreed, stating all employees, generally, should be represented on there.

Alderman McGorty stated, if this is oversight only, they don’t have any control over whether there is any money five years down the road. I don’t think that’s what this Board is for, to have somebody to volunteer their time to be responsible for the performance of the funds. I think that when we continue discussions it really will flush out to be an oversight only to ensure that information is flowing, documents are shared and collected.

Alderman Anglace stated, I envision the Pension Board starting off by documenting what pensions we have and who is in control of them. Start with the Police Department, then the Education, then Maintenance, the WPCA, and do an inventory of everybody and who has what pensions, and then see where they would be able to offer any assistance.
Some of them are clearly negotiated – the WPCA payments go right to the Teamsters and they manage the fund.

Alderman Papa stated, I think the Pension Board is going to be able to pick different financial institutions and then the individual employees will decide which one they want, and they’re going to make the choices of what they invest in.

Alderman Simonetti stated, I don’t see where that Board is going to have that amount of power. That’s a lot of power. You’re opening a big can of worms when you give these people that kind of control.

Alderman Papa stated, the Board of Education already has these financial institutions picked out. They’re approved. The Board of Education approved them.

Alderman Simonetti asked, what financial background does the Board of Education...

Alderman McGorty interjected, who is doing the due diligence on the legitimacy of the investment options that are provided to the employees who may or may not have any financial experience.

Alderman Papa asked Mr. O’Leary who chooses the financial institutions for the Board of Education.

Mr. O’Leary replied, it depends on the unions. Each one of the unions has it all set up and the Board of Education doesn’t really have much to do with it. They choose from an approved list.

Alderman Anglace stated, the way we got started here in City Hall with the non-union people, we advertised for and brought in investment companies that our people could invest with. They laid out for them what their plan was, what their investment opportunities were, etc. There were 3-5 companies that came in. I don’t think anybody was found lacking and was denied the opportunity to be a presenter. Then the people decide who they want to go with. For the union people we certainly would have to negotiate any changes and the Board would have no authority to usurp the union negotiations, the bargaining relationship. I think another oversight might be helpful. It’s a step in the right direction and maybe we could build on it and make it of value to the people.

Mr. O’Leary stated, a board like that would be very helpful when you’re dealing with nine contracts, to do the due diligence and tell you how this one works better than this one, etc.

Alderman Papa MOVED to close the public hearing on this matter; SECONDED by Alderman Simonetti. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 7-0.
3. AMENDMENT TO CODE OF ORDINANCE SECTION 2-145 – HIRING OF POLICE OFFICERS

Alderman Anglace stated, our Chief of Police is primarily the impetus behind this, and the reason is primarily because the ordinance as it currently exists has inhibited our ability to hire people and bring new people on. There are some very good ideas in here.

Chief Joel Hurliman, Shelton Police Department

One of the big changes is the hiring of certified officers that are either lateral entry or from out of state they’d be comparative entry. Currently they’re taking the test with everybody else and you have somebody that might not have any law enforcement experience and as currently written, they get the princely amount of two points added to their final score. Wherever they fall they fall on the list.

For the City to hire lateral entry or comparative, those can go to work after a very short Field Training period and be available immediately. They don’t have to go through 26 weeks of Academy training topped by 400 hours of Field Training. That would be one of the major changes.

Some of the other changes would be on the people that are not certified, there are a couple changes in the amount of points that would be awarded – we took a long look at that. There was a cut off of 10 people to go to the oral interview. With scores being so close, you could be off by a quarter of a point and that makes you number 13 and you don’t go to the oral interview. We found if the number is a little bit bigger there is an allowance for that and it gives more people an opportunity to be heard. Somebody that is number 13 could wind up number one after the oral interview.

Alderman Simonetti stated, this would enable you to bring people in at a quicker, easier, less expense to the City with the same qualifications as the people you already have on board, after you do your due diligence obviously of doing background checks, etc. Is that correct?

Chief Hurliman replied, that is true for the people that are already certified. It also makes it less cumbersome to hire people that are not certified.

Alderman Papa, for the police officers that want to get a job in Shelton, how much of a turnaround time would it take once he applies for the position and goes through a battery of tests and qualifications. When can you hire that individual if he’s qualified?

Chief Hurliman replied, from start to finish no more than a couple of weeks in that case. Because they still have to pass the polygraph, the psychological, doctor’s physical and the background check.

Alderman Papa asked, what if you had to hire a probationary person who hasn’t been an officer?
Chief Hurliman replied, the same amount of time from when you took the test before they can start the Academy. You have to wait for an Academy seat. That’s one of the things – we are hiring for the Academy. There are other cities doing the same thing that you could take a written in the morning, an oral in the afternoon, and get a letter of intent by close of business at 4:30. That is still subject to the background check, the polygraph, psychological and physical.

**Evan Sarris, Spoke Drive**

I’ve been a police officer for 27 years; I just retired actually. The good thing about having an officer come with a lateral transfer is you have someone coming out of the Academy and they have to learn everything. They don’t have the years of experience. They still have to learn. You’re learning as a police officer when you’re on the job for five years, 10 years, you’re always learning. To have somebody with 20, 25 years of experience, especially someone who is a worker, come on the job, and all you have to do is learn the streets, some codes and you’re done. The laws that we enforce are state laws. They are the same laws in Shelton; they are the same laws in Stratford. Everywhere you go in the State of Connecticut. You just have to learn the local ordinances. Not a big deal. But there’s a huge advantage to hiring lateral transfers, as long as that person checks out, if they have a good work ethic – and you can check all that in your background checks – that’s who you want. Also, we are also very mature. I am 55 years old. I’ve been through the whole gamut already. I know what to expect from people. I know what is expected of me. I wholeheartedly support lateral transfers. They’re what’s good for taxpayers, and what’s good for the City in general. Thank you.

Alderman Kudej MOVED to close the public hearing on this item; SECONDED by Alderman Papa. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 7-0.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Alderman Simonetti MOVED to adjourn; SECONDED by Alderman Kudej. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 7-0.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia M. Bruder, Clerk

Date Submitted: _____________________________

Board of Aldermen

DATE APPROVED: ______________BY: _____________________________

Mark A. Lauretti
Mayor, City of Shelton