



SPECIAL VIRTUAL MEETING MINUTES
BOARD OF ALDERMEN
CITY OF SHELTON, CT
THURSDAY, JANUARY 7, 2021
Shelton City Hall, 54 Hill Street
Live-Streamed at www.cityofshelton.org

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 via Phone
Alderman David Gidwani- Present via Phone
Alderman Stanley Kudej- Not Present
Alderman Noreen McGorty- Not Present
Alderman Cris Balamaci- Present
Alderman Bernie Simons- Present
Alderman Anthony Simonetti- Present

Administration

Mayor Mark A. Lauretti - Present
Fran Teodosio, Corporation Counsel – Present
Thomas Cotter, Assistant Corporation Counsel - Present
Jack Bashar, Administrative Assistant – Present
Paul Hiller, Director of Finance – Present

AGENDA ITEMS

1. FUNDING FOR OUTFITTING AND INSTALLATIONS TO NEW FIRE TRUCK

Alderman Anglace MOVED to appropriate an amount of \$28,176 for outfitting and installations to the new fire truck with funding to come from aldermanic bonding pursuant to Section 7.16 of the City Charter.

Seconded by Alderman Simonetti.

Mayor Lauretti: You may recall that at the last meeting the city purchased a new ladder truck to the tune of \$1.3 million. The truck wasn't fully outfitted so there are certain things that you received in the package that are identified that have to go into the truck with the cost associated with it.

Alderman Anglace: If you look in the back up, the first page shows \$28,176, the second page shows an additional \$9,900. You want to fund just the \$28,176?

Mayor Lauretti: Just the \$28,176.

A voice vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

2. CONTRACT FOR SALE OF FORMER CHROMIUM PROCESS PROPERTY

Alderman Anglace MOVED to approve the contract between the City of Shelton and Primrose Development, LLC for the sale of the former Chromium Process Property at 113 West Canal Street subject to a favorable 8-24 referral from Planning and Zoning. Further authorize Mayor Mark Lauretti to execute any and all documents necessary to effectuate the same.

Seconded by Alderman Simonetti.

Mayor Lauretti: I have some things that I brought here with me that I think are important for everyone to understand. As some of you may recall, this project was on our agenda in December for the taking of a small piece of property to complete this project. When it was bid by the city for sale, the project, it included an RFP with a designated use and that use was predicated on that piece of property that the city needed to acquire. There is a small triangular piece at the end of the property that was sold last year and we received \$4,000 for it. It's important to understand that we had a proposal on the table and what we are voting on today is far different than the original proposal. With that said, the original proposal included a five-story structure which was a 100 percent commercial use, which I thought was just what the doctor ordered for downtown because it gives us a lot of different types of uses, as opposed to residential or combinations of residential/commercial, which creates a lot of stability in a downtown area. The more diversity that you have, gives you strength over the long haul and diversity is not just in the form of people but also in the form of the different types of businesses that you have. This triangular piece was required because the structure was five stories and it included a parking garage. The parking

garage was at the end of that piece and hence the ramp was on that triangular piece. Without the ramp, the parking garage was affected. After that motion last month failed, the buyers came back and said we lost two tenants and because of that they couldn't go any further and they were going to walk away from the project and then they called me back and decided they would do a much smaller project. So, the original project was probably somewhere between \$8 and \$10 million. I thought that was significant enough and it would create tax revenues going forward for many years that was also significant. That's why the request was on the table. As we know, that didn't happen so we are back to a very different proposal that is three stories. The original proposal would have been a nice addition to the downtown area. With that said, we have a different proposal which is a 20,000 square foot building all contained on the former Chromium site that we own. The tax differential will be far different. The purchase price is far different. The original purchase price for the entire piece for the five-story project was somewhere in the neighborhood of \$450,000 and Fran, correct me if I am wrong but the purchase price is now down to a \$100,000?

Fran Teodosio: It's down to \$100,000 with a provision that provides for construction for the Riverwalk pavers with an estimated value of approximately \$137,000.

Mayor Lauretti: Right. So, the sale price for the original project was \$450,000 plus they were going to build out half the Riverwalk which we had stopped at the Civil War Memorial. This Riverwalk was slated to go across the back of the remaining property, adjacent to the railroad tracks and then back up to Canal Street. Now, with this new proposal, what they are going to do, they are going to put the brick pavers in. There is a big reduction in the overall price because there is a reduction in the project. Fran, have I left anything out in terms of the contract?

Fran Teodosio: It's got the standard provisions in it with regard to the application. Everybody had gotten a copy of the contract ahead of time.

Mayor Lauretti: Right. It was important to understand that there was an RFP that the city put out and that's what was on the table and now it's different so I just want to make sure they understood that. Are there any questions?

Alderman Anglace: What we didn't understand at the time when we originally acted on it was what the original proposal was. That wasn't shared with us. So, don't get the impression that we have settled for something less than originally planned, because we didn't know what the original proposal was.

Mayor Lauretti: I would respectfully disagree because everyone had a copy of what the original proposal was and a copy of the contract. The only thing that was different was the piece of property that was sold for \$4,000 which I admitted at the December meeting, in hindsight was a big mistake to sell. Two wrongs don't make a right. I tried to correct it but obviously the board didn't see it that way. So, this is what we have.

Alderman Anglace: What we were going to get, of course, if you are comparing apples to apples, if you want to compare numbers, by going through eminent domain, I don't know how much it would have cost us going through court to get that property back. That's another consideration, so we aren't doing too bad and we are right on track for what is planned for downtown, which is economic development which is lacking throughout the entire state. I think you made a great deal here. I said it in an article in the newspaper and I will say it again, a lot of hard work went into it by the Mayor and the staff. Planning and Zoning is going to do a lot of hard work on it and we are moving in the right direction.

Alderman Simonetti: Is there any talk about getting that property back at this time with the owner?

Mayor Lauretti: It's kind of a moot point because the prospective buyers had lost their tenants. Business people aren't going to sit around and wait for government to figure it out. They are going to go somewhere else and that's pretty much what happened here.

A voice vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

3. FUNDING FOR OFFICE FURNITURE - TOWN CLERK & MAYOR'S SECRETARY OFFICES

Alderman Anglace MOVED to appropriate an amount of \$33,970 for the purchase of office furniture for the Town Clerk's and the Mayor's Secretary's offices with funding to come from aldermanic bonding pursuant to Section 7.16 of the City Charter.

Seconded by Alderman Balamaci.

Mayor Lauretti: I don't know if anyone has taken the opportunity to go into the Town Clerk's Office to see what was done over the last couple of weeks. As you are aware, we closed that office between Christmas and New Year's holiday as we did some of

the other offices as we try to get some things done in this building. I don't think that office has been touched in almost 25 years. I know it looks like an awful lot of money we are spending there but when you think that over a 25- year period, the kind of use that the Town Clerk's Office gets, it's pretty insignificant. Beyond that, it was a necessary requirement to be able to conduct business in the year 2021. That office on an annual basis generates somewhere in the neighborhood of \$2 million dollars in revenue for the city. That is pretty significant. We felt it was important to bring that office up to a state-of-the-art operation and that's what part of this purchase is doing. We should also know that the majority of the work was done by the staff employed for us on a regular basis, although they are not considered essential workers, they never stopped working.

Alderman Anglace: I just want to note for the record that the furniture is being purchased under the state bid.

A voice vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

4. PARTIAL PAYMENT – SHARON SCANLON

Fran Teodosio: Mayor, I have a hand out for everyone.

Mayor Lauretti: As some of you on the Board will recall, seven or eight years ago, we had a major theft from the city's finances that fortunately was picked up. As time passed, we were able to identify an exact dollar amount, reach a settlement and we have been collecting money ever since.

Fran Teodosio: I want to make it clear to everybody that all the figures that you are going to see and all the success that the city had, is based on a lot of good legal work from past counsel Ray Sous. I am just filling in the blanks here. This template was set up by Ray when he represented the city for this matter. Going back in history, the original debt on the document that I handed out to you, was \$870,710.74. Through negotiations, between Ray and counsel for Ms. Scanlon, there was a payment made of \$139,399.06. That was her pension. That brought the figure down to \$731,310.78. There is a little bit of a difference if you do the actual math because the number that I just recited is the number that Attorney Sous did a stipulated judgment with the attorney representing Ms. Scanlon and when you do that you are entitled to certain costs that the court allows. If any of you have looked at the judgment lien that we are going to release tonight, you will see the figure of \$731,310.78. If you go back to the table that I provided to you, it has \$731,310.78

outstanding. The city then received a payment from its insurance carrier, for the sum of \$500,000. Ms. Scanlon, as best as we can determine, give or take maybe \$250, has through the probation/restitution for the State of Connecticut paid on her own \$1,875.00. That leaves a balance due of \$229,435.78. During the next month, there is being contemplated the sale of her home. The work that Attorney Sous had done, that I alluded to earlier, in putting the lien on that property entitles the city to make a claim against the equity in the property that Ms. Scanlon would be entitled to. The property is being sold and I have a copy of the projected closing statement. It was originally going to be sold in December. Now it's going to be sold on or about January 29th, 2021. The net figure of the sale is now going to be \$396,123.37. Now, Ms. Scanlon is entitled to half of that based on the way she owns the property with her spouse which means we are entitled to make a claim to half of that but we can only make a claim for half of that within the laws of the State of Connecticut. One of the laws of the State of Connecticut, allows Ms. Scanlon the 'Homestead Exemption' for \$75,000. When you do the math, and you divide the \$396,123.37 and then subtract out \$75,000, you get pretty close to \$123,055.97. Now, you heard me say 'pretty close' because the figures that I handed out to you were based on the closing that was going to happen in December. With the closing happening in January and based on a letter I just received a half hour ago; they are projecting that the amount of money that Ms. Scanlon will pay over to us is \$123,061.68. It went up a bit because of the taxes that are due on the property. After that payment, rather than the figure you have at the bottom of your table and based on this letter, Ms. Scanlon will owe \$106,374.10 to us. In addition to this money that we are receiving, and having nothing to do with the judgment, just as a foot note, there is outstanding on this property, and the city will be paid another \$44,695.74 in back taxes. Now a couple of points, the motion you have tonight, I am going to ask to put a little extra language in to say 'approximately' because based on the day that this closes, the figure may change a bit but it's not going to change any more than \$250. Also, understand that all your doing this evening with regards to releasing the lien is that you are giving up any further claim to that property to get money from Ms. Scanlon. Just because she has the \$75,000 exemption, it doesn't mean it reduces the amount of money that is due the city. It just means that we can't get that money from that source. She is on probation for another year and a half and her responsibility is to continue to pay the city and make the city whole. If you look at the judgment lien, the judgment lien says 'with interest'. That's a mistake. There was no interest allowed in this judgment but it was intentional because the money that we received, the \$139,399, that I pointed out in the beginning, was money that was turned over to us in lieu of the interest. That was a very good deal that Attorney Sous made.

Alderman Balamaci: I just have a question about the balance due. What is the stipulation if she fails to comply and pay the balance?

Fran Teodosio: Well, it's not a stipulation with us, it's a condition of her probation with the state. That is something that the court will deal with. As the victim, the city is entitled to provide its input, but we don't control the decision.

Mayor Lauretti: And it was a condition of the original agreement, and we from time to time have dialogue with the probation officer through the courts, to see if she is following up and doing her part paying what she was able to pay and that won't change.

Fran Teodosio: We are in contact with the probation department, as a matter of fact, Mr. Hiller has spoken to her probation officer and I spoke to her probation officer yesterday.

Alderman Anglace MOVED that Shelton Board of Aldermen authorize the release of the Judgment Lien dated July 14, 2015 and recorded in Volume 3570 Page 78 of the Shelton Land Records against real property owned by Sharon Scanlon provided that first the sum of approximately \$123,061.68 is paid to the City of Shelton; further move that Mayor Mark Lauretti and Corporation Counsel be authorized to sign all paperwork related to this transaction; and finally move that it be noted that the release of this Judgment Lien does not equate to a General Release of all sums due the City of Shelton from Sharon Scanlon which sums outstanding remain at \$106,374.10.

Seconded by Alderman Simonetti.

A voice vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

5. AUDIT PRESENTATION

Mayor Lauretti: Over the years, sometimes we haven't even discussed the audit and sometimes we have discussed it in detail, sometimes the auditor is here, sometimes he is not. If it is the Board's desire to have the auditor come at some point in time in the future to go over the numbers in more detail, he will be available to do that. I thought it was important to start a little dialogue about this past year. As you know, the audit of this past year is a reflection of the budget process and how the city fared,

particularly in the year of a pandemic. I want to digress for a minute, because I think it's important for the listening public to understand the budget process and the different boards and commissions that are involved in the budget process and all of the hype that goes along with the budget process or doesn't go with it, depending on what year it is and what people's motivations are. With that said, you are all aware that we had a charter revision question on the ballot that failed and we are all aware there was some public opposition by a group in Shelton that, I believe, misled the public with some of the commentary they had about the charter. Particularly, as it relates to Board of A&T. The Charter Revision Commission recommended the elimination of the Board of Apportionment & Taxation and I think for good reason. We've lived with it, we can live without it and the sun will come up and we will be just fine. The reason I bring this to your attention is because we have members on the A&T leading the charge against the charter revisions and saying how important the function of the Board of A&T is. I thought to myself, 'Really? Isn't this a classic case of the pot calling the kettle black?'. There are members of the Board of A&T who had an opportunity, under their charter responsibility, one of the few that the Board of A&T has, to forward the budget onto the Board of Aldermen for their review and/or approval, but that didn't happen this year. When members of a certain political party walk out of a meeting and aggregate their authority under the Charter and then advocate how important this oversight board is, I find that to be very disingenuous. I intend to call attention to it and I don't think I am going to stop any time soon. I mean specifically what happened this past year. When the Board of A&T doesn't pass a budget on to the Board of Aldermen, the Board of Aldermen gets the Mayor's budget, which was eventually adopted. I think there may have been some minor changes but by and large it was my budget that was forwarded from the year before. With that said, let's get into the numbers of the budget, and I am going to ask Paul Hiller to come to the podium in a moment. I do want to make a few more statements about how we did because I have a track record and a history with the budget process and so does the Board of A&T. Over the last ten years, the Board of Apportionment & Taxation has failed to forward a budget four times to the Board of Aldermen. If this is really that important as an oversight board, either individuals aren't considering this a very serious duty that they've accepted or maybe it's just not necessary. I will let everyone decide for themselves. At the end of the day, we were in the middle of a pandemic and the meeting times were limited and we just felt it was in the best interest to push the budget forward because (inaudible). You know, when people get up and knowingly walk out of a meeting, maybe it's because they don't want to stand up and be counted. I am not sure what their motivation is, but these are the same people who are advocating cutting the police department budget by a million dollars. I know you have all heard the theme, 'let's defund the police', well we have a faction of that in the city right now. I don't think that's a good thing. As the Mayor of the city

for the last 30 years, I have told people time and time again, the key to success, in my view, is being able to have a community that is affordable for businesses and people to be able to live in and to be able to grow in. More importantly is that you have a good quality of life. The quality-of-life issue is all-encompassing. Just pick a category, whether it's Parks & Recreation, whether it's Education, whether it's people being safe in their homes because they are being protected by police, or having good roads. These are some of the challenges that go into running a city. When you have (inaudible) budget surpluses, and still are able to grow your community, I think it speaks volumes. Particularly, when people are on the other side criticizing who have no track record, have no experience, and nothing tangible to point to. There are many factors when you have to administer a budget during the course of the year, there are some things that happen that you have to be prepared for, and if they don't happen then you do okay. If they do happen, then you have to react. This year, as you all know, we went through a pandemic. That slowed things down quite a bit. At the end of all of it the city didn't spend approximately \$4 million of the money that was budgeted. You are all aware that two years prior to that we had an issue with the Board of Education that had overspent their budget to the tune of \$3 million and that depleted our general fund and put us in a bad light with the rating agencies and from a rainy-day fund standpoint. We have overcome that this fiscal year. I think we probably have somewhere in between \$2 and \$2.5 million that has bolstered our general fund and that's a positive thing. I want to mention the fact that the Board of Education gave back approximately \$500,000 out of this year's budget. Largely, due to the fact that there was a pandemic. School wasn't in session so there were some things that there were savings on. That is the appropriate thing to do as opposed to thinking you have to spend every dollar that you were given because in this city when people haven't spent money and have given it back, we have not punished them for that. If you look at the city side of the budget you will understand what I am talking about. There are many departments that give money back. We don't cut their individual departments the next year. That's just not smart. You have to be able to be prepared to react to certain things and if you don't have the resources to do that then you wind up getting yourself in trouble. The other factor I think that is important to mention and because it's highlighted in the audit is the school bus contract. The audit says that the city saved about \$847,000 on the school bus contract. Some of that savings is largely due to the fact that the buses didn't run for four months. So, there were no expenses. Some of you may recall that last year we had a settlement with the Board of Education that put us in control of the school bus operation and that was our first year. We saw significant savings. It's important to understand, as you recall seven years ago when I advocated the city buying its own buses, it was simply to get ourselves in a situation where we can control our destiny. We can control the costs of operating something in the city and school bus costs are going

through the roof across the state. You may remember that the Board of Education was all set to sign a contract with another bus company that was a million dollars more than a year before. We said, 'time out, we aren't doing that'. We own those buses. We aren't signing a contract to allow anybody to take over these buses until we get involved and we went to court and came away with a three-year contract. This proves the point of the rationale for buying the buses which was to be able to control the costs that other municipalities in this state have not been able to and we have, because we do things differently. Of that \$847,000, don't think that it's all profit, because it's not. We had a capital outlay for those buses that we had to pay. Over the course of the five years, we had principal and interest that we had to pay. We are now recouping some of those costs. Yes, we did realize a profit. It speaks volumes to the fact that we were forthright in saying, 'hey, we are taking this over because we think we can do a better job'. That demonstrates the fact that we can. We can stabilize costs not only for taxpayers but for education. Rather than give that million dollars to another bus company, that can go into the system and it does because we didn't impact their budget by doing that. I think this is a very significant issue that everyone needs to understand and we need to continue to talk about because we have been doing this for over 30 years. That's why we have the tax structure that we have, that's why we have the growth that we have, and that's why we have people coming from all over the world to bring their businesses to Shelton and people from all over the state who are moving in to Shelton because they want to be able to survive in this beautiful state called Connecticut. This is just one example. I also want to make one more point about the Board of Education and all the critics out there that want to pass judgment. If they are so concerned about money for education, and they think that reimbursements to the city from the capital projects that we outlaid to the tune of \$5 million isn't important, then I think that you are selectively picking and choosing what you want people to know. I am not there, I am never going to be there and I never was. I am going to continue to talk about this thing. The city is owed close to \$5 million from Board of Education building projects that we laid out probably going on four years now. If education thinks that they want more money, maybe there won't be any more money until we get our \$5 million back. That just might be my decision this year. I want everyone to understand where I am at. This is an election year and I want everyone to know where I am at. That \$5 million is as important as anything because it helps make everything work in the city. When you have good, solid finances, then that is what carries the day. You know how they say the rising tides lifts all boats? Well, that's what cash does for you. There are a lot of people in the state of Connecticut who are not there but we are. Paul, with that I am going to hand the floor over to you and let you give some highlights of economics that are in the audit.

Paul Hiller: First off, the audit has been posted on the city website. It is also posted under the agenda for today's Board of Aldermen meeting on the city website. I realize the members of the Board of Aldermen have only just received the audit information this evening or within the last 24 hours, but we didn't receive our hard copies until yesterday morning. I will try and be brief and just highlight a couple of items here. If you turn to page 8 of the audit, down in the bottom left Exhibit D, one of the numbers that is highlighted that the banks and rating agencies were concerned about last year was only showing a fund balance of \$84,000. That has increased to \$2,188,000 in the current year. Basically, we had a very favorable year and virtually every line in this budget for the city has shown improvements over previous years. The Mayor highlighted the school bus operation. If you turn to page 56, you will see a breakdown of virtually every single department. There is a budget line in the city budget and the Board of Education. The points I would like to highlight here, you can see there were savings (Page 56), that we underspent what was allocated by \$6,261,382 that was budgeted by the Board of Aldermen for the previous year. That includes the money just above that line on Page 56 which talks about the Board of Education, which the Mayor indicated had returned over \$500,000 from their operating budget.

Mayor Lauretti: Paul, I want to underscore that in years gone by the Board of Education, from time to time, would return any number of monies in surplus, sometimes \$2 or \$2.5 million dollars' worth of surplus.

Paul Hiller: Right. Again, we could go through every single line here and as you can see, virtually every department had a positive result. The only one that didn't was Employee Resources, that's basically as a result of higher than anticipated medical costs for employees. We could go on and on with the details, there are obviously thousands of figures in this report. Turn to page 10 and this is one of the things the rating agencies looked at. See the unassigned fund balance, last year there was a negative figure of \$98,406. This year that has turned positive by \$161,395 but included in that is an allocation of \$1,600,000 which was taken as a reserve in the current year's budget, which hasn't been touched and we are obviously 50 percent of the way through this fiscal year and that money is likely to be returned to the general fund and boost us as we move forward.

Mayor Lauretti: Paul, I think you should talk a little bit about tax collection and some of the revenues that we didn't receive.

Paul Hiller: Tax collections overall were favorable with one exception. We did have a budget line of \$500,000 for what we anticipated might be Audit Returns on Personal Property Taxes. That did not happen last year. We have had some results on that this

year, we are in the process of collecting and that money, I won't say it's going to be positive this year but there was a \$500,000 hole in that line. Additionally, we had estimated last year that we would take in \$950,000 in receipts from the state as the Mayor talked about with prior school construction projects and that number was only around \$230,000. This year we budgeted a \$1.9 million for that and we should be starting to see some returns on that. Hopefully very soon. That's where some of the shortfalls are where revenue is concerned. Additionally, we fell a little short, about \$26,000 short, on our investment income because you are all aware the banks aren't paying much of an interest rate now. That's one that we lowered significantly from last year and it's going to be a reach to reach what we had this year but overall, it's favorable. Our tax collections right now, through December, are running ahead of schedule. We did not opt for the deferral program, that a few communities in the state have opted for, but frankly talking to other colleagues, not many people took advantage of it where it was offered in other communities. We are by Governor's Order, having to offer a lower interest rate on that, and as you may recall when we adopted the budget last year, we made adjustments on those lines as a result of that. It's a very positive picture that we have. One thing I would point out to you, and this is not our problem, but this is a state problem, if you look at page 52, the State of Connecticut is obviously responsible for the teacher's pension, and the liability which is attributable to Shelton increased by approximately \$36 million. The State of Connecticut's responsibility for our retired teachers is about \$155 million liability. That's not our liability but I pointed it out to you to show you where the state is as far as this is concerned. That impacts revenues for the State of Connecticut.

Mayor Lauretti: I think it's important to talk a little bit about tax collections because that was a comment that I, and other Chief Elected Officials, had made during their respective budget processes last year because of everything being shut down and people losing their ability to earn and while we haven't felt that impact, I think that at some point in time, we may, whether it's this coming year or the year after. You have to understand that you can't be out of work for a year and expect people being able to pay their bills. I will also mention, that in this city, people are pretty good payers. We have understood that for a long time because we haven't beat them over the head.

Paul Hiller: One thing I'd like to point out is that in some of the adjustments that we made, in the current year's budget when we adopted it, some of you may have received in the past month or so, if you purchased a new vehicle or got another vehicle, you got a supplemental motor vehicle tax. We had estimated that in last year's budget at \$1.1 million. We reduced that to \$900,000 in this year's budget. The bills that went out back in December for it, were just under \$1 million so, we

were right in reducing the amount we anticipated from the previous year and we got the benefit that people did buy more new vehicles or upgraded their vehicles for whatever purpose, so that should give us a little surplus there. As I said the billings were \$998,000 and we got into the budget \$900,000. If all those people pay, we will be \$98,000 ahead.

Alderman Simonetti: On page 3G, our outstanding debt is going down, I see we are paying our debts on time and not overextending ourselves?

Mayor Lauretti: That's historical.

Alderman Gidwani: Mr. Mayor, I have one question. With the city buses not running because the schools have been closed, where is that money going?

Mayor Lauretti: It's not going anywhere. What makes you think it's going somewhere?

Alderman Gidwani: Is it going back to the BOE?

Mayor Lauretti: We have a contract with the Board of Education.

Alderman Gidwani: I understand you have a contract with the BOE but since the buses are not working shouldn't the money go back to the BOE because it's not being used?

Mayor Lauretti: No. The money shouldn't. The money should stay where it is. That's the reason you have contracts. Other municipalities that had contracts with bus companies had to pay those and there was no money.

Alderman Gidwani: We have the advantage of the City of Shelton owning the buses so shouldn't the money go back to the BOE?

Mayor Lauretti: I think I answered that question already.

Alderman Anglace: I don't think that question is pertinent to the issue that we are talking about which is the audit from last year. I think the question is completely out of order.

Mayor Lauretti: I guess you can ask the counter question, is it okay for someone to overspend their budget two years in a row by three million dollars?

Alderman Anglace: The other issue that is more pertinent is that the Executive Order requires that if the BOE had farmed this out to a third party, they would be paying full costs and saving that third party harmless.

Mayor Lauretti: Let's not forget that the BOE a few years ago was prepared to spend a million dollars more than the prior year to engage in another bus company and we stopped that.

Alderman Gidwani: But Mr. Mayor, the advantage that we have is that the City of Shelton owns the buses. That's the taxpayer's buses. I do not see anyone writing a check for the buses, it's the taxpayers who wrote the check for the buses. No answer?

Mayor Lauretti: I don't think your statement is relevant to be honest with you. Any other questions or comments?

Alderman Gidwani: It is relevant because the City of Shelton taxpayers own those buses and if the buses are not running then the money should go back to the BOE.

Alderman Anglace: Wait a minute. Why doesn't the money go to the Police Department or Public Works or any other department?

Alderman Gidwani: Well maybe if you guys funded enough cops in Shelton, we wouldn't have all these problems with car break ins and cars being stolen.

Alderman Anglace: You are getting off the track. The Board of Aldermen is the appropriating authority, and we have appropriated the money and money is to be spent according to the way they were appropriated.

Mayor Lauretti: I wouldn't entertain this discussion because he just wants to advocate for more money for the Board of Education and that's not going to happen this year. You made your point and we don't agree. The reason we have a contract is so that we can solidify things and make sure everyone adheres to the contract and you have good performance that way.

Alderman Gidwani: Well, taxpayers are going to notice that.

Mayor Lauretti: They sure are and they are going to be happy when their taxes don't go up.

Alderman Gidwani: No, they are not.

Mayor Lauretti: Okay.

ADJOURNMENT

Alderman Anglace MOVED to adjourn the Special Virtual Meeting.

SECONDED by Alderman Balamaci.

A voice vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 5:50 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted

Theresa Adcox

Theresa Adcox
Board of Aldermen Clerk

DATE APPROVED _____ BY: _____
Mayor Mark A. Lauretti
