CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Cris Balamaci called the Special Joint Meeting of the Board of Aldermen and the Board of Apportionment & Taxation to order at 5:30 p.m. All those present rose and pledged allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

ROLL CALL

Cris Balamaci, Chairman, Board of A&T - present
John Belden, Board of A&T- present
Joe Knapik, Board of A&T- present
Louis Dagostine, Board of A&T - present

Alderman John F. Anglace, Jr., President of Board of Aldermen – present
Alderman Lynne Farrell - not present
Alderman John “Jack” Finn - present
Alderman Stanley Kudej - present
Alderman Noreen McGorty - present
Alderman Jim Capra - present
Alderman Eric McPherson - present
Alderman Anthony Simonetti - present

ADMINISTRATION

Mayor Mark A. Lauretti, City of Shelton
Thomas Welch, Corporation Counsel
Jack Bashar, Administrative Assistant
Paul Hiller, City of Shelton Finance Director
Dominic Barone, Board of Education Finance Director
Christopher Clouet, Superintendent of Schools

AGENDA ITEM
1. PER CITY CHARTER SECTION 7.2, MAYOR LAURETTI TO PRESENT HIS BUDGET FOR FY 2016-2017 TO THE BOARD OF ALDERMEN AND BOARD OF APPORTIONMENT AND TAXATION

MAYOR’S BUDGET ADDRESS

March 22, 2016

Good Evening Members of the Board of Aldermen and Board of Apportionment & Taxation, Members of the Press, and Ladies and Gentlemen.

The beginning of a six month long budget process in our City, has begun and more importantly for me, this marks my 25th budget to the City of Shelton.

It is hard to imagine that a quarter of a century has passed since I first took office in November of 1991. We have all witnessed the more significant changes that have occurred in our City, change that can be seen in most every area of our City and ones that have enhanced our quality of life with open space, walking trails and new schools. Certainly a change we can all be proud of.

Our population has increased by 4,000 since 1991 to 40,000 residents today, but even more importantly, the number of people that commute in to work has risen from 6,000 to almost 25,000 on any given workday. Consistent with that is the number of businesses that call Shelton home has doubled to over 1,500, making Shelton one of Connecticut’s employment hubs.

We have worked and labored hard over downtown redevelopment only to witness a rebirth of our waterfront - once industrial, and then dilapidation and blight, to where people live, work and enjoy recreation.

All of the things I have mentioned have contributed to the prosperity we now enjoy and has stimulated growth in our grand list from less than $1 billion in 1991 to just under $5 billion today. This year marks the 25th consecutive year of grand list growth, up three quarters of a percent from last year.
The diverse growth in our economy has also allowed Shelton to maintain a low and stable mill rate. In fact, in 25 years we have either maintained the same rate or lowered the mill rate 17 of 25 years. This has allowed residents and businesses alike to enjoy tax stability. Predictability is also a major factor for business recruitment and retention. Businesses have certainly benefitted from one year to the next as Shelton is constant and predictable.

We are, however, affected by conditions outside of our control. While this is the third economic recession in the last 25 years Shelton has endured, we are the last to feel its effect and the first to grow. I would caution that the State of Connecticut has not followed suit. We as a state have lagged poorly behind the rest of the country and continue to be business unfriendly. The exodus of businesses out of our state has come home to roost. We are keenly aware that people and business continue to leave our state. In fact, since 1991, forty-four Fortune Five Hundred Companies have left Connecticut taking their jobs and financial resources. The first being UPS from Greenwich to the most recent being General Electric Company.

Taxes, taxes, and more taxes along with onerous regulation year in and year out have made Connecticut less competitive than the rest of the country effecting a loss in state revenues, leaving less to go around. Cities and towns are sure to feel the impact of reduction in state funding as our current year's budget has had cuts to it, and next year will be no different. Connecticut has been consistent in its high cost of living and doing business.

A second factor that effects every city and town in our state is the cost of supplying educational services. As an example, in 1981 Shelton’s student enrollment was 6,700 students and the budget was $11,288,000. In 2016, student enrollment has dropped to 4,900 students and yet our budget ballooned to just under $72,000,000. This is not a trend that is sustainable for both city or state. Government must change the way it serves people and delivers services.

While the City of Shelton has met its obligation and deals with its challenges, we must not lose sight of the big picture. Creating a balanced approach to spending has been a hallmark to our success.

The budget I am submitting for Fiscal Year 2016-17 is based on revenues and expenditures of $122,355,476. It will result in a mill rate of 22.31 mills, resulting in no change in our tax rate. This will be the 8th year in a row that our residents will not see a tax increase.

Connecticut is a state with an abundance of natural beauty and resources and its being squandered. Holding the line on taxes will allow everyone to remain here to enjoy a world class quality of life.

Thank you,

Mark A. Lauretti, Mayor
**ADJOURNMENT**

Cris Balamaci MOVED to adjourn at approximately 5:40 pm. SECONDED by John Belden. A voice vote was taken and the meeting was adjourned.

Presented at the Special Joint Meeting of the Board of Aldermen and Board of Apportionment & Taxation, on March 22, 2016.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Brittany Gannon*

Brittany Gannon, Clerk
Board of Aldermen

DATE APPROVED: ______________ BY: ________________________________

Mark A. Lauretti
Mayor, City of Shelton