



Board of Aldermen
Shelton, Connecticut
FINANCE COMMITTEE – July 22, 2004

Call to Order / Pledge of Allegiance

Alderman Stanley Kudej, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 6 p.m.
All those present rose and pledged allegiance to the flag.

Roll Call - Finance Committee

Alderman Stanley Kudej, Chairman, present
Aldermanic President John F. Anglace, Jr. - present
Alderman Nancy Minotti, absent - vacation

Mayor Mark A. Lauretti
Corporation Counsel Tom Welch
Alderman John Finn

Public Session

Alderman Kudej asked if any member of the public wished to address the Finance Committee.

Judson Crawford, Member
Board of Apportionment and Taxation

Since our last meeting, I presented a question to you and you said you were going to get back to me. I have been patiently waiting for a response from you. Have you come up with an answer?

It is in reference to what I asked you about. Ordinance 768. Why was this for the Fence Viewer at year end transferred.

Alderman Kudej stated, I didn't get a response on that. I asked the question and I'm still working on it.

The issue was over expending on the Fence Viewer. You overexpended \$273 more out of that line item, even though the line item only calls for an expenditure of \$1,000, which is covered under Ordinance 768 and was posted. That was last year's budget 2003-04. I requested an answer.

Alderman Anglace asked, there is no year end transfer against that account?

Mr. Crawford replied, they expended funds to cover that for the \$273. It's account number 001-1200-419.10-12.

Alderman Anglace stated, the budget run at year end was not transferred, but money was spent in excess of what the ordinance allows to be spent for the Fence Viewer?

Mr. Crawford replied, that is correct. I asked for an answer.

Alderman Anglace stated, we will ask the Clerk to send a letter to the Finance Department pointing this out and asking for an explanation.

Mr. Crawford continued. This is for information. The July tax refunds - my only question to you, the Finance Committee is, where you're saying to take out \$22,558 and this should come from Tax Refunds. My question to you is, shouldn't that read Statutory Refunds Account 001-000-311.13-00 – a new line item. Tax Refunds was never allocated any funds at all.

Alderman Anglace stated, instead of Tax Refunds it's got to be Statutory Refunds. So noted.

Mr. Crawford concluded, the taxes balance.

Alderman Kudej asked three times if any member of the public wished to address the Finance Committee. Being none, he declared the Public Session closed.

Add-Ons

Alderman Anglace MOVED to add to the agenda as Item 12: Legal Services Billing – Pellegrino Law Firm; SECONDED by Alderman Kudej. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 2-0.

1. Approval of Minutes

Alderman Anglace MOVED to recommend to the full Board to waive the reading and approve the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting of June 24, 2004; SECONDED by Alderman Anglace. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 2-0.

2. July Tax Refunds

Alderman Anglace MOVED to recommend to the full Board that the report of the Tax Collector relative to the refund of taxes for a total amount of \$22,558.53 be approved and that the Finance Director be directed to make payments in accordance with the Certified List received from the Tax Collector with funds to come from the Statutory Refunds Account 001-000-311.13-00; SECONDED by Alderman Kudej.

Alderman Anglace stated, the Tax Collector should be notified, and the Clerk as well, about the change of account name from Tax Refunds to Statutory Refunds.

A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 2-0.

3. Theodore Road Culvert

Alderman Anglace MOVED to recommend to the full Board to appropriate \$5,000 for design funds in conjunction with the Theodore Road culvert; and FURTHER, authorize Mayor Mark A. Lauretti to expedite a Preferred Services Agreement with the low bidder, with funds to come from LOCIP and FURTHER recommend to add it to the Capital Improvement Program; SECONDED by Alderman Kudej. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 2-0.

4. Special Tax District for Condominiums

Alderman Finn explained that he and Alderman Minotti had a First Ward meeting and a resident of Aspetuck Village asked to see the City develop a special tax district for condominiums. The community they formerly resided in Stamford had this special tax district. The resident spoke with the City Tax Collector and said this would be workable. Alderman Finn questioned this, as City Hall workers don't say something like this would be workable.

Alderman Finn stated, I would like to have the Finance Committee explore the possibility of establishing a special tax district for condominiums by contacting the City Tax Collector, Assessor and Corporation Counsel. I also would like to contact the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities and find out from them exactly what other communities in the State have this special tax district just for condominiums, as this would include all condominiums in the City of Shelton.

Alderman Anglace stated, I think it's an idea that is worth exploring; it will take a little time to do it and I think there are a lot of questions. It's not a new law as I understand it; I remember it came up a long time ago. It hasn't come up in recent years. Maybe there were some changes to the law, I don't know.

We'll talk to the Assessor, have her come to one of our meetings and talk about it; we'll talk to the Tax Collector – I think your points are well taken. We'll have to get Counsel to look at it. It's a good idea.

5. *Madison ECS Funding Advisory Committee*

Alderman Anglace stated, this is a letter the Mayor received from Madison First Selectman Thomas Scarpetti. He points out that they had proposed to the State Legislature, Senator William Anaskovich put in a bill along with Senator Louis Deluca proposing a bill to establish a minimum grant for each town of \$1,000 minimum per student to fund education costs. The amendment didn't pass. Madison is trying to build a coalition among towns and cities that share a concern regarding inadequate state grant funding for education in municipalities.

It's a good topic for the joint meeting of the Board of Aldermen, Board of Apportionment & Taxation and Board of Ed to put as one of the agenda items and discuss it.

In the meantime we can write back to Madison, acknowledge receipt of the letter, and we will explore it further.

6. *Review of Mayor's Salary*

Alderman Anglace move to recommend to the full Board to waive the bidding and quotation procedure and engage the services of the consulting firm of Ulois Associates to perform the analysis forming the basis of the Mayoral Salary Ordinance at a cost not to exceed \$2,000, which will be taken from the Contingency General Account; SECONDED by Alderman Kudej.

The Mayor's Salary Ordinance calls for an update on a biannual basis. If you recall, we didn't do it two years ago and the Mayor is working at the same rate as two years ago. This has to be done before the next election and in order to give ourselves enough time and let him come back with a recommendation, we'll follow the same procedures as we did in the past. It should be back in plenty of time for us to act on it.

Alderman Finn asked, are three Requests for Qualifications required?

Alderman Anglace replied, I don't know if there are too many people that do this, but we haven't done that before either. Ulois has done this for us before, two or three times. He is well qualified.

Alderman Finn stated, I believe we have procedures where we required three Requests for Qualifications.

Alderman Anglace stated, that is why the motions reads, waive the bidding and quotation procedure. He has done it for us before, and it's going to cost a hell of a lot less to have him do it for us again.

Alderman Finn asked, do we have a letter from the Purchasing Agent or will you have by the time it goes to the full Board?

Alderman Anglace stated, we will have it by the time it goes to the full Board.

A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 2-0.

7. Digital Voice Logging Equipment

Alderman Anglace stated, this comes from the Police Department. They want to replace the digital voice logging equipment. We're talking \$17,000 or \$18,000 in funds from LOCIP. This is one that – this is a commodity. This certainly can go out to bid and perhaps it should go out to bid before we take an action on it. Why don't we ask them to go out to bid on it and have them come back to us. Alderman Kudej agreed.

8. ATV Tax

Alderman Anglace stated, this was prompted from a letter from Tom Harbinson. The Trails Committee is having problems with ATVs and dirt bikes tearing up the trails. The volunteers put in hard work into them. These vehicles are not registered because they're not required to be registered if they're used on private land. They're banned from public land, but they're using it anyway. Tom suggested that ATVs that violate open space rules be required to be registered and subsequently taxed. I checked with Counsel and this cannot be done. We will have to find another way to deal with the problem through the Police Department. There is nothing we can do. Corporation Counsel said we can't do that.

Alderman Finn asked if a specific fine can be set up specifically for dirtbikes and ATVs.

There is a specific fine for ATVs. The fine is in place under the Open Space Ordinance. \$100 is the maximum fine for violations of the ordinance, and they're listed – ATVs – specifically.

9. Electrical Work – Echo Hose Firehouse

Alderman Anglace stated, this is what the full Board approved - payment of this - last month and referred it to the Finance Committee. We sent a letter to the Chairman of the Board of Fire Commissioners and he hasn't responded yet. We'll just have to wait.

Alderman Anglace stated, I'll read the letter I wrote him into the record. I told him, *The Board of Aldermen took up the request to pay Ullrich Electric \$937.46 worth of work done at Echo Hose. We voted to pay the bill and send the matter to the Finance Committee for further discussion since, as we understand it, there was no purchase order, there were no competitive quotes, and the approved generic bidder was not used to do the work. We heard that the Board of Fire Commissioners reviewed this situation and recommended that the bill be paid, although the Board of Aldermen did not receive a recommendation directly from the Board of Fire Commissioners. I suspect that the order to do the work was given by Commissioner Sekelsky after a considerable wait, and in frustration. The Board of Aldermen does not want to make a federal case out of this, but we would welcome an assurance from the Chairman of the Board of Fire Commissioners that this issue has been addressed internally and that everyone understands the proper process to follow, that only the Board of Fire Commissioners can authorize such work, and that if this happens again, the individual will be personally held responsible. If you can acknowledge this e-mail accordingly, it will satisfy the Finance Committee and we can then report to the Board of Aldermen that the matter has been addressed to our satisfaction. So, I'm waiting for a response from him. I imagine that he wants to take it up with the Board of Fire Commissioners before he responds.*

10. Building #22 – Payment of Past Bills – Schedule of Open Invoices

Maintenance Superintendent Joe Sewack is present.

Alderman Anglace stated, this is a request for payment of past bills. At the June 24th Board of Aldermen meeting we addressed a similar issue to this, which would form the basis of how it should be presented.

These are the vendors and the bills. We need to know – this was all done for Building 22.

Mr. Sewack explained, Building 22 is the old Shelton Intermediate School. The Carroll's Home Improvement is paint and supplies for renovations. A painter has been renovating the whole second floor – the administration wing. We were going to be moving the Parent-Child Resource Center in there, but they have since decided to move someplace else, and we're moving the Probate Court in there. I'm meeting with Judge of Probate Fred Anthony on Monday regarding what kind of floor covering will go there, and then they're ready to move. This is past bills for paint, broken windows, wiring and anything we had to do for that. We were allocated \$17,500 and that was used for American Boiler's bills. The balance was \$7,184 and you'll see the writing next to it, \$2,165 was inadvertently included in that – that was for work at the Police Department. So the balance we owed them was \$5,619. Their total bill was about \$12,000.

The last line item - future service to install chemical feed system is to maintain the integrity of the two boilers that are running. There is no chemical system on there. That's not been billed yet because we haven't had the work done. It's for the future.

There will be additional use of the building. As we go we're told to renovate a room. I don't know if the administration is planning on a figure, like the \$17,500 originally, down the road, I don't know. This is just for past bills. They came in late May – one is dated from 12/03 – the company is so slow in sending their bills to me, I kept bugging them about it, and then finally they did. By that time we were out of money and using it for other things. We had pneumatic upgrades that we did in house, but we had to buy a lot of thermostats in order to make it work. The system is virtually leak-free.

Alderman Anglace stated, these repairs and improvements to the building are covered under LOCIP. I confirmed that by the Community Development Director. We just needed to know the building. You will be continuing to make improvements and change things?

Mr. Sewack replied, right now we're caught up to the use of the building. If somebody changes it tomorrow and there's a new area, yes, we will have to make that upgraded. We've done the cafeteria, the gymnasiums, the main admin wing and below in industrial arts.

Alderman Anglace stated, we have allocated money in the past to make improvements up there – specific improvements – and those accounts have been used?

Mr. Sewack replied, yes, it was for these types of items. The windows and the doors were \$106,000. That hasn't been addressed yet. That will have to go to bid. It won't be extra. The \$800 in steel doors to make it handicapped accessible in the lower area. We had to expand the doorways to make them big enough for a wheelchair to go through them.

Alderman Anglace MOVED to recommend to the full Board to pay the bills totaling \$10,220.22 listed on the July 22, 2004 memo from Joe Sewack, Maintenance Supervisor, with funds to come from LOCIP; and

FURTHER MOVED to add this expenditure to the Capital Improvements Account; SECONDED by Alderman Kudej. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 2-0.

Alderman Anglace stated, Joe, if you're going to come with further bills – you should contact us in advance so we can prepare the motion and make sure the sources, buildings, etc., are covered. I also wanted to be certain that none of the improvements are energy improvements that are going to be done in conjunction with the energy study that's going on with U.I.

Mr. Sewack stated, this is just maintenance.

11. Lease – 58 Perry Hill Road

Alderman Anglace MOVED to recommend to the full Board to amend the lease extension for the property at 58 Perry Hill Road to include the following:

Item 3 is amended to read: *You agree to pay us total rent of \$11,376 as follows:*

a. *You agree to pay \$948 per month on the first day of each and every month beginning with the first day of March 2004 and ending on the first day of February, 2005.*

SECONDED by Alderman Kudej. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 2-0.

12. Corporation Counsel Billing Pellegrino Law Firm

Alderman Anglace stated, this should be reviewed by Corporation Counsel before a motion is made, because this is a bill for legal services. Counsel will decide what lines in his budget he wants it to be paid from. I don't think we should act on it; we should bring it directly to the full Board after Counsel tells us what to do with it. It's an action that is ongoing – the City of Shelton v. Samarius Wernick. It's nothing new to the Board and I don't think it needs a recommendation from the Finance Committee.

We will refer it to Corporation Counsel and take it up at the next full Board meeting.

Adjournment

At approximately 6:40 p.m., Alderman Anglace MOVED to adjourn; SECONDED by Alderman Kudej. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 2-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia M. Regan
Clerk, Board of Aldermen