



Board of Aldermen
Shelton, Connecticut

***FINANCE COMMITTEE - NOVEMBER 29,
2005***

Call to Order / Pledge of Allegiance

Alderman Stanley Kudej, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 5:35 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 Christopher Panek - present

Others Present: Alderman John Finn
Tax Assessor Gloria Kovac
Police Chief Robert A. Voccola

Alderman Kudej welcomed newly-elected Alderman Chris Panek to the Finance Committee.

Public Session

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

Ronald Pavlucik, 287 Eagles Landing

Earlier this year there was a working group of citizens and a few members of the Finance Committee that had some informal meetings on the topic of possibly doing something with the Senior Tax Relief Program in Shelton, which has been helpful but not been modified since 1994. The local tax credit that has been offered for those that qualify is \$150. As I understand it, that working group

led to the Finance Committee itself requesting the Mayor to appoint a formal study committee.

I was given the opportunity to be chairman of that committee, and we met eight or nine times since July when the Mayor appointed us. Our charge was to review the current Senior Tax Relief Program in Shelton to see if it should be changed or enhanced.

The five of us on the committee were Steve Morse, Ann Walsh, Carol Savignano, and Gary DeFilippo. Our meetings took place during September through last night when we finished our report. We were assisted in that process by two of the town employees here, Gloria and Debbie who I'm sure you know gave us a lot of valuable input.

We're pleased to present tonight our final report to the members of the Finance Committee. It's short, concise, and without getting into the details, it basically says, we recommend that the City of Shelton increase the tax credit to seniors subject to some stricter eligibility guidelines than may be in effect right now. There is a financial impact; the cost would increase to the town in terms of uncollected taxes in form of the credit being offered to these residents that qualify.

The one interesting part of the new proposal here tonight is that we're suggesting a two-tier system - a certain tax credit of \$250 to those who are 65 years of age; but a \$500 credit for those that are 75 years of age. As we discovered in our research from the town records that most of the citizens that are in the current program are 75 years of age or over - actually 70 percent of the current participants are 75 and over. That was a target group that we wanted to help with an increased tax credit.

I would like to give copies of the report to the members of the committee and also a courtesy copy here to Mr. Finn, and ask the Clerk if she would send copies as well to the other members of the Board of Aldermen. I have those copies here for her to pass out.

Our final request is that the Finance Committee see if our proposals are realistic and viable with the upcoming budget process or budget cycle, and perhaps try to implement our recommendations if it's appropriate in time for the new cycle of applications for tax relief which start again in January or February at the latest based on numbers for the current year of income and other guidelines.

Let me give you copies of this. I thank you for the opportunity to help out in this effort, and are available to answer your questions tonight or at any other time down the road. Thank you.

Alderman Anglace suggested talking about what the key event schedule is to implement the recommendation.

Generally, the existing ordinance will have to be modified. If that goes to the full board on December 8, it can be sent to public hearing in December and vote on it in January.

The Assessor's Office starts taking applications February 1 through May 15.

City Assessor Gloria Kovac stated, I have a request of the Board of Aldermen. Because the Assessor's Office is the Administrator of the Program, I am requesting that I have input in terms of what has been recommended to the Finance Committee. I request that I have time to give the Finance Committee and the Board of Aldermen the Assessor's Office input.

Alderman Anglace asked, what will be required to get these recommendations into effect this year?

Mr. Pavlucik stated, the committee feels that it has completed its work. We are available to answer questions. We can meet with the Finance Committee; we have already talked amongst ourselves and we are generally available. Find a night that is convenient or any other time and I think it would be valuable to get the feedback of the folks from the Tax Assessor's Department.

Tom LaTulipe, 91 Toas Street

I read in the paper where you may decide on naming the former slab, called our 'wish list.' I wish for you to take this with the spirit that it's given, I'm not trying to grind my own axe or anything. I want to thank everybody – the Mayor and all the powers that be for obtaining this place down there for open space. It was a long hard battle from the bottom up.

Being just a spoke in the wheel, we were part of it; but only part of it. It took the whole community, our elected officials and state representatives to accomplish what we have down there today. At one of the Board of Aldermen meetings I mentioned naming this "Veterans Memorial Park." That was not just my own idea; that was information I got from the residents. I'm sure that if Joe Pagliaro and the Mayor's father could look down and give their vote they would vote to make it Veterans Park.

I'm not a veteran; not by choice, but I feel that would be appropriate. I spoke many times before the Board of Aldermen meetings in support of the veterans. I don't think we can do enough for our veterans that have given us the liberty that we have today.

I thank you very much for your time.

Judson Crawford, 8 Jordan Avenue

Good evening. Just a word to your committee. The items that were brought to your attention at the September 28 meeting that were said to be overdrawn have been corrected. The most important issue was the item for short term interest overdrawn by \$37,000. It was supposed to be charged to long term debt interest. As Alderman Anglace quoted, I state, the debt services are known to be true.

Number two, has the Finance Director reported back to this committee as requested by Alderman Anglace as to exploring the possibility of bidding for fuel and trying to save money for the taxpayers.

Thank you to you Mr. Chairman for letter you gave me in response to the \$950 that was for the statutory refunds. It stated that it was to be, took place a few years ago. Just for your information, I went back through the records and it comes up, it was passed by the Board of Aldermen on the September 23, 2003 meeting. It was a check for \$950.40 that was paid twice.

Thank you.

*Letter of Ann C. Walsh, Vice Chair, Senior Tax Relief Committee to
Brigitte Plucienik, Clerk of the Board of Aldermen*

Dear Brigitte:

At our meeting last night for the Senior Tax Relief, Mr. Pavlucik (Chairman, Senior Tax Relief) informed us that if we finalized our program that evening, he would be presenting our "final draft" to the Board of Aldermen Finance Committee's public portion of tonight's meeting.

Although I would have like to have been informed early enough to be able to attend the Finance Committee's meeting tonight, I will be unable. So I would like to ask a favor of you if I could. Would you please send the Senior Tax Relief Committee the minutes of tonight's meeting so that we can see what was said since some of us won't be able to attend with such short notice. I would further like to request of you that you also inform this committee when the Senior Tax Relief may come before any of the Board of Aldermen meetings so that we are able to attend those meetings. Our email addresses are in the first line of this email next to your address. We all worked hard and long to get this before the Board of Aldermen. It would be nice if we were all given the opportunity to be present when it comes up for consideration.

Sincerely,

Ann C. Walsh, Vice Chair, Senior Tax Relief Committee

Alderman Kudej then asked if any other member of the public wished to address the Finance Committee. Being none, he declared the public session closed.

Alderman Anglace MOVED to add to the agenda as Item 7-A Purchase of a Van for the Superintendent of Fire Apparatus; SECONDED by Alderman Panek. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 3-0.

1. Approval of Minutes

Alderman Anglace MOVED to recommend to the full Board to waive the reading and approve the minutes of the regular Finance Committee meeting of September 28, 2005; SECONDED by Alderman Panek. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 3-0.

2. October Statutory 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 \$24,267.20 be approved and that the Finance Director be directed to make payments in accordance with the Certified List received from the Tax Collector. Funds to come from the Statutory Refunds Account #001-0000-311.13.00; SECONDED by Alderman Panek. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 3-0.

3. November Statutory 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 \$3,989 be approved and that the Finance Director be directed to make payments in accordance with the Certified List received from the Tax Collector. Funds to come from the Statutory Refunds Account #001-0000-311.13.00; SECONDED by Alderman Panek. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 3-0.

4. Anthem Demutualization Lawsuit

Alderman Anglace MOVED to recommend to the full Board of Aldermen that \$70.18 (Shelton's share of the Anthem Demutualization lawsuit) be paid to Sullivan, Schoen, Campana & Connon, LLC with funds to come from the Professional Services Account 001-1900-411.30-01; SECONDED by Alderman Panek. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 3-0.

4. 2006 Grand List Revaluation – Professional Services Agreement

Tax Assessor Gloria Kovac explained that the City of Shelton does its own revaluation. However, on Commercial, Industrial and Public Utilities we bring in an appraiser. This is the contract for the Commercial, Industrial and Public Utility appraisal aspect of 2006 revaluation. In order to meet the speculations of payment under this contract \$50,000 will be required from the 2006-07 fiscal year and \$40,000 from 2005-06. There is \$20,000 in the budget already to cover half of the \$40,000 for this fiscal year. I will need an additional, unbudgeted \$20,000 more to be allocated this fiscal year.

The contract was given to Corporation Counsel Welch about three weeks ago. He has a few very minor changes. He will place the final copy on the Board of Aldermen agenda for the December regular meeting.

Alderman Anglace MOVED to approve the contract for the implementation of the reappraising and physical inspection of Professional Services Appraisal of commercial, industrial and public utility properties to Leary Counseling and Valuation, Inc., New Haven, Connecticut, for a total cost not to exceed \$90,000, with funding of \$50,000 to come from Fiscal Year 2006-2007 Professional Services Account 001-5300-412.30-01 and \$40,000 to come from 2005-2006 Professional Services Account 001-5300-412.30-01; and further,

MOVED to authorize Mayor Mark A. Lauretti to sign any necessary documents; SECONDED by Alderman Panek.

Alderman Anglace noted that the Board of Aldermen will have to seek the additional \$20,000 and incorporate that into the 2005-2006 Professional Services Account.

A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 3-0.

6. Chief of Police Contract - Amendment

Alderman Anglace spoke with Corporation Counsel Welch who will formalize a separation agreement between the City of Shelton and Chief of Police Robert A. Voccola. He expects this to be presented to the Board of Aldermen on December 8th. The agreement is going to contain a resolution of all separation issues.

7. Official Naming of Slab

Alderman Anglace MOVED to recommend to the full Board to officially name Phase I of the Downtown Revitalization Project containing a Riverwalk, a Farmer's Market, Open Space and Veterans' Monuments as "Riverwalk- Veterans Park"; SECONDED by Alderman Panek.

American legion post 16 in recent vets day information has referred to using that name Riverwalk-Vets park for location. Appropriate. Everybody's receptive to it.

A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 3-0.

7a. - Purchase of Vehicle for Fire Department

Alderman Anglace MOVED to recommend to the full board to approve the purchase of a vehicle for the Fire Department for the Superintendent of Apparatus at a cost of \$19,812 with funds to come from the City Vehicle Replacement Fund; SECONDED by Alderman Panek. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 3-0.

8. Motor Vehicle Disability Exemptions

Alderman Anglace explained that Alderman Finn received a request from a resident for a motor vehicle disability exemption. He suggested gathering and verifying information in order to proceed with this.

Alderman Anglace stated he would ask Tax Assessor Gloria Kovac to provide the Board of Aldermen with certain information regarding the individual asking for the exemption and research how many other such vehicles might be affected in the city, and compile a list of the modifications in each case, and we'll see if the modifications impact the resale value of the vehicle.

Ms. Kovac explained that there is currently a motor vehicle tax exemption for a person with a disability – but it has to be a veteran. That was adopted in 1991 by municipal ordinance. Connecticut General Statutes 12-81c is an exemption that can be to a person with a disability, provided their motor vehicle has been retrofitted to accommodate the owner's disability. The person doesn't have to be totally disabled. The ordinance must define what is meant by "retrofitted motor vehicle." As of 10/1/2000 the law also was amended to exempt a motor vehicle that is designed to accommodate the disability of the vehicle owner's child. The vehicle owner may be the child's parent or guardian.

There is one car on our grand list that we totally exempt because of the disability of a veteran. How many would come under this Statute if adopted under municipal ordinance is not known. As far automobile assessment information for the woman who is requesting the exemption, the 10/1/05 list from the Department of Motor Vehicles has not come in yet.

Adjournment

At approximately 7 p.m., Alderman Anglace MOVED to adjourn; SECONDED by Alderman Panek. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 3-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia M. Bruder
Clerk, Board of Aldermen