



BOARD OF ALDERMEN  
CITY OF SHELTON  
REGULAR FULL BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
MARCH 12, 2026  
SHELTON CITY HALL, 54 HILL STREET, SHELTON, CT  
*Live Streamed at [www.cityofshelton.org](http://www.cityofshelton.org)*

---

### **Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance**

Mayor Lauretti called the regular Board of Aldermen meeting to order at 5:30 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 via Zoom  
Alderman Bernard Simons, Vice President – Present via Zoom  
Alderman Lorenzo Durante – Present via Zoom  
Alderman Porter McKinnon – Present  
Alderman Anthony Simonetti – Present  
Alderman Benjamin Perry – Present  
Alderman Bryan Lizotte – Present  
Alderman Michael Duncan – Present

### **Administration**

Mayor Mark A. Lauretti  
Fran Teodosio, Corporation Counsel  
Kellie Vazzano, Administrative Assistant to the Mayor  
Frances Freer, Administrative Assistant to the Mayor  
Ray O'Leary, Treasurer  
Grace Zweig, Finance Director

### **PUBLIC PORTION**

Mayor Lauretti asked if anyone wished to address the board.

### **Jerry Bloom**

#### **24 Fairfield Avenue, Shelton, CT**

I guess we are skipping the roll call again. Once again I want to bring to your attention the fact that the road at Riverview Park is unpaved. I have been asking you, Mayor Lauretti, to please pave that road, now going on three years. I assume you all watched the address President Trump made to the annual State of the Union. One section was really, really a stark contract between both parties, most telling being that 99% of the democrats were not agreeing to place the safety of America citizens above the

illegal aliens. This is going to come back and bite them in the ass this November. Also, Mayor Lauretti, I still have yet to hear from you if you have contacted the Department of Homeland Security. I take that as a no. The benefit, of course, being if you were to have our police department enroll with ICE to assist with removing the illegal aliens that they arrest, it would save the police department – I don't know, what is the salary of the police officers on an annual basis? More than 1000 police departments nationwide have signed up. Although ICE was granted a \$75 billion budget in the Big Beautiful Bill last year, I would think that Shelton would want to get a piece of it. Also, the SAVE act is a big issue now and the democrats do not want to have citizens provide identification in order to vote. In fact, Connecticut has a bill pending that will bar ICE agents from 150 feet from all voting spots in the State. Why would they do that? Obviously, they want illegal aliens to vote freely. Thank you.

**Louise Bobrow**

**100 Parrott Drive, Shelton, CT**

I am not a politician. I am actually a former public health nurse, a graduate of Columbia University where we were steeped in public health and the importance of it. I am here tonight because I think there is really a public health problem and that is with regards to bus shelters along Bridgeport Avenue. I have noticed, myself, that there are people standing in all kinds of inclement weather, sometimes in two feet of snow which I saw the other day. There is nothing to protect them and these are the people that are working in our businesses largely, at Walmart, Shoprite, Stop & Shop, the restaurants, hotels and they are stuck in all kinds of inclement weather just waiting there. Aside from it being, I think, inhuman to put them in conditions like that, some of the drivers have expressed to me that they are worried about hitting them because they end up standing out in the street as that was the only place they could stand without being in snow. I think the conditions that they are in are awful, just standing there in all kinds of awful weather and there should be some sort of protection. I also recognize the importance of them being properly maintained. I have been in touch with Mr. DeMichele, who runs the Greater Bridgeport Transit Company and he led me to believe that there are funds that are available, they just have to be applied and it takes time, but I would like to put it into some kind of forward progress. I have been in touch with Mr. Scinto and I have also spoken to the Mayor. I know there are probably different ideas about this, but I would highly urge some kind of shelter and I think it would be a win/win situation for the most part. People could put ads in the shelters which would be a plus for the businesses and it would also protect them from all kinds of inclement weather. I would ask you to please take notice of this. I have also been in touch with Mr. Duncan and I think there are some things being considered right now. Thank you very much.

**Michelle Eckler**

**17 Grove Street, Shelton, CT**

Good evening Mayor Lauretti and members of the Board of Aldermen. I am a former Shelton student, a Shelton resident and educator of 25 years and, most importantly, the mother of two boys, Richie and Luke, who are students in our public schools. I am here tonight as the founding President of the Shelton Special Education Parent Teacher Association, or Shelton SEPTA. I just want to explain what we are and, perhaps, more importantly why our presence is vital in the health and reputation of the City of Shelton. As the keepers of the purse strings, you are often tasked with making difficult financial decisions.

However, during budget season, a recurring and painful narrative often emerges in our community – the idea that the rising costs of Special Education are a burden were a primary reason for budgetary strain. I just want to be very clear about how that feels as a parent. When we talk about Special Education costs, we are talking about my sons. We are talking about the basic right of hundreds of Shelton children to access an education. When these children are framed as a line item problem to be solved, it creates a divide in our City. It suggests that some students are worth the investment, while others are an extra expense. That mindset is not only hurtful to families, it is a fundamental misunderstanding of our legal and moral obligations to our citizens. My husband and I started Shelton SEPTA to change that narrative. Our mission is to educate the public so that inclusion isn't seen as a charity, but as a standard of excellence in our City. We want to work with you and the public to prevent the us versus them mentality that often flares up during budget cycles. SEPTA provides a platform to explain why these services matter, not just for the students receiving them, but for the entire classroom environment and the long-term success of our graduates. An inclusive school district is a high performing district and high performing district is what keeps property values high and attracts new families to Shelton. Shelton SEPTA is a resource for this Board as well. We are here to be a bridge between the families who live these realities and the leaders who make the fiscal decisions. I am here tonight to formally invite you all to join Shelton SEPTA. We are extending the Shelton Public Schools Educator rate of \$10 for membership to the Board of Aldermen to encourage your participation. By joining, you send a very clear message to the hundreds of families in your Wards that you see their children as valued members of this community, not just a budgetary challenge. We are not just asking for support. We are offering a partnership to ensure Shelton remains a City that supports every one of its residents. I will be emailing each of you individually with membership information, so if you choose to join you can do so, and we will be holding our first annual meeting in May via Zoom and we will invite you to join and also give you a platform if you wish to speak to the members of the organization. I want to thank you for your time, your commitment to our City and your commitment to the children of Shelton. Thank you.

Mayor Lauretti asked if there was anyone else wishing to address the Board. Hearing none, the Public Portion is closed.

Mayor Lauretti: Dave Cappelletti is here tonight to explain the City's audit from last year's financial performance.

#### **AUDIT PRESENTATION BY CLERMONT ACCOUNTANTS**

Dave Cappelletti, Clermont Accountants & Advisors  
Annual Financial Report Presentation

My name is Dave Cappelletti and I am the auditor for the City. For people who are not familiar with the audit process, we do an annual audit to make sure the City is in compliance with State and Federal laws and we also review the internal control structure of the finances to make sure everything that is reported to you on a monthly basis is accurate. This year we give an unmodified opinion and we do not have any findings or internal controls to talk about tonight.

I will give you a quick summary of the audit report and if you have any questions we can go into it a little deeper. Just to make you a little bit more familiar with the audit report, the financial statements are built up between the exhibits which are financial statements. Behind there are the notes that give it a little bit more detail. Behind that we show you the combining statements that if you need a little bit more detail we can look at them.

I will move to page 52 Financial Statements. This is a summary of budget to actual report for the general fund. As you see, you have revenues over the expenditures of \$1.4 million. At the bottom of the page you will see the change of unassigned fund balance in the beginning of the year to end of the year was increased by \$4 million. Those are the funds that are available for you to appropriate in the subsequent fiscal year. Is there any one individual line item anyone wants to talk about?

Mayor Lauretti: Always, the number one question is the results of the Board of Ed and their impact on the City side of the budget.

Dave Cappelletti: What we do with that is we went through the process. The Board of Education has a method of reporting their budget to actual reports to the Board. When a deficit is recognized the Board would reach out to the Finance Committee, the budget making authority, and notify them of the deficit. We don't get into why it happened, but just make sure when it does happen that it happens correctly. The communication worked within State statutes and obviously the Finance Committee reacted accordingly. Whether they made budget amendments or not, the funds were made available for a contingency. As far as State statutes that is what we are concerned about, that the communication was done properly, they were notified to the Board of Education and the Board of Education notified to the City and the City reacted.

Mayor Lauretti: When you say the City reacted, how did the City react?

Dave Cappelletti: We read through the minutes and the City reacted in the way that they knew that there was a deficit and they had to make sure that the funds were available before the end of the year. They were able to fund their deficits mainly through the appropriation. When I say that, your appropriated expenses for the year were \$143 million, but you were able to reduce that to \$135 million, although the Board of Education had a deficit budget spending, the City was able to complement that and fund it through the current year taxes.

Mayor Lauretti: I'm not sure how the City did that though. When you say the City funded it, how did they do it? Didn't it have to be an action of the Board of Aldermen?

Dave Cappelletti: In this situation the way that the State looks at this is they would notify ...

Mayor Lauretti: I'm not interested in the State. The State is way off base. What did the City do to respond?

Dave Cappelletti: The City didn't make a budget amendment, they didn't adjust the budget, but I feel they did make appropriate measures to make sure the funds were available, which meant that it

wouldn't go into a deficit general fund. However, it happened it did happen so it was funded in the current year.

Alderman Duncan: So, you gave an unmodified opinion, meaning that there is nothing really to change, but is there anything from a controls perspective that you would recommend us to implement to improve the process?

Mayor Lauretti: It is not the process. It is what they are allowed to do. All they have to do is say hey we are going to over-spend our budget. There is no incentive for them to stay within their budget. They could overspend it by \$10 million. Correct me if I'm wrong.

Dave Cappelletti: The State statutes said that they would notify the City and they would use every means possible to reduce additional costs to reduce the deficit. There would be a difference there whether they acted recklessly and spent additional funds even though they are in deficit. We looked at that and we didn't see that action. As far as what we are concerned about is what did they do once they realized there was a deficit. There wasn't any reckless spending. There was some reduction in expenses. I did speak privately with the management there as far as what did they go through, how did management react to this. Unfortunately, some of these expenses are going to be some long term goals rather than short term solutions. Like I said, we don't go there, we don't review whether this is the appropriate way to do it, just that the communication is appropriate and they are reacting to that.

Alderman Duncan: When you say reckless spending, is there a dollar threshold to that?

Dave Cappelletti: There wouldn't be a dollar threshold to that.

Alderman Duncan: So, it is just your opinion?

Dave Cappelletti: What we want to note on reckless spending is that they knew there was a deficit, but they still purchased excessively. We did not see anything like that. The deficit was targeted in specific areas which you are familiar with and those areas were difficult to maintain.

Mayor Lauretti: One of the areas that was over-expended was in healthcare. Can you share those numbers with us?

Dave Cappelletti: I don't have those numbers as part of the audit.

Mayor Lauretti: So, what did the Board of Education over-spend in their budget? That has to be part of the audit.

Dave Cappelletti: Two areas were healthcare costs and Special Education costs. Those are the two large areas that were overspent over their budgets. Healthcare costs are difficult to estimate. We see that from town to town and city to city. We also see deficits in the Special Ed area as well. That is a state-wide problem.

Alderman Perry: On page 52, under education (\$3,502,338). What does that represent?

Dave Cappelletti: That is the amount that they overspent on their appropriation.

Mayor Lauretti: Which is almost the exact amount, dollar for dollar, that was set aside in reserves for two separate categories. All indications would point to the fact that there was just a disregard for the budget line item knowing that those reserves were sitting there and they would go right to it. In other words, they balanced their budget in their minds. That is really what it boils down to. It almost becomes, why do we go through this exercise every year? Just give them a number. It will stop all the fanfare and public name calling and all that nonsense and be done with it. It has become a real joke now. Not just here in Shelton; it is state-wide.

Alderman Anglace: I'm not so sure that I totally agree with what you just said. Special Education and healthcare reserves were put in because of historical over-spending in those accounts. We didn't put it in before, it was done after your budget. You set the budget that they had and the healthcare affected both the City side of the budget and the education side of the budget. What you are saying in effect is that the City as well as the Board of Ed intentionally overspent their budgets? I don't agree.

Mayor Lauretti: I didn't say that. The City did not overspend on the healthcare side.

Alderman Anglace: We don't have the numbers on the healthcare.

Mayor Lauretti: You don't think it is a coincidence that almost their exact total expenditure totals up to what you put in reserves. Come on, everybody can see that. You may choose not to recognize that.

Alderman Anglace: The Board of Education does not control the healthcare expenditures. They don't determine what they are. They are determined by a third party. They are determined by the people who use the benefit. They have no control over it. It is what it is and that is what it came out to be.

Mayor Lauretti: That has nothing to do with the price of eggs with what you are saying. I couldn't disagree more. I've been looking at this for 34 years and it hasn't always been that they overspend in those two areas. It is just in the last 3-4 years that this has come about. There is a lot of history here.

Alderman Anglace: That is because we have gone through a self-insured program.

Mayor Lauretti: You're off base now.

Alderman Anglace: Of course, let's talk facts. The facts are when we spoke to the person who watches over and advises us on the self-insurance program, we asked him what his best estimate was for cost and he says that is exactly what it is – an estimate. Estimates could be good and could be bad and you can't control them. You just have to live with what they are and that is what happened here. Too many variables are involved in the process. I don't see the Board of Education as the culprit here. With Special Education we have a totally different story. The President of the Board of Education, the new President, put it into the Spotlight Report that the Board of Ed put out where the culprit lies in Special Ed. It lies

with the State of Connecticut. In 13 years they haven't changed the formula. For 13 years they have received money from the Federal Government to handle inflation and they spend it in other ways and not on Special Education. That is a crime. Who is on their tail? The Federal Government should get on their tail.

Alderman Simonetti: Just to understand the audit, there are people in the audience and myself, who are not accountants. You have been doing this for how many years for us?

Dave Cappelletti: 15 years.

Alderman Simonetti: How many other cities do you do this for?

Dave Cappelletti: 20.

Alderman Simonetti: So, you have had experience with this for many, many years. In your opinion, is the City of Shelton in good standing in all areas? Is there anything in your opinion that we can do better to take care of the funds that are given to us by the taxpayers?

Dave Cappelletti: Like I said, we have an unmodified opinion. The finance position is greatly improved during the year. There was a lower fund balance coming into the year. You were able to grow that back up to the \$4.4 million. That gives you a more healthy situation. The borrowing agencies like to see that. You have a growing grand list which has always helped you and it continues to grow. You are also keeping debt as low as it can be. Per capita you are probably one of the lowest in the State on debt. Those three things maintain a very financial position.

Mayor Lauretti: Thanks.

## **MINUTES FOR APPROVAL**

### **1. MINUTES FOR APPROVAL**

#### **1.1 BOARD OF ALDERMEN REGULAR MEETING – FEBRUARY 11, 2026**

*Minutes can be viewed on the city website: [www.cityofshelton.org](http://www.cityofshelton.org).*

Alderman Simonetti MOVED to waive the reading and approve the minutes of the Regular Board of Aldermen Meeting Minutes of February 11, 2026. Seconded by Alderman McKinnon.

A voice vote was taken and motion passed unanimously (8-0)

## **5.1 FINANCE COMMITTEE**

### **5.1.1 MULTI-PURPOSE TURF SPORTS FIELD AT SHELTON HIGH SCHOOL**

Alderman Simonetti MOVED, per the recommendation of the Finance Committee, to authorize the City of Shelton to enter into contract with FieldTurf USA to begin the construction of a new all-weather synthetic turf field on the existing lower grass field at Shelton High School.

Further, authorize Mayor Mark A. Lauretti to execute any and all documents necessary to effectuate same.

Seconded by Alderman Perry.

Discussion:

Alderman McKinnon: Have we appropriated the funds for this already?

Mayor Lauretti: No. This has been around for a couple of years now. There are two separate state grants associated with this. One is for \$500,000 and the other is \$150,000. We are at the point where we are either going to use them or lose them. The way this was laid out and presented to the Finance Committee, unfortunately some people didn't understand it, but all the numbers are there. This is set up for alternate choices. The base number, the base bid to do the field, to use rough numbers, is \$1.3. With that there are options to add fencing, to add lighting, to add bleachers. There are a variety of different things. We don't need to get into that now. This is just a proposal that lays out a structure that allows us to move forward so we don't lose the State grant. We will also petition the State for more State money for fiscal year 2026-27. It is not time to appropriate any money.

Alderman Anglace: I would like to speak in favor of this proposal. With the amount of State grants that we have right now and they are running close to the point where they could be lost, we are going to end up paying 54% of the costs and the State will end up paying 46%. That is a good deal and we should move in a positive way. There will be program improvements. We can always improve the field and we can always expand it. Many, many things can be made better, just as we did in the high school field and other fields. The Mayor deserves a lot of credit for keeping us moving in the right direction and keeping the Board of Education so they can offer good programs for our kids. Thank you very much.

Mayor Lauretti: I will respond to what I think is incorrect. This is not a State reimbursement item, like when you put a roof on a building, put up a building or do renovations to a building. This is not in that category. Secondly, this is a city-wide facility, not strictly for the Board of Education. We have been pushing hard for our youth programs to be able to access these facilities when school is not in sessions. This is particularly why we spent the money on the football field and the concessions stand for our youth programs. One of the main drivers in funding for our youth program is the concession stand. If they had to set up one stand for each individual sport, literally soccer, lacrosse, etc., it defeats the purpose. Quite honestly, today's parents are not doing that kind of work that they used to do 10-20 years ago. Parents used to bring grills from their house and set it up on the field and have a concession and generate money for the kids. These parents today don't do that. That is why we upgraded that facility.

Alderman Simonetti: I think the parents of this day do do a lot of things with the health regulations and concerns about having a very proper set up for a stand that works very well also.

Alderman Perry: I would like to add that the base price of \$1.39, say \$1.4, at a minimum maybe try to incorporate the conduit at a cost of 43.

Mayor Lauretti: That is our goal. I want to get the field started. We have three months before the beginning of the new fiscal year and hopefully we will be able to work sometime in the springtime when the schools are not using the fields and there isn't as much demand for the fields as that field will have to come out of service. We will be back revisiting this after July 1<sup>st</sup>.

Alderman Simonetti: Also, this company, FieldTurf, is already certified with the State of Connecticut so we don't have to look for other vendors.

Alderman Duncan: I want to make sure we are clear. We are approving the contract of \$1.3-1.4, the base, and then we will come back for alternates. Or are we approving – it does not specify what we are approving.

Mayor Lauretti: You are authorizing a contract to build the field. The base number for the field is \$1.3-1.4 with alternates. As I said, we will be back in July to revisit the alternates, whether it is another State grant or whether we have to take a different approach to the funding.

A voice vote was taken and motion passed unanimously (8-0).

## **5.2 PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE**

5.2.1 NO ITEMS

## **5.3 STREET COMMITTEE**

5.3.1 ACCEPTANCE OF GAMBLE PLACE

Alderman Simonetti MOVED, per the recommendation of the Street Committee and per Code of Ordinances Section 14-14, to accept the entire road and other public improvements at Gamble Place into Shelton's public road system, beginning at Long Hill Avenue and ending in a cul-de-sac.

Seconded by Alderman Perry.

No discussion.

A voice vote was taken and motion passed unanimously (8-0).

## **REPORT OF THE MAYOR**

Mayor Lauretti: I have no report.

## **REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT**

Alderman Anglace: I just want to report on my health issues to let you know that I am making progress and I will be back shortly. Thank you for your considerations.

**6– LEGISLATIVE – OLD**

6.1 ITEMS FROM PUBLIC HEARING

6.1 A.NO ITEMS

**7 – FINANCIAL BUSINESS – OLD**

7.1 NO ITEMS

**8 – FINANCIAL BUSINESS – NEW**

8.1 MARCH STATUTORY REFUNDS

Alderman Simonetti MOVED that the report of the Tax Collector relative to the refund of taxes for a total amount of \$3,350.20 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 Perry.

No discussion.

A voice vote was taken and motion passed unanimously (8-0).

*(Supporting documentation from the Tax Collector is on file with the BOA Clerk or Town Clerk's Office)*

8.2 FUNDING FOR PURCHASE OF UTILITY BODY FOR MAINTENANCE DEPT. TRUCK

Alderman Simonetti MOVED to appropriate an amount of \$15,745 for the purchase and installation of a utility body for Building Maintenance Department Truck #136 with funding to come from aldermanic bonding pursuant to Section 7.16 of the City Charter.

Seconded by Alderman Perry.

No discussion.

A voice vote was taken and motion passed unanimously (8-0).

8.3 DAVID & ALLISON MARRO - LICENSE AGREEMENT (WELLS PROPERTY)

Alderman Simonetti MOVED, pursuant to the license agreement dated June 8, 2023, to authorize the City to exercise its option to renew the License Agreement between the City of Shelton and Allison

Marro and David Marro for an additional one-year term, with the annual renewal period running from June 8, 2026 through June 7, 2027.

Further, authorize Mayor Mark A. Lauretti to execute any and all documents necessary to effectuate same.

Seconded by Alderman McKinnon.

No discussion.

A voice vote was taken and motion passed unanimously (8-0).

#### 8.4 FUNDING FOR ADMINISTRATIVE VEHICLE – WAIVER OF BID

Alderman Simonetti MOVED, per the recommendation of the Finance Director, to waive the bidding process for the trade-in purchase of an administrative vehicle in an amount of \$36,115 with funding to come from aldermanic bonding pursuant to Section 7.16 of the City Charter.

Seconded by Alderman McKinnon.

Discussion:

Mayor Lauretti: By way of background, this is the vehicle that I drive. It was determined that there was an engine replacement needed for this vehicle. This is a 2023 Yukon. It has 52,000 miles on it and over the last couple of years it has been burning oil and it is synthetic oil. It should not be burning any oil. I brought it back to the dealer, Daddario Buick GMC, and he contacted GMC and apparently they are having some issues with this engine. I don't know that there is a recall on it, but they did say they would replace the engine. The thought is that one of two things could happen. They would replace the engine and we would keep the vehicle and eventually it would go into service for other City departments, or trade the vehicle in now where you get a good trade value number. I think the trade value number they gave me was \$47,000 on it and not have to deal with this engine issue going forward. It may rear its head again. The vehicle does have 52,000 miles on it; it is going to start needing some things. It is just the nature of wear and tear on a vehicle so does it makes sense to trade it in now where you get a good trade in value because it is only three years old and move on to something else? I happen to like the vehicle, but you don't know what else is going to go wrong.

Alderman Duncan: What is the cost of the engine?

Mayor Lauretti: No idea, Daddario said that GM would replace it. Does that mean they are going to rebuild it or put in a new motor. I don't know the answer to that. My thought was trade it in and let someone else deal with the problem. As I mentioned there is 50,000 miles on the drive train, the shocks, brakes, and the vehicle itself. I just don't know. Those vehicles on average get 100,000-150,000 miles. That's why I thought I would put it on the Board's agenda for discussion to make a decision.

Alderman Anglace: I think the trade in is exceptional. I think we get rid of the problem because we don't know what else is going to go. This is not the first time a GMC has had an engine replacement problem. Best to get rid of it.

Alderman Simons: General Motors has over a billion dollars in recalls on that engine and the transmission goes right behind it. That is another problem they have with it. I am favor of getting rid of it.

A voice vote was taken and motion passed unanimously (8-0).

#### 8.5 FUNDING FOR A USED VAN FOR SHELTON ANIMAL CONTROL –WAIVER OF BID

Alderman Simonetti MOVED, per the recommendation of the Finance Director, to waive the bidding process for the purchase of a used van for Shelton Animal Control, in an amount of \$35,799 with funding to come from General Fund Surplus.

Seconded by Alderman Perry.

Discussion:

Mayor Lauretti: Why General Fund Surplus? Normally we would use aldermanic bonding for something like this. You could, but normally that is not what we do.

Alderman Perry MOVED to change the funding to come from aldermanic bonding instead of the General Fund Surplus.

Seconded by Alderman Simonetti.

No discussion.

A voice vote was taken and motion for the amendment was passed unanimously (8-0).

A voice vote was taken and motion as amended passed unanimously (8-0).

#### 8.6 ENDORSEMENT FOR CONGRESSIONAL COMMUNITY PROJECT FUNDING APPLICATION FOR POLICE DEPARTMENT COMMUNICATION SYSTEM

Alderman Simonetti MOVED Move to approve the following resolution:

Be it resolved, to hereby support the City of Shelton's application for Congressional Community Project Funding to fund the upgrade of the Police Department's Communication System in an amount of \$1.5 million.

Seconded by Alderman Perry.

Discussion:

Alderman Anglace: Absolutely essential.

Mayor Lauretti: I believe this also covers the Fire Department. It is a proposal to go on the State system. Does it Bruce? (I believe it is only for the Police Department).

Alderman McKinnon: Is this something we have discussed in the past?

Mayor Lauretti: There have always been a number of discussions about the communication systems for fire and police. It is well known and documented that there are some gaps with the system, particularly in the White Hills area. Fortunately for us we have been able to bridge those gaps. You get to the point in time where even the equipment that you are using becomes outdated and unserviceable and we are probably at that point now. That is one of the reasons that stimulates this request.

Alderman Lizotte: This will stop the gaps?

Mayor Lauretti: There are supposed to guarantee us 100% coverage.

A voice vote was taken and motion passed unanimously (8-0).

## **9 – LEGISLATIVE – NEW**

### 9.1 ITEMS TO PUBLIC HEARING

#### 9.1 NO ITEMS

### 9.2 RIPTON BROADBAND PRESENTATION (CIVITAS)

Danica Collins, Director of Operations Ripton Community Broadband/Civitas Representative

Thank you for having me. If you don't already know, Ripton Community Broadband is a new community internet provider that is based in Shelton and only serves Shelton. We started last year and our retail space on Howe Avenue, about a five minute walk away, opened last September. Since then, we have been focusing on a network roll out in Shelton, starting in the downtown area and expanding outward. I do have an update on the status of Ripton and a couple of proposals.

The quick update here is we have established our office and servers at 356 Howe Avenue which is the Riverwalk Place Building. We do have a locally based team in place. Any of our customers can come to the office at the retail space to either work or with questions or issues they have with the internet. That is something unique that I don't think most providers have. Something good about our service is that our deployments are fast. We have a wireless solution that is pretty cool technology that creates a fast appointment and does not require digging the way traditional fiber does. We are able to expand a lot faster than you normally would and with similar speeds. 1 gig upload and download is our current

standard speed. As I said our expansion is coming out from the 356 Howe and the Town Hall area, this whole downtown Shelton area. We have been able to make some dramatically positive increases with our customers. We have been able to provide interruption free education and access to healthcare resources. Our connections stay rock solid, even in the face of the recent snowstorms that happened. I moved from Tennessee into Shelton and that was a lot of snow for me. I am happy to see that our connections made it through all of that snow.

Something that I wanted the Board to be aware of is that we do have a close liaison with Shelton IT. Right now, that involves the director of IT, Dan Bednarsky. We are currently working on providing a Wi-Fi link to Fire House Echo Hose 6, I think, on Center Street and the Derby Shelton bridge to enable some initiatives and infrastructure there, for lack of a better word. We have also been supporting some community events, one of which was Shelton Day on October 5<sup>th</sup>. We provided complimentary Wi-Fi to all vendors there at the event to be enable their POS systems. On the 4<sup>th</sup> of July event for the fireworks, we created some arches where we collected a people count with anonymous sensors. Basically, they calculate the distance between the chin and shoulder which is unique for every person and that was able to determine exactly how many people came in and out. We were able to see valuable insight with what happened with the rain event – did a lot of people leave? The didn't, they stayed. How many people spiked around when the band arrived. That was generated and gave to the City for their review and it turns out it was helpful, so that was very good. About 4,700 attended was the number. We also have provided free Wi-Fi coverage to the Farmer's Market which is on Veterans Park green. That is free for anyone to use including vendors. When the Farmer's Market gets up and going, they will be able to use it.

I want to say overall things are going well. We are becoming more imbedded into the Shelton community.

Kellie Vazzano: We would like an update as to numbers with what the reception has been to the community as to what you have seen. I have heard some great stories from John as far as how our residents have received your program and the internet services that you are providing.

Danica Collins: We have had some great reception. Our current customers, including the people we serve at 356 Howe Avenue, which is the building itself and the apartments, have all mentioned a dramatic increase in their internet coverage. They are very satisfied with it. Those that have connected have reflected the same. They are going literally from buffering issues to being completely interruption free, blazing fast. It is not something you are normally able to get unless you have trenched fiber. The other thing we do offer is the fact that people local to Shelton can come see us. If they have issues out there at their home or their place of business, our team can be deployed straight away to go there. The response time is unusual.

Kellie Vazzano: That was the very exciting part you brought up that we were interested in.

Danica Collins: As we expand, we do want to offer free Wi-Fi to additional Shelton institutions. I know that various events happen on the green. We have Celebrate Shelton and the various food truck events.

We would welcome any kind of conversation about other events that could use free Wi-Fi and have vendors and things of that nature. We would welcome something along those lines.

As we have been embedding ourselves in the community, something we have noticed and observed is that there are mutual benefits if we merge Ripton and Shelton IT. Having worked with Shelton IT, we were able to gather this information. As of right now, IT resources and contingency in Shelton begins and ends with its director, Dan Bednarsky. Dan is an incredibly skilled individual that in the event he is indisposed or absent for something unavoidable, as we all are at some point, a lot of stress starts to mount on that point. We are thinking that by merging Ripton and Shelton IT our local team can help support Dan and his department with our additional resource and expertise, mitigating any downtime and things of that nature. Not only that, but merging Ripton and Shelton IT would reveal paths to recurring revenue streams and economic development, namely the ideal of Telecoms Pole rentals, etc. This would be something that Ripton would be responsible for designing, deploying and maintaining. It would not come at a cost of the City.

We are proposing that Shelton outsource its IT to Ripton at the same current cost that they have. Dan Bednarsky transfers to Ripton but remains the primary IT contact for Shelton. Ripton supplements Shelton IT with resources, back up and tech support. With Dan's Shelton knowledge, this will enable the pole rental revenues that can be seen. The benefits of partnership being there is continuity of IT support and reduced risk involving IT outages. Expanded technical resources enables pole revenue stream with no additional cost to Shelton. There is coordination with local infrastructure so you know what is going on basically because we are involved with Dan.

More on the recurring revenue – this would involve adding street poles on existing Shelton property to support major network carriers, such as AT&T and Verizon. This does create a revenue opportunity because the major network carriers can rent space on these poles on a monthly basis. Improved telecom infrastructure would increase the possibility of economic development and there is an estimated recurring revenue of \$2.4 million per year. Again, Ripton would design and implement the initiative and the poles. They do request a data backhaul, meaning our network. A major network carrier could not just put one of their devices on the pole and it would work. They do need our backhaul for it to work. We are a necessary part of that equation. The key point here about the poles being is that a town ordinance is needed as a protective measure for the City. It ensures carriers rent correctly and they all go into the right places as they are supposed to. A more detailed outline of this has been sent to the Finance Committee and that is something that Ripton leadership would be happy to discuss.

Mayor Lauretti: Do you have a date to meet with the Finance Committee?

Danica Collins: No, not yet.

Mayor Lauretti: That should probably be the first thing you should do is to get on their calendar.

Danica Collins: Thank you. Just the idea that rapid implementation does lead to a faster revenue path. The sample estimation of this possible revenue is \$200,000 a month, just multiplying factors. The faster it is implemented, the faster revenue can be captured. I am sure this is something I can share in the

Finance Committee meeting. I would welcome advice if there is someone on the Board that can enable us to bring this to conclusion.

Mayor Lauretti: I do agree with you that this does have merit which is why you are here today and that is why you are going to the Finance Committee. I was unaware of the revenue source that this could create, so that is absolutely worth the Board exploring. I don't know much about it so the Finance Committee will vet it. I do agree, and I have said for years, that we do need some type of redundant system in place, a back up for our IT because we currently have none. While we have survived all these years, it only takes one time. Thank you.

**10 - EXECUTIVE SESSION**

10.A REQUEST TO MOVE TO EXECUTIVE SESSION

10.1 NO ITEMS

ADJOURNMENT

Alderman McKinnon MOVED to adjourn the Board of Aldermen Meeting.

Seconded by Alderman Simonetti.

A voice vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously (8-0). Meeting adjourned at 6:45 pm.

Respectfully Submitted

*Donna Fonda*

Donna Fonda  
Acting Clerk, Board of Aldermen

DATE APPROVED \_\_\_\_\_

BY: \_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor Mark A. Lauretti