Call to Order / Pledge of Allegiance
Cris Balamaci, Chairperson 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
Cris Balamaci, Chairperson- Present
Karen Battistelli, Vice Chairperson- Present
John Belden- Present
Joe Knapik-Present
Adam Heller- Present
Louis Dagostine- Present

Board of Aldermen
John Anglace, President- Present
Eric McPherson, Vice President- Present
Jack Finn- Present
Stan Kudej- Present
Jim Capra – Present
Noreen McGorty- Present
Anthony Simonetti- Present

2000 Public Safety & Emergency Services
Department Requested $124,092; Mayor recommends $124,092

No one from department present for workshop.
2200 Fire Marshal
Department Requested $318,348; Mayor recommends $287,843

Jim Tortora – Shelton Fire Marshal

Chairperson Balamaci asked if the reduction of part-time employee payroll is something that is feasible. Jim Tortora stated that he could live with that. Lou Dagostine asked about regular payroll, he notes an increase of approximately $10,000. He asked if it was raises of existing employees. Mr. Tortora stated that it is due to raises. Lou Dagostine asked if the cut in part-time payroll would lead to layoffs. Mr. Tortora stated no. Adam Heller asked about full-time regular payroll, and through December they were under budget, and was questioning why Mr. Tortora was asking for an increase. Mr. Tortora stated that it was because it is contractual due to the Union agreement. Joe Knapik had a question on the Gasoline line item, and why the original budget and adjusted budget have the same balance. Mr. Tortora stated that usually this time of the year, the whole line item is transferred to the police department because that is where their gas is obtained. Lou Dagostine inquired if the Communication Equipment line item needed to be kept open because the request is $0. Mr. Tortora stated that they usually get their radios from the Fire Department budget, and it could probably be closed. Jack Finn stated that last year, just under $64,000 was returned. He asked if there is any place in the budget that can be reduced. Mr. Tortora stated that most of it is part-time payroll, and they are still down employees.

2100 EMS Commission
Department Requested $122,288; Mayor recommends $122,288

Noreen McGorty – Chairperson, Shelton EMS Commission

Noreen McGorty stated that there was a decrease in Personal Training because looking back on previous years, they have not spent what they have budgeted. Also, the C-Med Communication System is under contract, and it was increased by that amount. Also, Paramedic Intercept was increased by a modest amount, so net increase is about 1%. Lou Dagostine asked if Professional Services and Bundle Billing line items needed to stay open. Noreen stated yes, just in case something comes up throughout the year.
2400 Fire Department

Department Requested $1,028,416; Mayor recommends $966,763

Francis Jones – Shelton Fire Chief

Chief Jones stated that Part-Time employees line item, the reasoning for the increase is because the 2 apparatus maintainers that were hired May of last, and this would be their first full year of work and they would be off probation, so he would like to give them an increase in hourly wage. His budget also included a modest 2% increase in his other employees. He stated that most of the staff are volunteers and the other employees are either part-time or stipend employees. Lou Dagostine asked if there were any open part-time positions looking to be filled. Chief Jones stated no. He also noted that last year they talked about Pension/Incentive awards, and that the Board of A&T recommended the additional $30,000, and the recommendation wasn't followed, which led to a negative balance. This was cut again this year, and he asked if this would be an issue again this year. Chief Jones stated that the number he gave was what the actuaries believe is needed. Lou Dagostine also questioned Overtime Pay, and there was a significant increase and would like to know how it works. Chief Jones stated that it is not overtime, but extra time because they are not paid time and a half. Lou Dagostine also asked what is most pressing for their Capital Improvements request. Chief Jones stated that it would be the relocation of the Echo Hose Fire House. If the downtown development takes place, it is going to affect where the fire house currently sits, and they would have to relocate. He also stated that they are down 1 ladder truck. Adam Heller asked about Communication Equipment, and also if radios were replaced every year. Chief Jones stated that there are 2 accounts. Communication Maintenance is contractual, for preventative maintenance, and Communication Equipment is for upgrades. Adam Heller asked if what was budgeted is sufficient for Maintenance of the radios. Chief Jones replied yes. Jack Finn asked why money was returned last year, whether PO’s were denied. Chief Jones stated that the end of the season, PO’s slow down around May, into June, and they returned a lot last year because of personnel. They were down a Fire Alarm Maintainer for about 7 months. The new hire came during the next year’s budget. Jack Finn also asked if there was going to be enough money to cover his 2 deficits. Chief Jones stated that there is about $69,000 left, so it is going to be tight, and they may need to seek alternative funding through the Board of A&T.
Leon Sylvester – Animal Control Supervisor

Leon Sylvester stated that the one issue was Part-Time payroll, and he stated that there was a little discrepancy because they are in discussion with Derby about possibly taking over their Animal Control. This could create an avenue for additional revenue. The budget was created with an uncertainty of the future. The updated number would be $110,454, as opposed to what is showing, which is an amount of $162,922. Leon also stated that this year, there were a lot of food donations, so he was not sure if the donations would be as high this year, so he took that into consideration when constructing budget. Lou Dagostine asked about food, and mentioned Friends of the Animal Shelter, and the Mayor gave them an increase that they requested. Mr. Dagostine asked if they take donations and then give them to the Shelter. Mr. Sylvester stated that Friends of the Animal Shelter’s mission is to see every animal that leaves the Shelter spayed or neutered. He stated that the Veterinarian line item would be exponentially higher if Friends of the Animal Shelter did not pay to spay or neuter the animals. All the Animal Shelter really covers is the food. Lou Dagostine also stated that on the revenue budget for Animal Control Receipts line item, the Department projects $350, but the Mayor recommends $52,000, and asked what the rationale for this could be. Leon stated that with every adoption, there is a City fee, which goes back to the City. Lou asked why it was so high, and Leon stated that they would have to look into it. John Anglace stated that it may have to do with the partnership with Derby. Leon stated that it may be the reason why. Jack Finn inquired about the Quarantine Fencing line item. He believes that whenever an animal was in quarantine, after they were removed the fencing needed to be replaced. Now, the budget allocation is for $1 as a placeholder. Leon was not too sure, and maybe that was used in the old shelter, but he took over when the new shelter was in place.
Shawn Sequeira – Acting Police Chief

Lieutenant George Rodriguez

Acting Chief Sequeira stated that he is in agreeance with a majority of the Mayor’s cuts in the budget request. The one thing he was not in agreeance with was the cut in payroll. The department requested $4,858,447, and the Mayor cut it down to $4,700,000. The request was so they could hire 6 extra patrolmen. They currently stand at 31, and would like to be at 37. With the cuts, they can only hire 4. He stated that they try to do more with less, and would like to increase their omnipresence in the downtown area. There is an increase in crimes in certain areas, and they have been working side by side with the DEA to crack down on the opioid epidemic. There have been multiple arrests, but to increase the safety and make the crack down on the epidemic more effective, they need the extra 6 hires that have been requested. He also stated that hiring more with lower overtime, but his main concern is the safety of the citizens. Overall, there are 31 full-time employees, but they are requesting a total of 37. Lou Dagostine asked why the police department does not hire the employees that are needed, when the money is available that is allotted to do such. Acting Chief Sequeira commented that he has only been in this position for too long, but he commented on how the process work, and that it relies on whether there is a seat open in the academy. Lou Dagostine also asked if the City of Shelton’s Police Department’s staff rate of pay was competitive. Chief Sequeira stated that he averaged salaries from neighboring downs, and compared to our surroundings, salaries are low.

-Further discussion on tape in City Clerk’s office

Respectfully Submitted,

Nicholas Twigg

Nicholas Twigg

Clerk

2 tapes on file in City Clerk’s office