



BOARD OF ALDERMEN
CITY OF SHELTON
REGULAR FULL BOARD MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2025
SHELTON CITY HALL, 54 HILL STREET, SHELTON, CT
Live Streamed at www.cityofshelton.org

Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Lauretti called the regular Board of Aldermen meeting to order at 5:40 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 Zoom
Alderman Cris Balamaci – Present
Alderman Lorenzo Durante – Present via Zoom
Alderman Porter McKinnon – Present
Alderman Anthony Simonetti – Present
Alderman Bernie Simons – Present
Alderman Benjamin Perry – Present

Administration

Mayor Mark A. Lauretti - Present
Fran Teodosio, Corporation Counsel – Present via Zoom
Thomas Cotter, Assistant Corporation Counsel – Absent
Kellie Vazzano, Administrative Assistant to the Mayor - Present
Frances Freer, Administrative Assistant to the Mayor - Present
Paul Hiller, Finance Director – Present via Zoom

PUBLIC PORTION

Mayor Lauretti asked if anyone wished to address the board.

Jerry Bloom
24 Fairfield Avenue, Shelton, CT

You are skipping the role call again? I see Riverside Park is still unpaved. I have been talking about it for the past almost 2 years now. I am wondering if we are going to get that done this year? Also have they completed the new flag for the Town of Shelton? If so, is it observable somewhere? (Mayor

Lauretti: It is on the agenda for tonight). I am glad to see you cleared out all the furniture. We have all seen in the past few weeks what executive orders can do. I have asked you, Mayor Lauretti, if you would do an executive order to protect Shelton from the YouTube frauditors who are roaming the country, making videos, harassing people, etc., and you have not. I have also asked that you at least post a sign here at City Hall informing everyone that this is a limited public forum and that has not been done either. LIA is at it again, AKA Sean Paul Reyes, and AssElmo. They have a new video out. Go on YouTube, John Ligato Show, "Reyes Followers Accused of Harassing Public Officials". It is only 12 minutes long. Very informative. By the way, Sean Paul Reyes is a felon, did four years for armed robbery. He is making a killing on his YouTube channel. He has a trial coming up. He is looking at a year in jail. That's good news. You may have all received these flyers from our Representative Perillo whose ambition is now taking him to run for State Senate. I have been trying to contact him, leaving messages on his personal cell phone and he is ignoring me again. He is a bit arrogant since he ran unopposed last year and was re-elected. He has become quite ambitious. Our illegal alien problem here in Connecticut, which has hundreds of thousands of illegal aliens here in the State, is being ignored up in Hartford. Around the country you have seen the new Attorney General filing lawsuits against Chicago, Illinois and New York trying to get things done. Everyone is not on board unfortunately. There are several ways to fix that if you look at the size of the problem. As we know, or have been told, in the past four years, up to 12,000,000 illegal aliens have entered the country illegally. To remove them would require, if you do the math, 3,000,000 a year in the next four years and that's not counting the ones that have arrived prior to. This is almost unachievable at the current level of involvement, but is needed and is all hands on deck. I would even go as far as saying bounties on these people. In lieu of that, I would also ask that what we need is martial law. We have been told over the past decades, if you see something, say something. However, you can't do that because that would be what? Racial profiling which is the courts have forbidden. They want us to remain deaf, dumb and blind to what we are seeing around us. The solution to that is ask everyone for your papers please. I know that is extraordinary radical, but these are extraordinary times.

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

PRESENTATION FROM DAVE CAPPELLETTI of CLERMONT ASSOCIATES REGARDING ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT, CITY OF SHELTON, JUNE 30, 2024

For those who do not know who I am, I am Dave Cappelletti from Clermont Associates. I am the auditor for the City of Shelton. What we will do is go through a brief overview of the financial statements and then any specific areas to look at and questions and we will go over those in more detail.

I usually start with Exhibit F, Page 10. What this shows is that the General Fund Budget and Actual Report shows your revenues/expenses. Your revenues under expenditures by \$3.6 million. You were able to fund that through your prior year's surpluses which leaves you down to \$311,000 in unassigned fund balance. That also includes \$1.8 million that you have put aside for settlement for next year. Any specific questions in any line items in the General Fund budget?

Alderman Anglace: Dave, revenues over (under) expenditures, am I reading this correctly, I am trying to judge how well we managed our budget versus expenditures. We ended up with a deficit of \$3,649,377.

Dave Cappelletti: Correct. That is your operating revenues over your operating expenses. Your revenues had favorable collections after your final adjustments. You were actually able to save \$2.6 million in some cost-cutting activities. In the end it was your revenues collected compared to the expenditures spent. There was a \$3.6 million deficit.

Alderman Anglace: Just for discussion for people who ask me questions, that \$3.6 million deficit was generated primarily because of two things – Special Education deficit and Healthcare Costs.

Dave Cappelletti: Your two main areas of concern here – the Special Education costs we are seeing across the State. Specific reasons we can't really determine, but we have found that in the majority of our audits this year, the Special Education costs have gone through which has caused deficits in the Board of Education.

Alderman Anglace: Our Connecticut legislature is going to address that this year. Instead of it being 69% reimbursement for this year, it will be 61% next year is what I hear. They are going in the wrong direction.

Dave Cappelletti: It is not one specific item that is causing these deficits, but it is happening across the State.

Alderman Simonetti: Is that the same with Healthcare costs in most cities also?

Dave Cappelletti: Correct. Your Healthcare costs deficits started last year and continued into the beginning of this year. Now we are seeing that trend start this year going into next year as well.

Mayor Lauretti: The Healthcare costs are not going in the wrong direction. This year they are going in the right direction, this fiscal year. For the last two years they were going in the wrong direction and that was a trend across the State just like the Special Education costs was a trend going across the State.

Dave Cappelletti: Yes. What I was talking about was the trends across the State, not just Shelton. Shelton has made some corrections in the latter part of last year into this year, but in the rest of the State we are still seeing trends of these being increased. I think the trend probably started here quicker than in other areas, but now we are seeing it everywhere.

Please turn to Page 8, Exhibit D. This exhibit shows the City as a whole. The first column is the General Fund which we just spoke about. The second column is your Capital Projects where you run most of your bond programs. You still have the American Recovery activity you are spending through. The Plumb Library, we have to report now as a major program because they have a significant amount of investments on hand. The Other Governmental Funds which are smaller funds and projects that we present in one column, but are in the back of the book separately.

Page 7, Exhibit C. This shows your assets, liabilities and fund balance. Again, the General Fund balance is \$2,265,000. Capital Projects, as we said is your remaining balance in bonding. You still have American Recovery Funds that you continually spend, that is the \$1.8 million. The Plumb Library, I said there were a significant amount of assets there. You can see the cash and investments. Again the Other Governmental Funds that are presented separately in the back in the schedules.

Alderman Simonetti: Could you explain internal service funds? \$7.2 million.

Dave Cappelletti: The Internal service funds is your Workers' Comp and medical. The majority of that deficit is something called incurred but not reported. Those are long-term liabilities that are not included in the funds of each individual fund balance, but we do add it in as a long-term liability.

Mayor Lauretti: You should also preface that by saying that is an estimate.

Dave Cappelletti: Correct. The actuaries give us that number based on actuarial assumptions in their calculations.

Mayor Lauretti: The look into their crystal ball and come up with this number. Something like that. People need to understand that this is a worse case scenario type of number that they put out there being that this could happen. The majority of the time it never happens.

Dave Cappelletti: That's correct. It also does not include the way the government reporting standards are as we have to report the liabilities, but not necessarily the assets. So, you may have recoveries in some of that portion as well. As I said, these are long-term obligations. You don't need current resources to fund these. That is why that are not reported in the fund balance.

One other thing that the Board typically asks me about is on Page 33. This is your debt outstanding. The debt outstanding is \$10,707,139 which is planned to be paid off in five years. It is still significantly low compared to other cities your size.

Mayor Lauretti: It is extremely low compared to the rest of the country. I think the majority of that \$10 million is the Clean Water Fund, or at least half of it anyway which gets retired in 2027.

Dave Cappelletti: Any other specific areas you want to discuss or point out?

Alderman Simonetti: Can you give us an overall of how we are doing compared to other cities? Are we hitting our mark as we normally do? How far are we above or below where we should be?

Dave Cappelletti: Typically, the City of Shelton has always run lean, have always given back most of the overpaid taxes. Comparatively you consciously provided a low General Fund balance which you are able to do with a strong growing Grand List. You are still significantly growing that Grand List which gives you some opportunities to pass the surplus on to the taxpayer. Overall, you are healthy in that respect. Again, you carry low debt. Your operating costs overall are significantly less than other towns

and cities your size. You tend to run your capital projects lean as well. Obviously, you can see that you are going to be paying off your debt in five years, which is only \$10 million. Any other questions? I just hit the points that are typically asked of the aldermen.

Mayor Lauretti: You would have to say from a 20,000-foot view, we look pretty good compared to the rest of the world. Right or wrong?

Dave Cappelletti: Yes. As an auditor we are always trying to improve. In general, like I said, you are running the City like you like to run it. One area that someone would look at would be the low General Fund balance, but you are able to take that risk because you have such a growing Grand List. It has always been the City's objective to return the money as quick as possible back to the tax payers. Other than that, you are able to quickly raise funds because you don't have extremely high operating expenses or capital expenses. With that it gives you a lot of opportunities to be in a very healthy situation.

Alderman Anglace: As I go forward, the revenue sources, you talk about the Grand List and it continues to grow and the development of the Mas property is right around the corner, so that is another plus. How are we doing – can you comment on how we are doing as a community – are people paying their taxes? Is our tax collection rate a good one? How much money in uncollected taxes do we have?

Dave Cappelletti: Your tax collection historically has always been over 98%. Again, it has been favorable.

Alderman Anglace: My calculation, if it is right, shows a tax collection rate of 99.9%. On second thought, that is not right.

Dave Cappelletti: There are a couple of different ways to calculate this. Because you have a growing Grand List, by the time you make the budget, you are given one number, by the time during the fiscal year you have construction which is completed, so there are a lot of adjustments. It just so happens that in Shelton your adjustments are always increased. You might be taking the number that you originally thought it was compared to what you received, but you are not taking into consideration all the construction in between.

Alderman Anglace: This is an area that I think the people would like to know, how are we doing? I think they have a right to know. As citizens, we are good citizens and we pay our taxes. 98% is an excellent tax collection rate given the status of the economy and the costs. If we have a lot of property taxes unpaid, we have to go after them. Is there a lot of money out there that we should be pursuing?

Dave Cappelletti: On Page 93 it shows the outstanding collections by year. Just for an example, your original levy was \$105,939,000. Like I said you had several increases during the year. With that there was a collection of \$105,308,000, but also left \$1.2 million uncollected. Again, remember of the \$1.2 uncollected, you are looking at a total levy of \$105 million. I would like to add that some tax collections are just not collectable. An example would be motor vehicle when someone moves out of town during the year. It is difficult for the tax collector to find and assess and whether that person is willing to pay those taxes. Some are just able to be collected. Those are probably provided to you during the

suspense. The suspense is a list that the tax collector brings to you saying I can't collect these. The majority of them is motor vehicle. Real estate is overall collectable.

Mayor Lauretti: Okay, I think we are good. We do have some items to add to the agenda.

Alderman Anglace MOVED to add to tonight's agenda:

5.1.2 SELECTION OF OFFICIAL CITY OF SHELTON FLAG – SURVEY, ADVERTISING AND COSTS

10.2 LINDA MEHAYLO V. DANIEL LORIS, ET AL

Seconded by Alderman Simonetti.

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

MINUTES FOR APPROVAL

1. MINUTES FOR APPROVAL

1.1 BOARD OF ALDERMEN REGULAR MEETING – JANUARY 9, 2025

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

Alderman Anglace MOVED to waive the reading and approve the minutes of the Regular Board of Aldermen Meeting Minutes of January 9, 2025.

Seconded by Alderman Balamaci.

No discussion.

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

5.1 FINANCE COMMITTEE

5.1.1 FUNDING FOR MUNICIPAL REVALUATION SERVICE

Alderman Anglace MOVED, per the recommendation of the Finance Committee, to appropriate an amount of \$250,000 for the 2025 Municipal Revaluation Services with funding to come from aldermanic bonding pursuant to Section 7.16 of the City Charter

Seconded by Alderman Balamaci.

No discussion.

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

5.1.2 SELECTION OF OFFICIAL CITY OF SHELTON FLAG – SURVEY, ADVERTISING AND COSTS

Alderman Simonetti MOVED, per the recommendation of the Finance Committee, to approve the Shelton Flag Survey recommended by the Flag Committee, and proceed to the survey of residents as described in the January 9, 2025 full Board of Aldermen Meeting Minutes.

Further, submit such survey results to the Board of Aldermen for a final flag selection vote and to provide funding for the initial flag purchase, both of which were outlined in the January 9, 2025 meeting by the Flag Committee.

Seconded by Alderman Balamaci.

Discussion:

Mayor Lauretti: How about a clarification for discussion purposes. Are we making an appropriation tonight?

Alderman McKinnon: We are moving to go forward with the survey to the public and then come back to the Board with the recommendation of the design to vote on and the funding for the production.

Mayor Lauretti: You don't need any money for the public survey?

Alderman McKinnon: No. That will be done on the website, all digital. We are not doing any mailings.

Mayor Lauretti: I am trying to understand how you are going to do it digitally. How do we reach every individual home if that is what the goal is? If that is not what the goal is then okay.

Alderman Simonetti: There will be a PSA (Public Service Announcement) in the paper.

Alderman McKinnon: My understanding is there is going to be a pop-up window on the website when people go to the City of Shelton website. A pop-up window to participate in the survey. There is also going to be a notice in the newspaper. We felt that doing the printing and a mailing of some sort of flyer to the city residents would have been too expensive to take on.

Mayor Lauretti: I am trying to understand that unless people go to the website they are not going to know.

Alderman McKinnon: Other flyers will be in windows of businesses, advertising, putting out the QR codes that people can scan with their phones and go to the website to vote and the newspaper.

Mayor Lauretti: That costs money, probably the most expensive thing.

Alderman Simonetti: Articles and PSAs. Library, Board of Education.

Alderman Anglace: One of the questions that the Finance Committee addressed was, the first issue is should we or should we not have a flag. If they vote not to have a flag, it is over. If they vote they want a flag, it will come back to us and at that point we will figure out the funding, how much it is going to cost and where the money is coming from.

Alderman Balamaci: I thought that Porter had mentioned there was going to be a banner on the tax bills?

Alderman McKinnon: We had discussed that, but the timing is off.

Mayor Lauretti: You'd have to shoot for the July 1st mailing, which you can do. There is no immediacy.

Alderman McKinnon: Only time restriction is we wanted to unveil it for Shelton Day which is the first Sunday of October. If we could have time enough for the survey beginning in early July through early August and have time to manufacture, not sure of the timing of something like that, for October. I think it should be possible.

Alderman Anglace: With the amount of discussion and notoriety taking place with this flag business so far, I don't think we will have any trouble. The people will get involved. We don't have to have 100% involvement. Those that take an interest and participate will give us their views and the Board of Aldermen will then take their views to finalize what we are going to do.

Mayor Lauretti: You will know how successful you are when you start to tally all the contacts off the website.

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 NO ITEMS

REPORT OF THE MAYOR

No Report

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

No Report.

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 FEBRUARY STATUTORY REFUNDS

Alderman Anglace MOVED that the report of the Tax Collector relative to the refund of taxes for a total amount of \$1,095.07 be approved and that the Finance Director be directed to make payments in accordance with the certified list received from the Tax Collector with funds to come from the Statutory Refunds Account 001-0000-311.13.00.

Seconded by Alderman Simonetti.

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 EMERGENCY TREE WORK AT BOOTH HILL SCHOOL

Alderman Anglace MOVED to appropriate an amount of \$6,400 for emergency tree work services at Booth Hill School with funding to come from aldermanic bonding pursuant to Section 7.16 of the city Charter.

Seconded by Alderman Balamaci.

Discussion:

Mayor Lauretti: What was the emergency?

Alderman Anglace: I don't know, it wasn't on here. It said remove all trees along the right fence line hanging over the neighbor's property.

Mayor Lauretti: How is it an emergency?

Alderman Simonetti: It said it posed an immediate danger to the home.

Alderman Simons: Is the tree dead?

Mayor Lauretti: That's speculation.

Alderman Simonetti: It said immediate hazard to the neighbors on the fence line, see attached proposal.

Alderman Balamaci: Did we get photos?

Alderman Simonetti: Locust trees along the fence line.

Mayor Lauretti: We are constantly telling them that things need to be bid and it should be bid.

Alderman Simonetti: Remove dead and declining tulip trees further back on same fence line. Remove tulip log hanging over same fence line.

Mayor Lauretti: If they are dying, it usually takes a few years for them to die and decay and then they will fall. Again, I'm trying to understand what the emergency is here, why would we do this? I can't tell you how many times I had to stop City Department Heads from doing that.

Alderman Simonetti: It just happened on the 20th of January.

Alderman Balamaci: I'm sure they took pictures.

Alderman Simonetti: The work has been done. 1/23 they did it. John Calhoun didn't contact you or anybody else? Mr. Saranich didn't contact you?

Mayor Lauretti: No. I don't know why they didn't just pay for it out of their budget. Why are they asking for us to pay for it? I would recommend that we take no action at this point and they can answer some questions.

Alderman Anglace: In the comments, remove all trees and consider an immediate hazard to the neighbors on the fence line.

Mayor Lauretti: Again John, that is not a situation that has evolved overnight unless a major storm came through.

Alderman Anglace: Obviously, what is in question here is the judgment factor at the Board of Education relative to this matter. We have, on the City side, considerably more experience dealing with and it would appear we want more information, more documentation if possible.

Alderman Simons: We have a tree warden that could have gone out there and assessed it.

Mayor Lauretti: I have no idea. This is the first I am seeing it.

Alderman Simonetti MOVED to table this item for further questioning/clarification.

Alderman Balamaci: I was under the impression that we had instructed Mr. Calhoun going forward that he had to go through and vet things when something like this arises with the Mayor's office before he could do anything.

Mayor Lauretti: Why is he asking us to fund \$6,000? There is a motion to table.

Seconded by Alderman Balamaci.

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

8.3 STATE OF CT SMALL TOWN ECONOMIC ASSISTANT PROGRAM (STEAP) GRANT APPLICATION – PUBLIC FACILITY & RECREATIONAL ENHANCEMENTS

Alderman Anglace MOVED to approve the following resolution:

Be it resolved, that Mayor Mark A. Lauretti be, and hereby is, authorized to accept, on behalf of the City of Shelton, a 2025 Connecticut STEAP Grant in the amount of \$1,000,000 for Public Facility and Recreational Enhancements; and

Further be it resolved, the Board of Aldermen of the City of Shelton authorize a 20% match of \$200,000, and

Further be it resolved, that Mayor Mark A. Lauretti is hereby authorized to enter into and execute any and all agreements, contracts, and documents necessary to obtain said 2025 STEAP Grant with the State of Connecticut.

Seconded by Alderman Balamaci.

Discussion:

Alderman Anglace: The State of Connecticut does not care where our money is coming from as long as we agree to match it 20%.

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

9 – LEGISLATIVE – NEW

9.1 ITEMS TO PUBLIC HEARING

9.1 NO ITEMS

10 - EXECUTIVE SESSION

10.A. REQUEST TO MOVE TO EXECUTIVE SESSION

10.1 NO ITEMS

Mayor Lauretti: At this time I am going to entertain a motion to go into Executive Session and ask that Corporation Counsel and the Administrative Assistants join us.

Alderman Anglace MOVED to go into Executive Session. Seconded by Alderman Simonetti.

MOVED to go into Executive Session at 6:25 pm.

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

Mayor Lauretti: At this time, I will entertain a motion to end Executive Session.

Alderman Anglace MOVED to end Executive Session. Seconded by Alderman Simonetti.

Executive Session ended at 6:35 pm.

Mayor Lauretti: Let the record reflect that no votes were taken in the Executive Session.

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

10.2 LINDA MEHAYLO V. DANIEL LORIS, ET AL

Alderman Anglace MOVED that the City accepts the settlement as discussed in Executive Session.

Seconded by Alderman Simonetti.

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

ADJOURNMENT

Alderman Anglace 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 6:40 pm.

Respectfully Submitted

Donna Fonda

Donna Fonda
Acting Clerk, Board of Aldermen

DATE APPROVED _____ BY: _____
Mayor Mark A. Lauretti