Call to Order / Pledge of Allegiance

Christopher Besescheck, Chairman of Board of Apportionment and Taxation, called the Budget Hearing meeting to order at approximately 7:00 p.m. All those present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call

Board of Apportionment and Taxation
Christopher Besescheck, Chairman- Present
Judson Crawford- Present
Wayne Bragg- Present
Jim Tickey, Vice Chairman- Present
John Belden- Present
Charlotte Madar- Present

Board of Alderman
John Anglase, President- Present
Lynne Farrell- excused
Jack Finn- Present
Stan Kudej- Present
Noreen McGorty- excused
John Papa- excused
Anthony Simonetti- Present

0500 Elections

Department requested $196,401.00; Mayor recommended $196,401.00

Pete Pavone and Jack Finn, explained that they have two part-time people and they don't anticipate changing that number. The payroll account covers the salaries of; two Registrar of Voters, two Deputy Registrars, two Assistant Registrars and four Machine Technicians throughout the year. The Registrar of Voters salaries get increased every year by $100 per charter and all the other positions stay the same.

Wayne Bragg questioned, what’s your head count?
Pete Pavone answered, there is no change. The two part-time employee’s handle all the day-to-day operations.

Alderman Anglace asked, can you address the differences from what you want and what the mayor recommended?

Pete Pavone answered, everything we requested we received so we are all set.

Charlotte Madar asked, there is $0 for postage and this year you have $12,700.

Pete Pavone answered, Gene Sullivan and Louis Marusic have set up the mailing differently this year. We now have line items for postage we won’t have to keep tapping into the Purchasing account.

**0600 Inlands/Wetlands**

Department requested $87,304.00; Mayor recommended $87,304.00

John Cook explained, the Mayor gave everything that was requested and there was no change other than payroll from the previous fiscal year. The economic is still sluggish so we tried to reflect that in the budget.

Wayne Bragg asked, can you speak about your head count?

John Cook replied, I’m full-time and I also have one part-time individual that I share with the planning department.

Judson Crawford asked, does the department have Revenue and does the department have a six year capital?

John Cook replied, we have fee’s that get paid to our department and the estimates of the fees are based on the adopted fee schedule and the receipts as the time and date of the compilation. Revenue has increased approximately 20% from the projection last year due to fees paid in permits from larger projects and penalties.

**0700 Economic Development**

Department requested $78,600.00; Mayor recommended $78,600.00

Fred Ruggio explained, we are a volunteer commission and develop marketing materials to promote the City. The majority of the expenditures are usually in the last four months of the fiscal year and the annual report is every two years. I have had good luck with Gene Sullivan and what we have been doing is getting ahead on our purchase requisitions to get a better cost. We have been lowering the cost every year.
Judson Crawford asked, line item “Meeting Travel and Conference” and its $14,600 and to date you have spent $0.

Fred Ruggio replied, as I stated before the last four months of the fiscal year is when the majority of our expenditures happen. Perhaps the description should be changed to maybe City Events. We really do any traveling and or go to any conferences.

**0900 Planning and Zoning**

Department requested $337,851.00; Mayor recommended $337,851.00

Rick Shultz explained, we only adjusted the regular payroll and the Mayor granted everything we requested. We are going really well at the moment and starting to see more movement in the department. We already issued 28 permits for single family dwellings which has exceeded all of last year. I want to advise you that we received a notice from Connecticut Post the legal’s will be going up meaning the fee’s. Accordingly, my department has been asked to make the necessary adjustments. We anticipate being able to fund everything with each line item. If and when the applications start to double in numbers that will directly affect the publications. There is movement to go electronic instead of using hard paper there is a lot of lobbying to keep it status quo. In the meantime, we use Connecticut Post for the publications. Our application covers; the legal notices, the stenographer and etc.

Wayne Bragg asked, your head count what is the actual head count verses what’s in the budget?

Rick Shultz replied, we have a total of four full-time; myself, two zoning enforcement officers, one clerk full-time and one part-time employee. We have coverage Monday-Saturday.

**1300 Conservation**

Department requested $48,512.00; Mayor recommended $48,512.00

Tom Harbinson explained, the open space trust account is a trust fund that’s maintained by the City of Shelton for the purpose of acquiring open space. The ordinance has gone through a couple revisions in the past. The requirement was $250,000 per year be deposited into the open space trust account by a set period of time in your fiscal year. That has not always been adhered to in a timely manner however; the amount of money that is required to be spent on open space has definitely been done. In the past fiscal year we have accomplished two important open space acquisitions. Although the ordinance is not being followed to the letter it’s
definitely being followed in spirit. The amount of money that has been expended on open space acquisitions in this town is laudable and will return a yield on that investment a hundred times over.

Wayne Bragg asked, what activities go on in other outsides services?

Tom Harbinson replied, when we do a property acquisition at times there are components that have to be done for the City to know that it’s getting the value of the property.

Tom Harbinson also made a few remarks to the Board asking how he stands with his line item Clerical Stenographer regarding the amount of money spent on the clerk on a per meeting basis and how he stands compared to any other City agency. Also the postage line item is $1.00 and has been for a few years because he added all our communication is done electronically. There can be a lot of efficiencies in City Hall to use electronic communication. The Community Garden a request was submitted for $200.00 and that line item didn’t exist in the budget last year. There are two sites for the Community Garden now and in total there are 60 plots and it costs $25.00 per plot. There is no revenue item on the budget and Tom isn’t sure how it’s supposed to be arranged structurally with the City's Finance Department. There will be $1,200 in revenue and they will be spending more than $200 that’s in the line item for the Community Garden. In the past the money was taken from other line items in the budget because there was never a Community Garden item and that’s why it’s showing a minus -$90.00. Also in the years passed on the budget there was a Capitol Improvement component for the recreation path. It’s nearly complete and hopes that it’s finished for National Trails Day. There has always been a $50,000 line item per year for about 5 years and there has never been any feedback on how Capitol Improvement budgets were administered through the Board of A&T.

1800 Zoning Appeals

Department requested $18,060; Mayor recommended $18,060

Non attendance.

2200 Fire Marshal

Department requested $283,018.00; Mayor recommended $283,018.00

James Tortora explained, we have some money that comes in from Blasting and Burn Permits this can be found under Revenue. On my budget printout I see a mistake line item 40.11 Clothing Supplies it should be $2,600 not $2,800.
Judson Crawford asked, we talked about this at last year’s meeting the Gas account looks like nothing has been expended.

James Tortora replied, as a Board a few years ago we decided every April 1st we were going to make all the money transfers to the Police Department budget. I make that request April 1st of every year.

Wayne Bragg asked, what is the number of part-time employees you have currently verses what’s in the budget?

James Tortora answered, right now I have four part-time. We are less one part-timer because they moved to full-time and that is reflected in the budget. The contract was just signed this week therefore; I have copies of the new numbers. The only contract pending now is mine the Fire Marshals.

**2400 Fire Department**

Department requested $915,567.00; Mayor recommended $880,151.00

Chief Fran Jones and Vice Chairman Ben McGorty explained, we asked for $915,567.00 and the Mayor recommended $880,151.00. We prepared our budget over the last month and a half we have reviewed both our Department request and the Mayor’s request you will find under part-time employee’s we are ok with the Mayor’s request. Moving down to alarm maintenance most of you all know we are in the middle of obtaining a new communication system for the Fire Department and all our alarms will be built into the new communication system. I would recommend just putting a $1.00 into the account just to keep the line item open.

Alderman Simonetti asked, are all your positions filled?

Chief Fran Jones replied, the $55,000 in the full-time payroll will be for the mechanic currently our full-time mechanic is out on Workers Comp so we hired a part-time employee for the interim. Once he returns, it will be a full-time position again.

Wayne Bragg asked, how many do you have part-time currently verses how many are in the budget?

Chief Fran Jones replied, currently we have the Fire Chief, four Assistant Chief’s, Mechanic, the Records Administrator and the Administrative Secretary as part-time employees. We have some posted positions; Deputy Fire Chief, Quartermaster, Recruitment Officer, Director of Training and four Training Assistants.

Judson Crawford asked, if this budget is approved where would you be taking the $12,412.00 cut from part-time payroll?
Chief Fran Jones answered, that will be coming from the proposal where we wanted to increase the hourly rate for the Records Administrator from $12.00 to $18.00 per hour and the Administrative Secretary from $12.24 to $18.00 per hour. These positions haven't had an increase in years. Under the Mayor's recommended budget it will allow for us to give the two positions a slight raise about $15.00 per hour.

Judson Crawford asked, would they still be working the same number of hours as you have listed here.

Chief Fran Jones replied, correct.

Charlotte Madar asked, you have a new item here Professional Services it was $0 now its $16,000. What is that for?

Chief Fran Jones replied, that so we can go out for engineering studies for replacement and renovations to our existing Fire Houses.

Vice Chairman Ben McGorty stated, we are going to be moving towards doing the renovations to the Huntington Fire House and the Echo Hose Fire Department. We will need consultants and professional architects on board now.

Jimmy Tickey asked, the storm watch program year-to-date you have spent about $4,800 you requested $25,000 and the Mayor recommended $15,000 can you explain a little about that program?

Chief Fran Jones replied, the storm watch program it all depends on the season. Last year we had record snowfall amounts and they put duty crews on during the inclement weather. This year we only had the one snow storm in October and the Hurricane. Most of it is done by volunteer hours but there are some monies to pay for food while the volunteers are on standby. We try and put $25,000 just for that variation from year-to-year.

Charlotte Madar asked, are you ok with the $8,000 drop in Fire Company Allowance?

Vice Chairman Ben McGorty stated, no. That's the one thing that we really do want to discuss.

Chief Fran Jones stated, each Fire Company in addition to Worker’s Comp provided by the City of Shelton each company is also insured under the Volunteer Fireman's Insurance Plan. That adds for additional coverage if a member was to be injured while under performance or on training to cover the difference between their normal salary and what Worker’s Comp will pay out. As our membership increases just like any other insurance rate it's based on the number of people and the potential claims. The cost of the insurance, we are anticipating it to increase slightly so that's why we are asking for a little more in the Company Allowance. This is the most important increase that we would like to see is the additional $8,000 added to the budget. We have increased our
membership we are up twelve members from last year and we plan on increasing it more.

Vice Chairman Ben McGorty explained, all the fire houses are set up as private corporations and they can get insurance from whoever they want. Chief Fran Jones added, I believe all fire companies are using the Volunteer Fireman’s Insurance.

Charlotte Madar asked, do you know what equipment you’re looking to purchase?

Chief Fran Jones replied, we are looking to purchase some apparatus over the next few years. The first items we would like to address are two rescue trucks and one quint. We then move out two years and want to replace ladder #33 in Huntington then we hope to replace engine #44 and engine #53. So that’s the vehicle replacement plan. We also need to replace or renovate Fire Station #1. As we did in the past we are asking for a $30,000 expenditure for breathing air station upgrade.

Chief Fran Jones added, we have been working with the town fathers yearly to replace the structural fire gear.

Adjournment

Charlotte moved to adjourn the March 1, 2012 Budget Hearing meeting; seconded by John Belden. A voice vote was taken; motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned approximately 8:26pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Melissa Anglace
Clerk, Board of Apportionment and Taxation