



SPECIAL VIRTUAL MEETING
BOARD OF ALDERMEN
CITY OF SHELTON, CT
THURSDAY, APRIL 8, 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
Alderman David Gidwani- Present via Phone *(at 5:02 p.m.)*
Alderman Noreen McGorty- Present via Phone
Alderman Anthony Simonetti- Present via Phone
Alderman Bernie Simons- Present via phone *(at 5:05 p.m.)*

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 – MARCH 11, 2021
- 1.2 SPECIAL VIRTUAL MEETING – MARCH 25, 2021

SECONDED by Alderman Simonetti.

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

Alderman Gidwani joined the meeting via phone.

REPORT OF THE MAYOR

No report.

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

No Report.

6 – LEGAL REPORT

6.1 CORPORATION COUNSEL BILLING

Alderman Anglace MOVED to authorized a total payment of \$3,488.15 to Corporation Counsel Teodosio Stanek, LLC, for services rendered per statements March 30, 2021, with funds to come from the following Legal Services Accounts:

Professional Services -	001-1900-411.30-01	\$
Legal Fees	- 001-1900-411.30-03	\$2,887.50
Foreclosure Fees	- 001-1900-411.50-01	\$
Court Costs	- 001-1900-411.80.84	\$
Disbursements		\$ 600.65

SECONDED by Alderman McPherson.

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 \$1,963.50 to Assistant Corporation Counsel Thomas Galvin Cotter for services rendered per statements dated March 29, 2021, with funds to come from the following Legal Services Accounts:

Professional Services	001-1900-411.30-01	\$
Legal Fees	001-1900-411.30-03	\$1,963.50
Foreclosure Fees	001-1900-411.50-01	\$
Miscellaneous Services	001-1900-411.80-03	\$
Court Costs	001-1900-411.80-84	\$

SECONDED by Alderman McPherson.

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

Alderman Simons joined the meeting via phone.

9 – FINANCIAL BUSINESS – NEW

9.1 APRIL STATUTORY REFUNDS

Alderman Anglace MOVED that the report of the Tax Collector relative to the refund of taxes for a total amount of \$24,388.06 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 McPherson.

A voice vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

9.2 ADOPTION OF TAX COLLECTOR’S SUSPENSE LIST

Alderman Anglace MOVED that the Tax Collector’s Suspense list in the amount of \$221,733.00 be adopted and transferred from the Grand Lists into Suspense per State Statute Sec.12-165:

2011	\$ 201.16
2012	\$ 2,163.62
2013	\$ 9,144.66
2014	\$26,897.70
2015	\$61,153.76
2016	\$54,715.09
2017	\$41,131.36
2018	\$22,560.22
2019	\$ 3,765.43

TOTAL: \$221,733.00

SECONDED by Alderman Simonetti.

Alderman Balamaci: This suspense list, those are things that were turned in or they just weren’t paid?

Mayor Lauretti: There are unpaid taxes and the statute of limitations has expired.

Alderman Balamaci: Thank you.

Mayor Lauretti: Fran, this is a question for you and I don’t know if you know the answer to this. This must include a delinquency on Autoswage?

Fran Teodosio: I am not sure if it does or not Mayor. There is another part of the Suspense list that she can’t figure out how to collect and suspend for a duration. If she gets it then she can then put it back on the list.

Mayor Lauretti: I am just wondering because of the pandemic and all the Executive Orders if everything would be stayed for this year that we couldn’t foreclose.

Fran Teodosio: We just sent in the claims for Autoswage and we included everything. We are trying to claim it based on what you just said.

Alderman Anglace: I haven’t had a chance to talk to the Tax Collector but the 2019 number of \$3,765.43 appears to be much lower than we have had in the past. It might, as the Mayor pointed out, go up later.

Mayor Lauretti: Just for the benefit of everyone here. Does everyone understand the Autoswage situation? Do you want an explanation?

Alderman Carloni: Yes.

Mayor Lauretti: Autoswage has been an ongoing tax collection issue for a number of years. Like the Star Pin building, they are in arrears of several hundred thousand dollars to the tune of close to seven hundred thousand. As you know, we took Star Pin, and we are in the process of remediating it. We are applying the same concept with Autoswage. It is under a tax foreclosure. We have received funding from the State and Federal Government to investigate and assess the contaminates that exist on the property. We received an assessment grant. Then we were in the process of applying for clean up money and the foreclosure and then the Covid-19 pandemic hit and everything got shut down. There is a lot of effort that has gone into this and continued effort will also be put into it once the Executive Orders are lifted. I am hopeful that it will be soon.

Alderman Anglace: Okay, you can't foreclose.

Mayor Lauretti: No. The pandemic has held it up for about a year now. We were weeks away from a judgement and everything got shut down.

A voice vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

9.3 CREATION & APPROVAL OF MERIT SYSTEM POSITIONS PURSUANT TO SECTION 4.1 OF ORD. #908 MERIT SYSTEM AND PERSONNEL RULES

Alderman Anglace MOVED, pursuant to Section 4.1 of Ord. #908 Merit System and Personnel Rules, to approve the creation of two new non-union Merit System positions and assign the following job grades:

1. Renovation and Reconstruction Worker – Grade 23
2. Assistant Animal Control Officer – Grade 13

SECONDED by Alderman McPherson.

Mayor Lauretti: I will try and recap for you why we are doing this. The first one deals with specialized construction services of people who have been employed by the city but have worked in a part-time capacity. Over the last couple of years, the properties that we owned and purchased years ago, have structures on them that were abandoned and left in disrepair. What we have done, through the Board of Aldermen, is reconstruct, renovate and bring these properties up to code and they are now being rented. These people have been with us for a number of years and I think it's time that we keep them under our employ. There is always a threat of tradespeople leaving, in this country, because there are so very few, that are skilled and qualified to do this specialty type work including finished carpentry, tile work, electrical, plumbing, and/or HVAC. We have a pretty good group right now and this is the reason for the creation of this position. The second position is Assistant Animal Control Officer. You may

remember that last year we merged with Derby and now we handle their animal control. We need to beef up our staff. We have some employees, again, who have been with us in a part time capacity for up to as many as ten to twelve years. They are very good at what they do. They have worked an awful lot of overtime during this pandemic and we need to ensure that we can retain these people. That's the purpose of creating this full-time position. Leon Sylvester, as you know, is the Animal Control Officer and Department Head, and he is putting in a multitude of hours to ensure that the needs of both Derby and Shelton are met. I have to tell you that from the animal control standpoint, there are a lot more complicated situations out there that we are running into, things like homes having 47 cats in the house that have been abandoned and there is the same thing with dogs. There are abuse issues where we had to get the police department involved to have people arrested for animal abuse, particularly with dogs. This is a very complicated world that we live in. We need to beef up our staff and this is one way of doing it. I hope to be announcing some time very soon, that we will be providing the same type of services with Derby through either the Building Department and/or Tax Collector.

A voice vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

9.4 RESOLUTION REGARDING EXPENDITURE OF COVID-19 RELATED FUNDS (Coronavirus Relief Funds)

Alderman Anglace MOVED to authorize the use of \$350,621.00 of Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF) monies for eligible expenditures to be made in accordance with city, state, and federal guidelines with funding to come from CRF Municipal Reimbursements received during December of 2020 from the State of Connecticut Office of Policy and Management.

SECONDED by Alderman Balamaci.

Alderman McGorty: Do we have any details regarding what is behind that number? Any details regarding the eligible expenditures?

Mayor Lauretti: I am going to turn the microphone over to Fran because I know in the last couple days he has been working diligently to research this. I will say for the longest time it's been a mystery to every municipality in the state as Paul and I have had conversations with either Finance Directors or Mayors of other towns.

Fran Teodosio: First of all, you have to understand how the city received this money. The city received this money, as the motion indicates, in December of 2020. What was unique about that receipt is that the regulations as to how it would be spent were not yet in place. The regulations are now in place. Noreen, to answer your question, there are approximately 65 different ways to spend that money. They have three characteristics. One, the money has to be spent before December 31, 2021. Another characteristic is that it can't be spent for anything in the city regarding infrastructure expenditures. Third, it has to, in some way, be Covid related. There are a number of examples in the regulations that describe what Covid related means.

It's primarily having to do with those expenditures that are obvious because of Covid, but also expenditures that are made with regard to safety personnel, health personnel, and the police department because the treasury has indicated in its interpretation of the guidelines that police officers are a necessary backup to any entity that is dealing with Covid so that expenditures for police officer's salaries is also one of the components that it could be spent on.

Mayor Lauretti: With that said, the things that we have spent it on to date, which is very little, this week I just issued a purchase order for \$18,000 for the Senior Center to buy a large catering tent so they can have events for the seniors outside. We normally wouldn't do this but because we want to get the Senior Center up and running and create activities and keep people spaced apart, we thought this was an appropriate purchase. I must say that it was Doreen Laucella who came to me with the idea. She wanted to rent one and I decided to just buy one because I don't think this is going away any time soon. We will always have a need for something like this. The events that we have done in the past, such as Flag Day picnics and we have had to rent the tents. Now we will have one in our ownership. In addition to that we are going to do a Flag Day picnic this year that was previously cancelled. Now we will be able to do that with the pavilion and the tent. The other thing that we are doing is that we are buying large screen televisions for City Hall for Room 104 and the auditorium so that when these Zoom meetings take place that people will be able to participate. Dan, can you expand on this?

Dan Bednarsky, IT Director: We will be doing several TVs in the auditorium as the Mayor said. We are turning Room 104 into a Zoom room as well as two other offices, yet to be determined, within City Hall. That will give us the ability to hold more than one meeting simultaneously, which has been an issue that we have had. We will be utilizing what is called Zoom Rooms. Everything will be more or less a one-click operation and very simple for people to be able to use.

Mayor Lauretti: Also, we had to buy extra sets of power tools for our maintenance workers. In the past they would work together and share the tools but now, during the pandemic, we had to spread them out and that was a couple thousand-dollar expenditure. We are contemplating buying some vans for school transportation. In the event that we have some capacity requirements on the buses, the vans will help us expedite and take care of some of the runs that we would normally send a larger bus to. For those people who weren't paying attention. This week on Monday, ten municipalities across the state had to close school because they couldn't get school bus drivers and they didn't have enough teachers. They had to close school. We haven't had to do that. Anyhow, I gave you a handful of examples. The \$350k will go fast. The bigger challenge is all the other money that they are sending everybody across the country.

Alderman Anglace: I think following up on Noreen's question, I think we should all understand, that the intent of this motion is to provide the Mayor with the prerogative to spend this money within the state and federal Covid guidelines. I think we should also be concerned about the transparency and look for a periodic report and then a final report once the deadline comes around. Would that be fair to say that is our intent?

Alderman Simonetti: Agreed.

Mayor Lauretti: The state and the feds make you do that anyway. I don't know how much work you want us to do? We are on overload now. I am happy to supply the report that we send to the state and the feds.

Alderman Anglace: We keep an ongoing record of our Locip funding, same idea. Just run it down for us so we know where it was spent and the public knows where it was spent.

Alderman McGorty: Thanks so much for giving the details behind that. It's very interesting and I appreciate it especially the Senior Center and how the city is reacting to try and keep things open and get people active. We are used to seeing details and I understand it's an arduous task. I second Alderman Anglace's comment in knowing what's behind these numbers in whatever way it's easiest to show.

Mayor Lauretti: I just don't want to get in a situation like we have with some members of the Board of A&T who want to second guess and why did you do this and why didn't you do that? It's easy to be a Monday morning quarterback. When you are trying to open up systems that have been in place and operational for years and having been shut down by a pandemic there is nothing easy about trying to understand what the law's intent is and playing that guessing game. I want everyone to understand that right up front.

Alderman Balamaci: So, that just can't be a catalogued internal document for our purposes?

Mayor Lauretti: It can. I want everyone to know there isn't going to be any debate over it.

A voice vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

9.5 WAIVER OF BID- POLICE DEPARTMENT SOFTWARE/BROADBAND UPGRADES

Alderman Anglace MOVED, per the recommendation of the Purchasing Agent, to waive the bids for Police Department Software/Broadband upgrades to integrate the City of Shelton's crime prevention system with Stratford, Monroe and Trumbull.

SECONDED by Alderman Simonetti.

Mayor Lauretti: You can see that this is a regional program that we are getting involved in. I don't want to say too much about exactly what it is because the criminals don't need to know how we are coming after them.

A voice vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

10.1 ITEMS TO PUBLIC HEARING
10.1 A. NO ITEMS

11 - EXECUTIVE SESSION

11.1 A. REQUEST TO MOVE TO EXECUTIVE SESSION

Alderman Anglace MOVED to go into executive session and asked the Corporation Counsel and Assistant Corporation Counsel to be included.

Thomas Cotter: I am going to withdraw the request of item 11.2 Anthony Durso vs. City of Shelton because that is a Board of Education matter.

11.1 EDWARD BELADE VS CITY OF SHELTON

11.2 ANTHONY DURSO VS. CITY OF SHELTON

SECONDED by Alderman McPherson.

A voice vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

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

SECONDED by Alderman Balamaci.

A voice vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

11.1 EDWARD BELADE VS CITY OF SHELTON

No action.

SECONDED by Alderman Simonetti.

A voice vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

11.2 ANTHONY DURSO VS. CITY OF SHELTON

Withdrawn/no action.

ADJOURNMENT

Alderman McPherson MOVED to adjourn the Special Virtual Meeting.

SECONDED by Alderman Simonetti.

A voice vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 5:40 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted

Theresa Adcox

Theresa Adcox
Board of Aldermen Clerk

DATE APPROVED _____ BY: _____
Mayor Mark A. Laretti