



**BOARD OF ALDERMEN
SHELTON, CONNECTICUT
PUBLIC HEARING ON THE BUDGET
TUESDAY, MAY 15, 2013**

CALL TO ORDER/ PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Alderman Anglace called the public hearing to order at 7:00 p.m. All present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Alderman John F. Anglace, Jr., President – present
Alderman Lynne Farrell - present
Alderman John “Jack” Finn – present
Alderman Stanley Kudej – present
Alderman Noreen McGorty - present
Alderman John P. Papa – present
Alderman Eric McPherson - present
Alderman Anthony Simonetti – present

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Freeman Burr, Superintendent of Schools
Lorraine Rossner, Asst. Superintendent of Schools
Al Cameron, Board of Education Finance Director
Paul Hiller, City Finance Director
Arlene Liscinsky- Board of Education Finance Committee Member
Judson Crawford, Member of the Board of A & T

PUBLIC HEARING

President Anglace announces that this is a Public Hearing on the proposed budget for the fiscal year of 2013/2014, and it was also advertised in a legal notice.

1. BUDGET FISCAL YEAR 2013/2014

Debbie Callahan, 18 Balsam Circle

I am speaking as both a parent and as a tutor. I am a tutor at Elizabeth Shelton School and I am also a parent to four children: two whom are currently

attending Booth Hill School, grades 1 and 3. I have a child who is in 5th grade at Perry Hill School and one in 8th grade at Shelton Intermediate School.

I am going to talk first about my personal experience: I have a son who has been diagnosed with a learning disability and with that experience, I cannot imagine him without the resources that he has been provided with through the school system, through the use of tutors and other specialists. He is my second son, and not having to realize how hard it is with my first son, going through this experience has completely changed my whole point of view on how hard it is to have a student who has a learning disability and how much support that they need to feel successful. My son has said that he feels stupid; he doesn't feel like he is learning anything and he does not want to go to school. Through the process of getting him help with tutors and other specialists has completely changed to where, the last two semesters he has actually been on the honor roll. So, that is just from my personal learning experience.

I also think that he was reading at a grade 2 reading level when he was in grade 4. Without that support, without that extra help, there would not have been a way that he could have managed the curriculum. I believe it is a proven fact that once behind in reading, children do not catch up to the recommended reading level, unless they receive the attention and individualized, expert instruction. According to the National Assessment of Education Process, "Thirty-three percent of 4th graders are below the basic reading level. Only one-third of high schoolers are proficient in reading, two-thirds of 8th graders do not read at grade level. About 3,000 students drop out of school each day, because the majority of them are poor readers."

I am a tutor at Elizabeth Shelton School and there are approximately 485 students there. We service and tutor approximately 70 students, which is around 15% of our student population in Tier 2 and Tier 3. In January, after testing, about 21% of the students exited the program because they have reached goal. What would happen to those students if there were no tutors? With the students that I have personally worked with this year: one was a fourth grader that began with a reading level of a 24DRA (Daily Reading Assessment); currently he/she is at a reading level of a 38 DRA. Another fourth grader began at a level 16, which is a first grade level, in fourth grade, and is currently is reading at a 34 independent level. Another fourth grade student that I have tutored read at a level of 20 DRA, and is currently reading at an independent level of a 38 DRA. Out of the six of the kindergarteners that I tutored who were working on letter sounds, goaled in 8 weeks. When I started working with them in February, they did not know any of the letter sounds to knowing all 28 letter sounds at the end of 8 weeks; now they are working on site words.

In Elizabeth Shelton School this year, less than 5 kids through SRBI have been recommended for special education testing. How many kids will get sent for testing if there are no tutors? How can one reading consultant meet the needs of all Tier 2 and Tier 3 students of that school? How can she or he possibly service 70 students per week, on their own? How are you going to prepare these students for the Common Core State Standardized Test, without tutors? I have observed this past

week and last week and they are testing in that school. These students are trying to type on the computers, and every answer that they put down, they have to explain from one or two examples based on the text. Everything is based on text evidence; they have to support their answers with text evidence. You are lucky if you get these students to type one sentence. In the fourth grade class that I have served, not one of the students finished the test. How are you going to do AMES, DRAs, SRBIs and CMT testing without tutors? These are questions that I have, that I need answers to. How are these things going to get done without tutors in the school system? How are these kids going to get the services that they need? Without tutors, there will be many kids that will need special education testing, which will cost the school system more money. Most students would not make goal on these standardized tests. Those students that are slightly behind will become further behind and will get completely lost in the system. Tutors not only help students make goal, but we give them guidance they need, in a non-threatening environment to make them feel successful.

In just this past week coming into my room, they have gone onto the next level on their DRAs. Their smiles on their faces and all of the hard work; they want to do well; they want to do better and be successful. They want to read on the same level as their peers and you can just see how hard it is. They are coming in and they are very excited to go up; it is unbelievable! Without tutors, that is not going to happen; you are not going to see that. Who is going to help these kids without any tutors? Thank you.

Mark Holden, 275 Soundview Avenue

I am here with a sort of conflicting situation because in one hand, I understand that one of your primary goals is to make sure that we do not need a tax increase next year. On the other hand, as the Chairman of the Board of Education, I see that I am looking at an \$841,000 gap from what has been currently allocated for next year and what we felt what we needed to be done. I do not expect you to get up to the \$841,000, but I have some suggestions on how you can get a little closer. If we are \$100,000 below the \$841,000, we are still going to have computers in the schools that are older than some of the students, but in the past, we have used the Technology Committee as a way of funding purchases like that and that is certainly something that we can look at.

Beyond that, I looked at a couple of other things in the budget, and I have noted that the Mayor has projected a tax collection rate that is .2% below the historical data, which seemed to indicate that ok, he is at 98.7%; last year it was collected at 98.9% and we have always done real well in that area. If you adjust the tax collection rate up .2%, that will allow you to put an additional \$213,000 or so, into your budget for next year.

The Mayor also projected a tax decrease to approximately \$517,000. If you forego some of that tax reduction, you could still add more money to your budget. We are grateful that the City has recognized that our costs have gone up a lot this year:

The teachers contract settled through binding arbitration, which has increased our costs to \$1.3 million. Our medical insurance is going up; that is one of those things that is beyond our control, and frankly, the bus contract; while those new buses are going to save money and fuel and so forth that was already factored into our budget. At the time we were putting together our budget, we were looking at a contract with Owner Operator and in Owner Operator's situation, it makes sense for them to go for the longest term financing that they can get, to hold their payments down and bid the lesser amount so they can win the contract. Shorter term is better for the City in many respects because over the long haul, we will save a bunch of money in interest. The problem is that all of that money could have been used to cover our other expenses, so I ask you to consider that. The savings on the bus contract is roughly \$550,000 less than it was projected. That is not a question of poor negotiating or anything like that. If you take the cost of the buses and you divide it by 11 years versus 5 years, you will see that it will make up the difference.

Otherwise, I thank you for your consideration and I thank you for all of the hard work you are putting into trying to develop the best budget we can, so our City could run on a fiscally responsible track.

Al Cameron, 307 Meadowridge Road

First of all, I would like to thank you. I know that we usually have that meeting at the end of the year as the audit is wrapped up and we talk about the good things that we have done and I would like you for the good financial results that Shelton had last year: \$13,000,000 in fund balance and an excellent credit rating, and that is because of your service. It is because of all the volunteers that this place is such a great place. I would like to start and say thank you, because that would be my first step at the audit, but I want to start by saying thank you for your service. Just like what Mark said, I know it is a hard job and I know how many countless hours you spend at meetings, and how many competing interests that you have.

I am just going to try to remind you of some of the things that we were aware of when we went through our budget. As the Board was building up its budget, we are in a very different place from where we were a few years ago. In 2009, we had 25 administrators and today we have 23. In 2009, we had 416 teachers and today we have 390. We have reallocated our tutors into a much more effective model called the "Academic Support Center". In our productivity and of the folks that are in that work, has increased enormously. Over 5 years just to give you a little perspective, the budget of teacher and administrator salaries have dropped by \$320,000. In the non-certified salary account, the number of secretaries was reduced; the hours were reduced. We have maintained our number of custodians to 34; that was after we cut two at the high school so we did not have 36 anymore. We reduced the number of paraprofessionals from 65 to 45. We added some non-union employees such as occupational therapists and physical therapy assistants in an effort to in source a more cost effective way to provide for the needs of the special education students' IEPs. We have been outsourcing that stuff, and we found that

we had enough demand so it was more effective to make those outside professionals as employees.

In the Benefits account, like the City, we have seen out costs rise but one of those things that worked for the Board of Ed was that we achieved over \$1.4 million in employee cost shares; so the amount that we request on our budget is \$1.4 million less than what our total cost is for health insurance because the employees bear that \$1.4 million. The other thing that has happened is over the past few years we accepted the cost for Worker's Compensation. That used to be an expense that was paid on the City side. Last year the Board of Ed accepted \$1,022,000 in charges from the City, for Worker's Compensation having to do with our employees.

In the last few years, one of the places that we run over every year is Staff Development. The reason why is that every time you hear on the radio about the "Common Core." Well, Connecticut adopted the "Common Core" but this is one of those unfunded mandates. The "Common Core" means that we have to go back and redesign our curriculum, so it is aligned with the national standards. That is work that teachers have to do, and they cannot do it during regular workdays, so they do it during the summers, after school; but it has been work that has been going on for many years. It comes out of our dime; nothing comes from the State for that.

Allow me to talk about our Support Services Expenditures; this is like our attorneys. The Board of Ed switched attorneys to Shipman & Goodwin, LLP, which is considered the "Golden Standard for Education Attorneys." We would always go to Tom Welch first, but Tim Welch says, "I am not an education expert." There are other areas of law that he does not want to represent us because it is not the representation that we need, so he wanted us to go an education lawyer. When I started at the Board of Ed 17 years ago, the education law firm that was there was Shipman & Goodwin, LLP. They are like the gold standard, the best of the best. We have hired some people that have left Shipman & Goodwin, LLP to establish their own practice and we have saved \$100 an hour.

We went and looked through our Special Ed costs. Year after year after year, 10% of our special education students are getting a larger, growing share of our budget. We went to Futures, a company who specializes in Special Education, and said "look at our Special Ed thing, let us see if there is a better way." They were the ones that recommended to us, to in source occupational therapy, physical therapy and some of this other stuff that we have been outsourcing, so the Board of Ed did that.

We purchased and installed a new payroll and HR system. We were using ADP, same as the City was. We went to MUNIS, which is software we use for our general ledger. We purchased their payroll and HR module, which has saved us \$100,000 a year in professional services. We also transferred payments for our athletic officials, from the Board of Ed payroll to the Athletic Account.

We have done many things to make ourselves more efficient and more cost effective. However, here are some things that have not worked out too well: In 2007/2008, our total tuition bills, this is for students who are going outside of the system that we have no control over, was \$1,056,000 and last year, it was \$2,340,000. It grew by \$1,000,000. For transportation in 2007/2008, it was \$3,194,000 and last year it was \$4,351,000. What is the driver in both cases? It is special education. Special education is not something that we can back off of; that is a law. When a student has an individual education plan, the services that are specified in that plan have to be provided, so where does it come from? It comes from everybody else.

Heat and utilities, suffice to say that we are spending \$140,000 less now, than we were five years ago, and that is after we took on the Perry Hill School, which is 188,000 square feet. We did the Intermediate School, the High School and every school in the system, except for Sunnyside inside, and the parking lots. We have improved the energy efficiency of our freezers and our refrigerators, we put in carbon dioxide sensors, and most recently we switched the heating of the High School to natural gas. So, we are heating and air conditioning more. Perry Hill is air-conditioned; we never had an elementary school that was air-conditioned before, and yet we are spending \$140,000 less than we were.

We had to curtail the Operations and Maintenance portion of the budget, where we take care of the buildings and we had to curtail the Equipment Replacement, so what has happened? In the places that we could manage our costs, we have and I think I showed you that. However, there are places that we face growth in our costs that has been unavoidable: Special Education tuition, Special Education transportation and Worker's Compensation are things that we had to deal with that forced a challenge on us.

So I ask you, as you consider the budget that we have presented, that Mark has talked to you earlier. From the last five years, we have had \$700,000 increases in our budget. This year we knew we were between a rock and a hard place because all of the increases are contractual. I have talked to you about the services that have been reduced over the years. Please see if you can find a way to make up that shortfall that Mark was talking about, because we do not want to put the system into any kind of turmoil again. We have achieved stability; you saw when Freeman gave the presentation at the A & T meeting. Results are good and getting better. We have good, positive momentum; please help continue that momentum by voting to close that gap. Thank you.

Alderman Anglace: Al, can you verify that gap? Can you tell us what you think the gap is?

Al Cameron: I think it is \$850,000, in addition to the \$1,000,006. John, I have been advised that the actual number is \$841,000.

Freeman Burr, 17 Livingstone Road, Bloomfield, CT

Thank you for giving me the opportunity for me to speak to you this evening. The one thing that I am going to remind all of us here is the reason that we are involved in education. I, the teachers in the room, the elected officials, the Mayor and the Board of Aldermen know at the end of the day it is our responsibility to provide the best teaching and learning environment to our students. For many of you that include students, children or grandchildren that went through Shelton schools, or who are continuing to move through Shelton schools. This will be an interesting year for me because I will have a young godchild entering Mohegan School this year, the first time entering Shelton schools, so this should be very interesting. Obviously, I hope I do not get any calls from the teachers in that school.

Education districts throughout the State have the same dilemma. There are certain costs; year-end and year out that just go up. Those are our salary accounts, our benefit accounts and our transportation accounts. You will not find a district in the State who is flat; there are a lot of reasons for it. I am not going to wail about binding arbitration and things like that, that force municipalities and districts to pay more than they may want, but I will also argue that we have an obligation when we go into our negotiations; to negotiate in good faith and to make sure that we are going to be competitive so we can draw competitive teachers to the school district, competitive special educators, competitive staff in whatever role they fill.

I have heard it said to me that there is a pervasive feeling throughout the State of Connecticut and in the nation, that teachers' salaries are too high. One of the things I want to remind us is that we forget that teachers are mandated to get a Master's degree within ten years. They have five years, in which they must start; that is a mandate, and in ten years to achieve a Master's degree. They do not have to go beyond that, but many teachers have degrees above that. A Sixth- Year degree, which is particularly important for our teachers in tenure, such as mathematics, science and English. Those are critical things that are needed to go forward. What I want us to keep in mind is that we all know that the cost of an average college education just for a Bachelor's degree is amazingly high; it is well over on average \$150,000 a year. Teachers have to attain a Master's degree as I have just described. Shelton is one of the few contracts that are not very generous. We are very supportive of teachers getting their Master's in terms of tuition reimbursement. Most of our teachers get their degrees from their own out of pocket expenses. We are not the number one teacher ranked salary in the State of Connecticut by far. Are our teachers paid well? I would say that they are paid well. If you ask our teachers if they are paid well, commensurate time and effort that they put in; the answer is no. These are the costs that are the real costs, and what AI has stated, we have reduced 36 teachers four years ago, and we have gradually placed teachers where we have needed them.

Last year after the budget, I met with President Anglace, John Papa and also the Mayor. I have put on the radar for the Board of Aldermen, based on contracts alone; we were going to be looking at a \$3,000,000 budget. As we went through the budget process this year, that budget process went up to \$4,000,000. One of the

reasons that it went up to \$4,000,000 was because of the renewal rate for health insurance; it was 18%. That is, an 18% increase over what was existing. We know the starting point with benefits and benefits is not where we end. Through good faith efforts, we have carved back a \$1,000,000. The request that we made includes only \$440,000 in program improvement, which I consider to be a very modest sum when you consider this budget year; we are a little under \$64,000,000. So, \$440,000 of program improvement, all of the other costs in this budget request are the rollover costs including: transportation, health benefits, salaries, etc.

What I want to point out is what is included in some of these requests: trying to increase guidance services in a couple of our larger elementary schools. Our guidance counselors provide a great deal of support to our families. I certainly went through school at a time when I didn't see any guidance counselors until 7th grade or grades 9-12 but now, school counselors are very involved with students and families. We have seen terrible tragedies, such as Newtown. One of the immediate calls was getting kids more intervention and more counseling services at an earlier age. That is not to provide therapeutic services, because our school counselors are not equipped to do that. It is designed in order to provide early intervention, and more importantly early identification to refer young students with serious emotional issues and mental health issues. Some of those are familial, but many of them are not. If we are not able to intervene and identify those students early, we can refer them to agencies that can provide them help. I do not want to bring up Sandy Hook, but we saw a case of a young man, who was never intervened along the way. Our goal is to ensure that if there are such potential students in Shelton, we will identify them early and get them the appropriate services.

Also, regarding media specialists and I am not sure if everyone shares my view: I believe that libraries in elementary schools need to be open five days a week, full time for our kids. Currently, our media services are part time; only in our larger schools they are full time. I think if we are trying to ensure that kids will be literate for the 21st century and be prepared, we need to provide them an opportunity to get into the library every day. Also, I want the Aldermen to know that our library media specialists provide lessons; so this is not just open library where kids drop in. Our kids learn research; our librarians pull materials that support the academic and structural units that our students are receiving, and they pull them across grades. We all know from our elementary experience, everyone in different grades is not studying the same science, social studies, etc. Our media people do that and they also monitor the technology labs, so to have those positions not in our elementary schools full time, really comprises some of the learning for our students. I am not going to go through the accolades, however, in Shelton, science, technology, engineering and math- we have very talented students up and down our school district. Two years ago, we reallocated existing funds and built into our science curriculum, a program called, "Science is Elementary." That program exists, along with our other science program in all of our elementary schools. Part of the reason we put that in is to continue to feed the interests that our kids have at Perry Hill, Intermediate and at the High School, to pursue science, technology, engineering and math careers. Why do we do that? That is one of the fields that are going to be there

in the 21st century for our kids. If you look at the college data, we import engineering students and we export them when they go back. America does not produce enough engineering students to compete with the way that students will be able to compete in the future. I am not going to go into the math, science, technical education, because they are all included in the stem initiative.

We also have an emphasis on journalism, arts and media. I don't have to speak to that because I know; you gentlemen and ladies know that. In Shelton, we have a very artistic community; we have many talented kids in the area: the visual arts, dramatic arts, musical instruments and we are continuing to support that.

One big-ticket item that is really critical for us, I think, is redesigning our behavioral management program at Shelton High School. It is included in our \$440,000 request. That behavior management program is critical because the one that we have established there now, can service the diverse needs to two distinct populations of the kids who have behavioral issues. Those are classified as seriously emotionally disturbed, and others are considered to be socially, or emotionally maladjusted or are marginally identified because of their intellectual abilities on appropriate decision making. This program will pay dividends in the future; Allan talked about the increase of special education tuition costs. This is a very moderate request, but I would like to explain. Special education students who are intellectually disabled, by law, we are required to educate them until they are 21. That means we have to provide program services, and Alderman Simonetti is very aware of this. His wife works in our department, and he and I have talked about this, but the big thing here is that last year we had a student who was with us until age 21. Obviously, under confidentiality, I will not reveal the student's identity, but I will say that the last five years of that student's education was \$150,000 per year for the special education placement, as well as transportation. So when I talk about putting a program into Shelton High, it is to avoid out placements, or reduce out placements in areas like that.

I think I also want to talk about what Allan has discussed about the "Common Core" State standards, which are the national standards. It isn't so much that these national standards are standards. These standards are aligned to international standards. Our role is to make our kids internationally competitive, and that is why these standards are important.

Allen also mentioned Worker's Compensation. We cooperated with the City and we took out Worker's Compensation, even though it was not in our budget last year and we have capped Worker's Comp costs; we will be able to cap it again next year. The only thing that I am going to offer is that I was able to compare the recent Worker's Comp numbers from the City's side and the Board's side, so I invite any of you to come by and discuss a strategy. You (City) are where we were a couple of years ago. Ours is really under control now.

The other thing that I want to talk about is, more than a year ago, Alderman Simonetti, former chairperson of the Shelton High School Renovation Committee,

and chairperson of Perry Hill, Sean Sullivan, came to us and asked for some support to get for the respective projects. Alderman Simonetti arranged with me, to meet a gentleman known as Joseph DeSanti. Mr. DeSanti came in and it wasn't an easy road. We got Mr. DeSanti to meet with Mayor Lauretti, and Mr. DeSanti put on the table on what he thought what he could do, and he thought he could get money for the Shelton High Renovation Project, of which, no reimbursements from the State had been forthcoming since 2007. Joseph DeSanti, through his efforts, the City has received a check this fall for \$1.2 million in reimbursement for the Shelton High Renovation Project. I believe that was collaboration from Alderman Simonetti reaching out to us, us bringing in someone like Joseph DeSanti and also getting the Mayor to agree that Joseph DeSanti was the right person. I would also like to mention that it is my understanding that the litigation for Perry Hill, Mr DeSanti has been secured to provide professional testimony for the impending litigation. I would also like to encourage that once this litigation is resolved, that there would be consideration to have Mr. DeSanti wrap up the reimbursements and everything for Perry Hill because I think you will find for a very small investment, it will generate huge dividends as it did for Shelton High. As I have been told, we may still receive \$500,000 this year from the Shelton High Renovation Project, due to the efforts of Mr. DeSanti.

We have been collaborating with the Mayor on health benefits and we have collaborated with the Mayor to secure Promethean boards in classrooms. Last year, on the efforts that we have made to be simpatico with the goals of the Board of Aldermen and with the goals of the Mayor had been positive. I would ask you guys to consider \$440,000 for program improvement, in which if we are not able to fill that gap, most of that will go by the wayside. I am asking you to try to help and as Chairman Mark Holden has stated, he is far better with statistical memory than I am. As Allan Cameron has stated, to please help close that gap so we can continue to ensure those services as well a new program to support the success that we had. Thank you very much.

Ron Pavluvsik, 287 Eagles Landing

I am just going to summarize my thoughts and comments on the budget process this year with two words: good job. I know you were assisted by other people in the City, specifically the Board of Apportionment & Taxation, the Board of Ed and many other department heads that followed some of those activities and meetings. I think that under this continued Obama recession this year and the uncertainty of the economic situation for the rest of the year and next year, the good thing to do is to hold the line item spending and fewer taxes. Even though the proposed budget calls for a very miniscule decrease to the mill rate as I understand, I think it is very symbolic to not just as residents and taxpayers, but it sends a message across the region through the realtors, through neighbors, through relatives that Shelton continues to be a jewel in Fairfield County. It can lead to development and investment; it is exciting to know what is happening along Canal Street in the past year and the plans of the future activity there is very encouraging. We need that positive message of a sound

government, and the balance between spending, decent schools and recreation activities. I think that that balance approach that the Mayor has implemented for 22 years and to lower the mill rate by just a little, goes miles and gives us that much of a further advantage over everyone else. I want to thank you and everyone up there as far as I know is a volunteer and I want to tell you that I appreciate all of the volunteered time and effort you put in serving our City.

Arlene Liscinsky, 54 Country Ridge Drive

I am a member of the Shelton Board of Education, and also the Chairperson of the Shelton Board of Education Finance Committee. I think this is the 23rd year that I stood before you, speaking at a public hearing obviously in support of the educational budget. I stood here as a parent, I stood here as a PTA representative, obviously as a Board of Education member and now honestly I can speak to you as a senior citizen.

I am going to make this short and sweet because you have already heard the numbers. Those priorities have been providing a solid, public education for all. That is where our Constitution guarantees and certainly all boards of education are in charge to provide the best education we can for the communities. This Board of Education has been responsible in controlling and containing all the costs that we can. However, given all mandates, proposed reforms in public education, it is getting harder and harder.

I am also President of CES, which is all of Fairfield County. It is an educational service of 17 members all over Fairfield County, and we all have the same issues. The Mayor has also publicly admitted that he has been hard on the Board of Education, by providing no increases for the past several years. Even though the City taxpayers have been held harmless, with increased ECS dollars meant for education that we could always benefit from.

I do not need to repeat the numbers, again the Superintendent and I, as the Chairman, providing you with a powerful PowerPoint at the budget meeting and they have recapped some of those numbers tonight. You are the fiscal authority and you have the responsibility to provide the necessary funding to help fulfill all department requests. This Board of Ed, and this Superintendent have done all they can to work with the Mayor and to be cognizant of the economic realities. However, the Board, the staff and the children of this community; I can honestly say have done more, with less. No other department in the City has been impacted as much as the Board of Ed, over the last several years, or has been laid off. I am an individual who believes that actions speak louder than words, and some of you have publicly and privately stated that you are in support of what the Superintendent has done. We can all agree that he has done a good job with dealing with what he has to deal with, so I challenge you to give the district the necessary resources to further move forward. I also challenge all of you to lead, despite this being an election year, let's not play politics and not raise taxes for that benefit and let us do what is necessary for the

community as a whole, and properly fund our gap along with what the Mayor has recommended. I thank you tonight and I thank you for listening.

Judson Crawford, 8 Jordan Avenue

I stand before you ladies and gentlemen of the Board of Aldermen. I have two things to say. I hope that you will not have the frustration that the Board of A & T had, when trying to develop a sound budget to be able to present to the Board of Aldermen. I was a little upset that no department heads had the decency to come before us and speak. Yet, you, the Board of Aldermen, when you established the Charter Revision Commission, that was one of the things that was stated in that Charter: to have department heads to come before the Board of A&T, who was in joint session with the Board of Aldermen.

For the most part, the costs for the Board of Education are contractual obligations. The Board, elected by the constituents of the City of Shelton must live under the budget that has been granted and awarded to them, but mandates by the State of Connecticut are starting to come down very heavily on to the Board of Education to be able to live with those mandates, but tonight is not a night to discuss all those mandates that are being imposed. Mark Holden, he and I worked together on the Board of A&T and I am making a thought to you: read the tax collector's memo attached to her budget statement. The reason that I am saying this is because without department heads coming before us speaking to let us know what is important of what the real needs are in Shelton. We were only given one man's opinion, so I decided to read every page of the budget book that was given to the Board and Aldermen and the Board of A&T. For the past four years, the tax collector was figured at 98.9% and I hope Mr. Holden used the correct figures of \$213,978; I found a discrepancy.

In closing, I put the following statement describing the words as cooperation, as coming together is the beginning, keeping together is progress and working together is success. I thank you.

Thomas Minotti, 246 Aspetuck Trail

I did not come here tonight to speak, but after hearing everything I wanted to wear three hats. Again, I want to say thank you and hopefully when you go into deliberations on the budget, you really take to heart and consider what my colleagues have said beforehand.

Tonight I want to address you, in which I have never down in the past. I wanted you to know something about my family; and I encourage the committee to appoint me to be on the Board of Education. My wife presently serves on the EMS Commission with Alderman McGorty, and she is an active participant. We have four children that have gone through the educational process in Shelton and are presently

adults. Of the four children, two of them have taken an internship in the City, with the high school program and gave up her paralegal experience and job, in order to go back to school and get her Master's degree in Special Education. She did her internship and practice at Shelton High School, with the intention of hopefully to come back if there was a position available. Presently, she is working in Watertown, CT, in the Special Education department. Again, if it wasn't for the education that she had and the guidance that she had in Shelton, I do not know if she would have gone back and did what she did.

Our second daughter, who was also a paralegal and a stay-at-home mom is presently employed as a part-time person in Shelton; working in the secretarial department in some of the schools and in the Human Resources department. I am told that she has experience, is well liked and she has the mannerisms of a professional, which I attribute to some of what was done in her education, as well as the parenting that she had.

We presently have eight grandchildren that are in the Shelton educational system in Shelton: one of them has already graduated college, is a florist in Bridgeport and has a business with her mother. Our second granddaughter is a junior at college, in which she is on the dean's list- again a member of the Shelton education system. We have two granddaughters in the high school, in honors classes. We have two grandchildren in Perry Hill, in advanced classes. We also have one in Elizabeth Shelton and a kindergarten student at Booth Hill School.

I also forgot to mention that I am a member of the Shelton Board of Education, Vice President and I support the budget that was proposed to you. I ask that you take into consideration, even though it is personal, I am showing you we have the education; but without the finances to bring forth the education to go to the next step, from good to great, we cannot educate our students for the 21st century. Thank you for your time.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no other speakers, Alderman Anglace closed the public hearing at 8:05 p.m.

Alderman Papa **MOVED** to close the public hearing; **SECONDED** by Alderman Simonetti. A voice vote was taken and the hearing was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Brittany Gannon, Clerk

May 15, 2013

Board of Aldermen
Public Hearing on the Budget for FY 13/14

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DATE APPROVED: _____ BY:

Mark A. Laretti
Mayor, City of Shelton

