



SPECIAL VIRTUAL MEETING
BOARD OF ALDERMEN
CITY OF SHELTON, CT
THURSDAY, MAY 13, 2021
Shelton City Hall, 54 Hill Street
Live-Streamed at www.cityofshelton.org
MINUTES

Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Mark A. Lauretti called the Special Virtual Meeting of the Board of Aldermen to order at 5:00 p.m. in the auditorium at Shelton City Hall. All those present stood and pledged allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

Roll Call

Alderman John F. Anglace, Jr., President- Present
Alderman Eric McPherson, Vice President- Present
Alderman Cris Balamaci- Present
Alderman Joanna Carloni –Present via phone
Alderman David Gidwani- Not present
Alderman Noreen McGorty- Not present
Alderman Anthony Simonetti- Present
Alderman Bernie Simons- Present

Administration

Mayor Mark A. Lauretti - Present
Fran Teodosio, Corporation Counsel – Present
Thomas Cotter, Assistant Corporation Counsel - Present

Public Portion

Mayor Lauretti asked if anyone from the public wished to address the board. There being none, he closed the public portion.

AGENDA ITEMS**1. MINUTES FOR APPROVAL**

Alderman Anglace MOVED to waive the reading and approve the following meeting minutes:

1.1 SPECIAL VIRTUAL MEETING – APRIL 8, 2021

SECONDED by Alderman McPherson.

A voice vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

Minutes can be viewed on the city website: www.cityofshelton.org.

5.1 FINANCE COMMITTEE**5.1.1 NO ITEMS****5.2 PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE****5.2.1 NO ITEMS****5.3 STREET COMMITTEE****5.3.1 NO ITEMS****REPORT OF THE MAYOR**

Mayor Lauretti: I was contemplating to respond to a couple of issues. I am really at a loss to know where to begin because there are so many ridiculous things that have been said over the last two weeks with respect to the budget and then with respect to the school buses. And so, I want to highlight a couple of things and then I'm going to move on, but if anyone was paying attention to the Board of Apportionment and Taxation budget meeting a week ago, there was a motion that was proposed by a member that was blatantly out of balance and made absolutely no sense. And these are the same that are pontificating, "Vote No on the Charter," because the A&T is the oversight, the fiscal oversight of the City, which is falsely untrue. And yet, this is the second year in a row the Board of Apportionment and Taxation have not been able to forward a budget off to the Board of Aldermen. So, one really has to question the real relevance of what this Board does. Or perhaps, what this Board, doesn't do. And I think that the last two years are good examples of that because some of us remember how the Democratic members walked out the meeting and didn't want to vote on the budget. But yet they advocated, "Vote No on the Charter," because it (inaudible) the role of the A&T. Well, if they thought that the role of the A&T was so important, why walk out of a meeting? Why don't you stand up and be counted? And then this year you have the three votes on the budget which goes nowhere. So again, I say, tell me what is the relevance of this Board of Apportionment & Taxation, that people in this community advocated "Vote No" to change the Charter? I'll leave that for you to decide.

The next issue that I want to address really stems from a letter to the editor by the Great Gidwani on April 21st, when he talks about the horrific bus service for kids and how the City has fallen flat on its face on not fulfilling its obligation; makes many allegations about trying to drive a narrative.

I've been driving a narrative for 30 years and it's called low taxes. It's called development of downtown. It's called growth of the Grand list. It's called 2000 acres of Open Space. It's renovating every school and building new ones. There's a 30-year narrative by Mark Lauretti that supports nothing but prosperity. And yet we have these people on Facebook that continue to say things that are just from a different planet. And I'm not going to get into the different diatribe of these individuals, but you decide for yourself but let me tell you about our student transportation that I reported last month to you and I think that I said that there were some 1270 runs, of which the City missed 6. Well now we get the 13th day of May, there are some 3153, and the City missed 16 runs. No school, by the way was cancelled. That's a record that's pretty good in a Pandemic. And I say that because some people don't think the Pandemic affects Shelton. But yet, everybody in the State of Connecticut is doing far less in terms of being able to deliver on student transportation. I think that when this is all said and done, we're going to shine far above and beyond any other people. You know there's another factor here too. The Great Gidwani says that we have failed to hire enough school bus drivers. There's been a school bus driver shortage in the country for the last ten years. Not new. In the State of Connecticut in these different school districts, they advertise constantly to advertise school bus drivers. And they have to be certified. When the State of Connecticut is two months behind in that Certification because of Covid-19, because of the Pandemic, because people don't come to work, how do you get people certified to drive school buses? But this is the idiocy we're dealing with in this day and age when people just say things because they just don't like another person. And really for me that's the bottom line here. Because you can't base a decision that's not true in fact and portray that to the public and portray that as being true. And so, I want you all to know that I am going to continue to chase after these people on Facebook, and people who sit on this Board who want to drive a true/false narrative and want to impute someone's character. I will not sit on the sideline. The record in this City is impeccable in many, many categories. There's a reason why businesses continue to move here. There's a reason why in 1991 there were empty storefronts and there was blight through all of downtown that no longer exists. There's a reason why people are commuting into work, there are businesses from all around the world. Look at our corporate roster, it is envied across the State. And perhaps I have not spent enough time talking about these things and I'm going to do that because it is inherently unfair to demonize someone when you are factless and faceless. And so, I'm going to stop there and I'm going to continue on with this meeting but expect me to be out in front of this issue.

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

No Report.

6 – LEGAL REPORT

6.1 CORPORATION COUNSEL BILLING

Alderman Anglace MOVED to authorized a total payment of \$2843.75 to Corporation Counsel Teodosio Stanek, LLC, for services rendered per statements date May 5, 2021, with funds to come from the Legal Services Accounts:

SECONDED by Alderman Simonetti.

Mayor Lauretti: Before I move onto Item 6.2, I want to bring up an item that is related to school transportation because there are some people in this community that continue to say that there was no real savings of the City taking over the City owned buses and doing student transportation. This information that I am going to offer to the Board is the Budget Summary Worksheet right from the Board of Education, this is their document, not mine. The actuals, approved, and proposed budgets. And so, under the student daily transportation for Fiscal Year 17 & 18, I'm sorry, for Fiscal Year 18 & 19, the student daily transportation that the Board of Education spent was \$4,405,000.000. The next year 2019-2020 was when the City took over. The City bought a contract that was negotiated through the courts, was \$3,150,000.000. Now, basic math if you are really interested in leveling with people and telling the truth, will tell you that's over a million dollars. That's close to 1.3 million dollars in savings. And so, I don't need to belabor this point. This is a document, I'm happy to share with members of the Board, but this is a document right out of the Board of Education workbook. I am not the author of this. And another point is, they can look at the bids, they can look at what Durham Bus Company's bid was. So, I'll rest my case on that. Of course, I know there will be people who will say, "that can't be true," "that can't be possible," but you know what, this is another point that I'm going to drive it home and I'm not going to stop. Not only is it for the first year, but for three years in a row, but Durham had escalators in their proposal. So, if the original bid was \$4.3 million, it's probably \$4.5 by now. And this happens to everybody who has school transportation throughout the State that uses a private contractor. And again, I just wanted to share that with the Board and this is going to go on the Facebook page because this is how I'm going to start communicating with people across the City. Ok, this takes us to Item 6.2.

A voice vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

6.2 ASSISTANT CORPORATION COUNSEL BILLING

Alderman Anglace MOVED to authorize a total payment of \$759.00 to Assistant Corporation Counsel Thomas Galvin Cotter for services rendered per statements dated May 5, 2021, with funds to come from the Legal Services Accounts.

SECONDED by Alderman Simonetti.

A voice vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

7- LEGISLATIVE – OLD

7.1 ITEMS FROM PUBLIC HEARING

7.1 A. NO ITEMS

8 – FINANCIAL BUSINESS – OLD

8.1 NO ITEMS

9 – FINANCIAL BUSINESS – NEW**9.1 MAY STATUTORY REFUNDS**

Alderman Anglace MOVED that the report of the Tax Collector relative to the refund of taxes for a total amount of \$2,974.86 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 001-0000-311.13.00.

SECONDED by Alderman Simonetti.

Mayor Lauretti: Ok, I'm going to deviate again and go back to school buses because there's one other point that I need to emphasize. For the people out there who say the Board of Education was flat funded. They cannot qualify that statement from a factual standpoint and here's why. Because their budget never got reduced the year we took over the school transportation which was a million dollars, \$1.2 million less than the year before and so if you didn't have to spend \$1.2 million, that means you have it available to spend on something else. So, when you say they were flat funded, I don't know if they are being devious or just not understanding. Ok, let's keep moving.

A voice vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

**9.2 FUNDING FOR PEARL BACH OPEN SPACE PROPERTY FENCE – PINE ROCK
PARK IMPROVEMENT FUND**

Alderman Anglace MOVED in accordance with paragraph 5 and other provisions of the Pine Rock Improvement Fund to approve the purchase of fencing for the Pearl Bach Open Space Property in Pine Rock Park, per the recommendation of the two Ward Alderman Anglace and Alderman Balamaci with funding not to exceed \$15,100.00 to come from the Pine Rock Park Improvement Fund.

Seconded by Alderman Balamaci.

Alderman Balamaci: I would like to acknowledge Teresa Gallagher for her help with all of this and her efforts were well received and we appreciate it.

A voice vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

9.3 WAIVER OF BID FOR THE PURCHASE OF A USED 4x4 TRUCK WITH UTILITY BOX

Alderman Anglace MOVED per the recommendation of the purchasing agent, to waive the bidding process, for the purchase of a used 4 X 4 truck with utility box.

SECONDED by Alderman McPherson.

Alderman Anglace: We are waiving the bidding process?

Mayor Lauretti: Yes, it is difficult to purchase vehicles, whether they are used or new, through the bidding process, particularly with vans, it's even more difficult to get used vans because the marketplace has sucked up all these vehicles through the Pandemic. The inventory on vehicles in the State, the Pandemic has depleted them.

Alderman Anglace: This process of where you waive the bids, is there an inspection of the vehicle?

Mayor Lauretti: Yes, our foreman from maintenance goes up and inspects the vehicle. These vehicles are being purchased with the Covid money that was received from the State because as was mentioned a couple times before, our people are working independent of one another, and so, we had to pick up extra tools, because we couldn't share tools anymore and now the same thing with vehicles because they go to different locations, and they're working independently. The same rationale applies for the vans that we're buying for student pickup. There are many clubs and sporting programs and daily student transportation that are very small groups, that make it a lot easier for us to pick them up, as opposed to the 77-passenger school bus.

A voice vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

9.4 WAIVER OF BID FOR THE PURCHASE OF TWO USED PASSENGER VANS

Alderman Anglace MOVED per the recommendation of the purchasing agent, to waive the bidding process, for the purchase of two used passenger vans.

SECONDED by Alderman Simonetti.

A voice vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

9.5 WAIVER OF BID FOR THE PURCHASE OF A USED TRUCK FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Alderman Anglace MOVED per the recommendation of the purchasing agent, to waive the bidding process, for the purchase of a used truck for Public Works.

SECONDED by Alderman Simonetti.

A voice vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Lauretti: I don't know, did anyone get a description as to what kind of truck this is? This is a medium-sized dump truck that the town of Thomaston is getting rid of.

Alderman Simonetti: It came with a plow.

Mayor Lauretti: Yes, this a pretty good number that we are paying for it.

A voice vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

9.6 FUNDING FOR ROAD REHABILITATION

Alderman Anglace MOVED to appropriate an amount of \$600,000.00 for the rehabilitation of City roads to come from Aldermanic Bonding, pursuant to Section 7.16 from the City Charter.

SECONDED by Alderman Balamaci.

Mayor Lauretti: I think this is fairly self-explanatory. We're going to repair roads. We're going to rebuild roads. We're going to resurface roads. That's an ongoing effort each and every year. In years gone by we used to do a bond issue for either 5 or 10 million. Now we're at the point where we don't have to do that at least for the next couple of years.

A voice vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

9.7 INTER MUNICIPAL AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF SHELTON AND THE CITY OF DERBY REGARDING THE CITY BUILDING DEPARTMENT AND TAX COLLECTOR'S OFFICE

9.7 A. Alderman Anglace MOVED to approve the agreement between the City of Shelton and the City of Derby for shared Building official services, subject to final review of the Mayor and Corporation Counsel, further authorize Mayor Mark A. Lauretti to execute any and all documents necessary to effectuate the same.

SECONDED by Alderman Simonetti.

Alderman Anglace: We have that agreement and can explain how this will work.

Mayor Lauretti: They're giving us a flat fee for oversight regarding Building Official's and Tax Collectors duties, Paul, I believe that we've incorporated it in my budget.

Mr. Hiller: There's a line item of \$115,000.00 fiscal year 2022, similar we've had that several years now with Animal Control. But this is a new line, if you look at the budget documents, particularly, the revenue side, you will see the \$115,000.00. You will also see that we have supplemented the Mayor's recommendation to the salary lines both in the Tax Collector's Office and in the Building Department for both the additional work that the Tax Collector and Building Official will be doing for the City of Derby.

A voice vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

9.7 B. Alderman Anglace MOVED to approve the agreement between the City of Shelton and the City of Derby for shared Tax Collector services subject to final review and approval of Mayor and Corporation Counsel. Further authorize Mayor Mark A. Lauretti to execute any and all documents necessary to effectuate the same.

SECONDED by Alderman McPherson.

Alderman Balamaci: I want to be sure that A & B are inclusive of that \$115,000.00?

Mr. Hiller: Yes.

Alderman Anglace: We didn't get an agreement on the tax collector. We did get an agreement on the Building Official, but not tax collector.

Attorney Teodosio: The copy of the agreement with the City of Derby still has some items that Derby hasn't done.

Mayor Lauretti: But for all intents and purposes, our agreement is not going to change. What Derby has to do is their business, not ours.

Attorney Teodosio: Their Board is meeting this evening to act upon this, to act upon the Tax Collector.

Alderman Anglace: I'm ok with the agreement, I read through the part on the Building Official. If the agreement on the Tax Collector mirrors that, I would have no disagreement.

Attorney Teodosio: Except for the tasks, it's almost identical.

Mayor Lauretti: Yes, they're two separate functions. The heart and guts of the agreement are identical as Corporation Counsel indicates.

Alderman Anglace: I didn't want the Board to approve it without the agreement. The questions I foresee, the questions from the public, do we get our building permits here? Do we pay our taxes in Shelton? I think we can proceed to approve it based on it mirroring the Building Official agreement.

Mayor Lauretti: Here again, that's Derby's issue, that's not our issue. Those are things Derby will have to communicate to the citizens.

Alderman Anglace: Absolutely.

Mayor Lauretti: We're just providing the service. The day-to-day operation.

A voice vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

10 – LEGISLATIVE – NEW

10.1 ITEMS TO PUBLIC HEARING

10.1 A. NO ITEMS

10.2 CITY OF SHELTON FAIR HOUSING POLICY STATEMENT

Alderman Anglace MOVED to approve the following resolution, Whereas, all persons are afforded the right to full and equal housing opportunities in the neighborhood of their choice, and whereas Federal Fair Housing laws require that all individuals, regardless of race, creed, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status or national origin be given equal access to all housing opportunities including rental and home ownership opportunities and be allowed to make free choices regarding housing location, and whereas, Connecticut Fair Housing Laws require that all individuals regardless of race, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, marital status, age, lawful source of income, familial status or any physical or mental disability, sexual orientation be given equal access to all housing opportunities including rental and homeownership opportunities and be allowed to make free choices regarding housing location, and whereas the City of Shelton is committed to upholding these laws and realizes that these laws must be supplemented by an affirmative state and publicly endorsing the right of all people of full and equal housing opportunity in the neighborhood of their choice. Now therefore, be it resolved, that the City of Shelton, hereby endorses a Fair Housing Policy to ensure Equal Opportunity for all persons to rent, purchase, obtain financing and enjoy all other housing related services of their choice on a non-discriminatory basis as provided by State and Federal law, and be it further resolved that the Chief Executive Officer of the City of Shelton, or his or her designated representative is responsible for responding to assisting any person who alleges to be the victim of an illegal discriminatory housing practice in the City of Shelton and for advising such person of the right to file a complaint with the State of Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities or the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development or to seek assistance from the State of Connecticut Fair Housing Center Legal Service Center or other Fair Housing Organization to protect his or her right to equal housing opportunities. Adopted by the City of Shelton on May 13, 2021.

Seconded by Alderman Simonetti.

Mayor Lauretti: This is pretty standard as we do this once a year and really doesn't come as a surprise.

A voice vote was taken and passed unanimously.

10.3 APPOINTMENT TO WATER POLLUTION CONTROL AUTHORITY

Alderman Anglace MOVED to appoint Michael Duncan, 13 Sharon Drive, Shelton, CT, (unaffiliated), to Water Pollution Control Authority effective immediately.

SECONDED by Alderman Simonetti.

A voice vote was taken and passed unanimously.

Mayor Lauretti: Let's move to item 11.1, which I'm not sure why this is under Executive Session.

Attorney Teodosio: I did not move for this item to be included under Executive Session.

Mayor Lauretti: Fine, lets move to item 11.1, Administrative/Clerical Union Local 1303-238, then go into 11.2 EDWARD BELADE WORKER'S COMPENSATION Executive Session.

11.1 ADMINISTRATIVE/CLERICAL UNION LOCAL 1303-238, COUNCIL #4, AFSCME AFL-CIO AGREEMENT

Alderman Anglace MOVED to approve the AFSCME AFL-CIO AGREEMENT as negotiated.

Seconded by Alderman Simonetti.

Mayor Lauretti: I mean there's not much new in this contract other than it's a three-year contract and I think it totals 6 percent. John are you familiar with it?

Alderman Anglace: 6.5 percent, here's a summary. The summary is boiler plate. It agrees to give the City options for managing some of the benefits. And I think that's fair.

Mayor Lauretti: Yes, it's all here, it's pretty self-explanatory. Some of the changes are reflected in health care benefits that really benefit the employee and the City, and makes it flexible and agreeable by most.

Alderman Anglace: We want to continue to provide the benefit and it gives us the latitude to seek other sources.

Mayor Lauretti: You know some of you may remember from being on the Board a few years, our contracts are, the percent increase are generally not this lucrative, for lack of a better word, unlike Education, has gotten 3 percent increases every single year. Our City employees don't get that. You know I think it's also important to recognize that during this Pandemic, there was no Pandemic here, these people came in to work every day. They came into work every single day. And if they couldn't come into work, they got things done from home just because of the nature of their job. Unlike teachers across Connecticut that didn't come to school. Unlike school bus drivers that didn't come to work. That closed things. We never had to do that with our City buildings, for the most part, this building in particular. That's what we recognized.

Alderman Anglace: That's to the credit of the AFL-CIO members.

A voice vote was taken and passed unanimously.

11 - EXECUTIVE SESSION

11.1 A. REQUEST TO MOVE TO EXECUTIVE SESSION

Alderman Simonetti MOVED to go into executive session.

SECONDED by Alderman McPherson.

A voice vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

Alderman Anglace MOVED to reconvene and noted that there were no votes were taken in executive session.

SECONDED by Alderman Simonetti.

A voice vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

11.2 EDWARD BELADE WORKER’S COMPENSATION

Alderman Anglace MOVED to approve Edward Belade vs. City of Shelton settlement in the amount of \$92,000.00.

SECONDED by Alderman Simonetti.

A voice vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

Alderman Anglace MOVED to adjourn the Special Virtual Meeting.

SECONDED by Alderman Simonetti.

A voice vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 5:51 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted

Terry Burden

Terry Burden
Acting Clerk, Board of Aldermen

DATE APPROVED _____ BY: _____

Mayor Mark A. Lauretti