Call to Order / Pledge of Allegiance

Charlotte Madar, Chairman of Board of Apportionment and Taxation, called the Budget Hearing meeting to order at approximately 6:00 p.m. All those present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call

Board of Apportionment and Taxation

Charlotte Madar, Chairman- Present
Joe Palmucci, Vice Chairman- Present
John Belden- Present
Joe Knapik- Present
Louis Dagostine- Present
John Zikaras- Present

Board of Aldermen

John Anglace, President- Present
Jack Finn- Present
Stan Kudej- Present
John Papa- Present
Noreen McGorty- Present
Eric McPherson- Present

0600 Inland/ Wetlands

Department Requested $88,562; Mayor recommends $88,562

Chairman Madar: As I read, the Mayor gave you penny for penny; you have requested $88,562 and the Mayor accepted your request of $88,562. I do have one question: Under line items: Meeting and Travel, Professional Services and Field Supplies, you did not spend anything yet. Is that all for the spring?
John Cook: It is for the spring time, but if there are things that I can defer, I have prepared the budget to reflect a zero change over the last three years, except for salary and payroll. I would like to see those three line items maintained.

John Zikaras: I have a question on Printing and Advertising: Do you have a plan for next year to spend more than the $250 that you have spent on the current budget?

John Cook: That actually was a greater expenditure, although this year the board withheld a number of meetings, a bunch of meetings and to put a legal notice in the paper. I believe that there were funds that came out of another line item; there should have been some funds that were taken out of that. In future, we would like to put more and more documents online, such as the Regulation books. In years past, we used to sell the regulation books and so forth but as time passed on, not as many people are requesting paper copies.

Louis Dagostine: I have a question about part time employees: To date, you have spent your allotted budget, which was $17,816. Next year you requested $17,816. Do you anticipate more payment to go into the part time employees line item for the rest of the year? Did it just stop?

John Cook: That position is actually shared with my office, the Planning and Zoning office and the Community Development office, under the Blight Program. His salary comes out of those different departments, so under my budget I am not projecting any additional amounts. The remainder for this year’s budget will either come out the Planning and Zoning budget or Community Development budget, part time.

Jack Finn: Does Fred’s salary all come out of that number in your line item?

John Cook: In our account, he used it completely.

Jack Finn: Does he work within the 29 hours among the three departments?

John Cook: Yes he does. For my budget, I put him in for 16 hours per week for my services. The rest would be allocated between Planning and Zoning and Community Development.

Jack Finn: One more question: Your department returned about $7,000 last year. I noticed in the two areas for Meeting, Travel and Conference and Clerical were used very little. Is that where your surplus came from?

John Cook: Correct. The bulk of the surplus was from Clerical. In the Clerical
portion in particular, if the meetings are shorter and we can get by with the transcription of minutes, the turn around is quick and the cost is small.

Jack Finn: Can you deal with less money in Clerical?

John Cook: If it stays slow like in years past, certainly I would not use that full amount. When we go to Public Hearing, we still have our minute clerk but then there are times when we have to bring in a court stenographer, and that is more money.

Alderman Papa: Do you have any Revenue Accounts?

John Cook: Yes we do. Based on the previous six months, I just project that out.

0700 Economic Development Commission
Department Requested $76,800; Mayor recommends $76,800

Fred Ruggio: We develop the marketing materials to promote the City of Shelton. Such activities include publication of Shelton Life; sponsoring the Annual Flag Day business event, sponsor the schools' art contests along with the Board of Education. We also produce the Bi-Annual Report for the City of Shelton. We are asking around the same, such as in previous years.

Chairman Madar: The Mayor gave you the exact amount that you have requested for. Are you going to have enough money in the Part Time Employees line item?

Fred Ruggio: Yes. Most of our expenses come out around the last several months of the year. We have not been spending that much as we go along.

Chairman Madar: When do you produce the annual report?

Fred Ruggio: We produce the bi-annual report every other year. In this year's budget we have $30,000. In this year's budget, I asked to put $1 in there to keep the line item open. The Mayor recommended $1 and this board approved $1. It went to the Board of Aldermen, and I received $30,000 and I do not know why. The only thing that we have in this line item is $405, which was a carryover from the previous year. I sent an email to the Mayor and never heard a reply from anyone. The $30,000 is going to be returned; I will not spend that.
Next year we are asking for $30,000 to produce the bi-annual report.

Chairman Madar: In your budget line item for the Bi Annual Report you have a balance of $29,595. For the 14/15 budget, you have requested $29,000 and the Mayor kept your request of $29,000.

**0900 Planning and Zoning**

Department Requested $342,379; Mayor recommends $342,379

Chairman Madar: The Mayor gave you the full amount that you have requested for.

Louis Dagostine: How many part time employees do you have?

Rick Schultz: Mr. Cook indicated Fred Wills. John Cook does approximately 16.9 hours, I put in for 6.5 hours and Community Development does the rest. As a side note, my department uses Fred on Mondays when City Hall is closed, so we do have coverage. If we need him on the weekends, we do it. That is for checking all of the development sites, sediment erosion to see if there are any issues.

Jack Finn: Your department almost returned $8,000 last year. Do you really need a $1,262 increase this year?

Rick Schultz: I am not going to be returning that this year. Things have picked up dramatically in terms of large-scale development. Unfortunately the residents are still not coming in. It is tough to get loans for a variety of reasons, so that saddens us. However, the big projects are coming in. There is a combination of Class A office space, apartments and some retail space. That is also going to impact the revenue side. We evaluate our fee schedule every six months because we have to deal a lot with the Connecticut Post. When they increase, we also have to go up for ads.

Jack Finn: On the revenue side, there is an area that you are indicating to us that you want an increase?

Rick Schultz: No, we have been delighted with you holding it for the past couple of years. It was tough, but we are starting to see improvement. The only improvement that we are not seeing is the residents. Everyone is complaining about the toughness of the lending institutions, and people did lose a lot of
equity in their homes.

Chairman Madar: Are you okay with the Professional Services line item? It looks like it has been spent.

Rick Schultz: We are running low, but we will make due.

1300 Conservation Commission

Department Requested $66,292; Mayor recommends $61,292

Tom Harbinson: Basically the budget is a $0 increase from last year. We leverage our City dollars for a lot on a lot of volunteer activities. The one change in line items that is significant is currently we have a salary of a full time and a part time position. We have anticipated that during this fiscal year, our part time position would be reverted back to a full time position, in which I have spoken to the Mayor about. In our budget request, we the bubbling of a full time and part time dollar amount into a single full time dollar amount, but no change in the dollar amount.

Chairman Madar: On our printout for Regular Payroll, it says $1 and the Part Time as $40,000. Your department requested $45,000 and the Mayor recommended $1 for that line item.

Tom Harbinson: The number should be $40,000 in that line item, not $1. I believe that was a mistake.

Chairman Madar: So that is a decrease of $5,000. Will $40,000 be enough, or do you need $45,000?

Tom Harbinson: I had anticipated $45,000; that is what we need and that is what I put in for last year.

Chairman Madar: John, please flag that line item for review because we need to put $5,000 in there and switch the line items.

Under Part Time Employees, is the $1 okay?

Tom Harbinson: Yes, because there would not be any other part timers. I would just be a placeholder for the line item.
Chairman Madar: Every other line item is as exactly as you have requested.

Tom Harbinson: That is not correct because under the Mileage line item I have requested $160, not $460. The $160 was on the digital copy that I have submitted.

Chairman Madar: Then we will just subtract $300 from that line item.

Tom Harbinson: Correct. I have not used any of that money to date.

Jack Finn: Why did you return $12,593 according to the audit?

Tom Harbinson: As you know some of the line items are components to help facilitate the purchase of open space. Not every fiscal year, from July to June, we are able to accomplish a purchase. However, we are actively out there with some of them with appraisals, surveys, etc. Some of those other line items such as Outside Services and Land Improvements are late to surveys that need to get done, or appraisals to get done. Sometimes they have to get done according to a yellow book standard, which is a federal reference on how they have to be done. If it is over a certain appraised value we might have two appraisals. They are really a placeholder of dollar value of what we would expect as a typical acquisition level compared to previous years.

1900 Legal Services-Corporation Counsel

Department Requested $196,763; Mayor recommends $196,763

Atty. Welch: There is not an increase to our budget for the upcoming fiscal year. In the total amount, you will see an increase for the requested hourly wage. For litigation, the firm gets paid $150 per hour and as part of the budget, it was increased to $165 per hour. The last increase was four years ago. That is the only change that you are seeing. It is a $9,000 increase.

Jack Finn: We know how many hours that your firm spends on Worker's Compensation, foreclosures and other various legal matters within the City. Why did your office return $54,177?

Atty. Welch: It was reactionary. The variable numbers are the legal fees; it is going to go up and down based on the amount of litigation. That is going to be higher this year, because of the case specifically, entitled Planning and Zoning
vs. the Zoning Board of Appeals. We had to hire outside counsel for each. It is somewhat difficult to control those costs. That is going to be around $15,000 to $16,000 bill that is outside of what I had anticipated out of our normal monthly litigation. It is really based upon litigation. We have some tax appeals that are coming up in the next two months that are going to litigation.

Alderman Papa: Do you have any Revenue accounts?

Atty. Welch: We do, but it is not listed on our side. It is a general revenue account that foreclosure fees come out of. I wish it was in my budget, so it would replenish but it is not. It is return of costs. When I am doing a foreclosure, and when I have legal fees I bill the City for those costs. An appraisal, the entry fee is $650 then the taxpayer pays in full. All of those costs and expenses go back to the City as payment of taxes and return of cost. So, there is a revenue line item for return of foreclosure costs.

Chairman Madar: The line item is: Foreclosure Fee Reimbursements. The line is zeroed out across the board.

Atty. Tom Welch: I do have to make sure it is properly credited as to what return of costs that we have. This year we probably had $2,200 in return of cost. It doesn’t go back into the line item, but goes back to the City General Fund.

2200 Fire Marshall

Department Requested $268,043; Mayor recommends $268,043

Chairman Madar: The Mayor has matched your budget request. I have a question: you have no need for communication equipment funds?

Jim Tortora: No because all of the radios are brand new through the Fire Department.

Joe Knapik: The Fire Marshall's office returned $67,410 last year as surplus. I am wondering what this office anticipates returning, if any, this year? Are there any variables that are involved?

Jim Tortora: Most of that was Part Time Payroll or Full Time Payroll. We were down a couple of people who we never replaced.
Joe Knapik: Is this situation likely to reoccur?

Jim Tortora: No.

Chairman Madar: Your request was lower from last year. It was $304,175 and this year it is $288,043.

John Zikaras: This is regarding part time employees. You currently have four positions that are filled?

Jim Tortora: Five positions total.

John Zikaras: Do you intend to full additional positions?

Jim Tortora: Yes. We are actually eliminating two positions from the last several years.

John Zikaras: Have these people been here for a while?

Jim Tortora: Yes there are some. There many be a new one coming in but we are not sure yet.

Louis Dagostine: You are asking less for the Regular Payroll this year. Why?

Jim Tortora: That was the way I calculated it. I do not know why it came out that way.

John Zikaras: So you didn't replace anyone?

Jim Tortora: No.

Chairman Madar: Your request went down to from $151,515 to $149,943, which is $2,000 less. The Mayor gave you your request.

Jim Tortora: Also, the Deputy Fire Marshall's contract is not settled yet, so there will be an increase there.

Louis Dagostine: So, will the $149,943 cover that increase?

Jim Tortora: By contract it should.

Louis Dagostine: In terms of the Gasoline line item, I see that you were budgeted $8,000. You didn't spend any and now you are asking for another
$8,000. Why is that?

Jim Tortora: That is usually rolled over every April by the Finance Director into the Police Department’s account. We get our gas there. Every April, the Finance Director transfers my $8,000 into that account. Paul Hiller has that request, and he will do it any day now.

John Zikaras: Any capital improvement plans?

Jim Tortora: Just vehicles.

Alderman Papa: Do you have any revenue accounts?

Jim Tortora: Yes it should be in there. We do not do that many blasting permits anymore. We have blasting permits, open burning permits, and insurance requests for reports.

Alderman McGorty: The budget summary lists the budget as $268,043, but the budget that I am working with is $288,043. That is a $20,000 difference.

Chairman Madar: I believe that is a typo.

Alderman McGorty: The difference looks like it was Part Time Employees and Personnel Training.

Jim Tortora: I asked for $268,043. Personnel training should have $3,000 in there, as requested.

Chairman Madar: After correcting, the correct amount requested for Personnel Training is $3,000 and $83,020 for the part time account.

Jim Tortora: That is correct.

Chairman Madar: So the correct budget for this department should be $272,923.

2000 Public Safety & Emergency Services

Department Requested $122,058; Mayor recommends $122,058

Chairman Madar: At the present time your payroll is overdrawn by $2,000.
Mike Maglione: Yes, however last Friday there was a transfer of funds. The amount that was transferred last Friday was $25,000, from the part time account. Paul Hiller represented me as I was out of state. We should be balanced now.

Chairman Madar: According to our printout, your budget request reads as $122,058 and that is what the Mayor agreed to.

Joe Knapik: Last year, $30,402 was returned as surplus to the City. Would you like to explain the likely reoccurrence of that happening?

Mike Maglione: When you are dealing with emergency management funds, there is always a possibility of a return. You do not want to have to spend the money, but at the same time you need it in the accounts to have it on hand almost immediately. In the year that we are in right now, that surplus is going to be much smaller because we had that fire on Howe Avenue. The hotel room charges were around $8,500.

Louis Dagostine: In the Part Time employees line item, it shows the YTD as $860. Last year’s requested budget was $30,000. This year, your request went down from $7,500 to $22,500. Why hasn’t money been spent?

Mike Maglione: Normally there are two deputy emergency managers. At this time, they are not filled.

Louis Dagostine: Are they going to be filled for the next fiscal year?

Mike Maglione: I certainly hope so. I cannot give you a definite yes or no.

Louis Dagostine: Are the positions being advertised?

Mike Maglione: No, it is a Mayor’s appointment.

Louis Dagostine: Just a follow up question: there are a bunch of zeroes in terms of money spent for Mileage, Meeting, Travel and Conferences, Uniform Service, Communications Maintenance, EOC Maintenance, Medical Exams. Is that money that you intend to spend at the end of the year?

Mike Maglione: The fuel portion gets rolled over. The Medical Exams line item is there in case of an incident. There is a possibility that funds will be spent on EOC Maintenance because we bring in the technicians for our equipment on an annual basis. Nothing has been decided yet on Field Equipment. For clothing supplies on my end, I have not spent any money on uniforms; I will not buy a uniform. I might buy some work clothes between now and the end of the year.
Louis Dagostine: Do you anticipate on buying some next year?

Mike Maglione: No, but at the same time if deputies are hired, they would need uniforms.

Jack Finn: Isn’t the Part Time Payroll reimbursed by the State of Connecticut?

Mike Maglione: The City receives about $20,000 in reimbursement from the State. Right now, we use my salary to meet that requirement.

More discussion held on tape.

2100 EMS Commission

Department Requested $116,501; Mayor recommends $96,501

Noreen McGorty: Our budget is pretty modest, and I think you really get a good bank for your buck from the City. I am extremely disappointed to see that the Mayor has reduced the paramedic service from $30,000, which we had for years with no increase, to $10,000. To be frank, it cannot operate on $10,000; it just cannot happen. I would like to highlight again that this amount was arrived at many years ago with the Valley Council of Governments on how much each town wanted to pay for their paramedic service. I respectfully request to put that back in the budget.

More discussion held on tape

2400 Fire Department

Department Requested $1,012,637; Mayor recommends $976,501

Chairman Madar: Your Part Time Employees account was cut by $14,136 by the Mayor. Can you live with that?

Chief Jones: With the Part Time Account, there was an increase from last year’s actual budget. I proposed a new position of a Records/IT Secretary. It would be a Data Management title. We were looking at a 20-hour per week position, at $16.00 per hour. That would be around $16,640. With the Mayor’s recommended budget I am still able to fund that new position, but I will not be
able to provide raises to two of my other part time employees. I was looking to provide a raise of $12.25 per hour, to bring it all up to a $16.00 per hour position. The secretary’s position and the other position currently makes $12.00 per hour. Somewhere in the middle is where that extra $14,000 comes in. It is approximately a $10,000 cost for the secretary’s new pay raise if that was to be approved down the road. The cost would be $7,500 for the other position.

So, we can live with the Mayor’s recommended budget. It means a less of a raise for those other two positions if ultimately granted through Human Resources and the Mayor’s Office. I also might have to cut the hours on the proposed new position. These are all part time employees.

Chairman Madar: Your physical exams were cut by $11,000. You increased it $9,000 and the Mayor cut you by $11,000.

Chief Jones: Every year we go back and forth on this topic. Currently the Shelton Fire Department has approximately 272 members. Each year we take in around 20-30 new applicants. Every applicant that joins the Fire Department, and every existing member have to meet minimal physical requirements. There is some OSHA standards for respiratory protection as well, so that is where physicals came under. It is a medical component within the fire service. Projected for next year, we will send 169 of the 272 current volunteers for medicals. We are going out to bid on this item in the next couple of weeks. An average medical costs at least $250 per individual; with $250 multiplied by 169 is around $42,000. Estimating 30 new applicants, again at $250 per medical that brings the total just shy of $51,000.

Chairman Madar: How often do the volunteers need a physical?

Chief Jones: It’s an annual physical for the current 169 members. It is based on age groups: 18-29 years old require a physical every 3 years based on that person’s health. From 30-39, it is recommended that our firefighters receive a physical every other year, unless you have an underlying issue. Once you hit 40, a physical is required every year, for health and safety reasons.

Chairman Madar: The next item the Mayor cut was Communications Maintenance by $7,000. Can you live with that?

Chief Jones: Yes. He reduced the communications account. Then on the next page for communication equipment, he increased that item by $4,000 so I only have a net loss of $3,000. I can live with $4,000.

Joe Knapik: You say that you can live with the Mayor’s proposed budget for next year. I would be inclined to think so because you returned $101,004 last year.
How would you reconcile this year’s budget cuts and what you might expect from this year for what the return of $101,004 surplus that occurred last year. How would you reconcile the two?

Chief Jones: At times, there are line items within the budget that are not spent during the current budget year. So that is why you see a surplus.

More discussion held on tape.

**Adjournment**

Chairman Madar MOVED to adjourn the April 8, 2013 Budget Hearing meeting; seconded by Joe Palmucci. A voice vote was taken; motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned approximately 7:45pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Brittany Gannon, Clerk