



Mayor Mark A. Lauretti, City of Shelton
Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Budget Presentation to the
Board of Aldermen
And
Board of Apportionment and Taxation
Thursday, March 20, 2025 at 5:30 p.m.

Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance

John Boyko called the Special Meeting of the Board of Aldermen and Board of Apportionment and Taxation 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

Board of Aldermen

Alderman John F. Anglace, Jr., President – Present
Alderman Eric McPherson, Vice President – Present
Alderman Cris Balamaci – Present
Alderman Lorenzo Durante – Present
Alderman Porter McKinnon – Present
Alderman Anthony Simonetti – Present
Alderman Bernie Simons – Present
Alderman Benjamin Perry – Present

Board of Apportionment and Taxation

John Boyko – Present
John A. Belden – Present
Wayne Bragg – Present
Joseph Knapik – Present
Joanna Carloni – Absent
Greta Jacobsen – Absent

Administration

Mayor Mark A. Lauretti
Fran Teodosio, Corporation Counsel
Kellie Vazzano, Administrative Assistant to the Mayor
Frances Freer, Administrative Assistant to the Mayor

Mayor Mark A. Lauretti

City of Shelton

Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Budget Presentation to the Members of
The Board of Aldermen and Board of Apportionment and Taxation

I will make this as short and painless as possible. Good evening everyone, members of the Board of Aldermen, members of the Board of Apportionment and Taxation, members of the Board of Education, parents, families and friends and City employees.

With the 34th year of making the budget presentation you would think it would become routine. There is nothing routine in America anymore, unfortunately. I will say from the city standpoint that things are very well and on the city side of the budget, there are minimal increases as there are year after year, mostly contractual and most of which you are familiar with. However, in the infinite wisdom of the State legislature here in Connecticut, over the summer months, unbeknownst to most of us, they had changed the way we tax automobiles in the state. I have touched upon this a little bit at the Board of Aldermen meeting last week. For those of you who are not familiar with it, they eliminated receipt of taxes on automobiles. When grand lists were coming in back in February, everybody's grand list was going down. In fact, the City of Shelton saw a half percent decrease in the grand list. I went to our assessor and said please explain this to me. This is a first in 34 years and just unordinary. He then explained the law to me. Apparently, there has been a lot of outcry from elected officials around the state and the legislature reversed course on this and did allow a portion of automobiles to be taxed. Nonetheless, it does affect our grand list and everybody else's in the State of Connecticut. We are not seeing the kind of gain and growth that we have over the years. That creates a shift and a tax burden. Hartford and Washington do things that are unbeknownst to most people and what did they think was going to happen? When you eliminate something completely, you create a void. The shift has to go somewhere and it goes to the personal property taxpayers. That is what is happening in this situation. Fortunately, it is not happening at the magnitude thought when they originally passed the legislation. I bring this to your attention because it is important. They do this with education mandates and municipal mandates. They say here is what you need to do and they don't provide any funding for it. They never take the opportunity to evaluate the workmanship and the success or failure of any of this legislation. So, in this state when the legislation goes on the books, it stays there. It never goes away and that is sad because it creates a lot of problems for municipalities. It creates an unclear path for people to do things because there is always a statute that someone can say, oh did you do this or did you do that? I have always called this the game of "I gotcha" when it comes out of Hartford. That is really unfair because we at the local level, particularly the City of Shelton, we do what we are supposed to do. We get results far beyond anybody, far beyond anybody. That is why we have consistent and steady growth to our grand list, to our corporate structure and for people just wanting to be here. You don't need to believe what I am saying. Do a little research, talk to people that live outside our borders. They will give you the scenario. People say, 'I come to Shelton for dinner'. Who said that 20 years ago? We have a variety of different restaurant establishments for people of all ages and for people to select. We never had a national pharmacy in the city until a few years ago and now we have three of them.

When you think about the changes that have occurred, there is a reason that people are gravitating towards our city. There is a reason why the Planning & Zoning Commission meets three times a month. Unheard of in the state. Unheard of. I'm not here to tell you that it is all good because it does create some problems, especially with the legislation for affordable housing. It is problematic, not only for Shelton, but for the entire state. It may be well intended to provide some affordability for people at the lower end of the economic scale, but there is another way to do it instead of just allowing people to plop it down anywhere. These are some of the challenges that we, at the local level, have to deal with on a regular basis.

I would just direct people's attention to what goes on in Hartford. At budget time people like to come out and complain to us if they don't like how things were funded. I would tell you, members of the Board of A&T and Board of Aldermen, refer them to the state legislature. They created the issue. You shouldn't stay here and get beat up unfairly by anybody.

With that said, the budget that I am proposing for Fiscal Year 2026, based on current revenue and expenditure levels, \$139,779,547 will result in a mill rate of 18.57 which represents about a half a mill decrease off of the current mill rate which is 19.18. As always, I remind everyone that the Shelton budget process culminates with the adoption of a budget by the Board of Aldermen at the end of May. There certainly will be some changes that will be necessary. As far as I can see right now, it shouldn't be anything substantial or radical, but always understand that there are certain things that are not available to us today when this budget gets presented, that gets changed when the State legislature finalizes their budget and the municipalities understand what they get or what they don't get.

With that, I am going to close my remarks and wish you well. Thank you.

Adjournment

John Belden MOVED to adjourn. Seconded by Joseph Knapik.

A voice vote was taken and motion passed unanimously.

Meeting was adjourned at 5:40 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted

Donna Fonda

Donna Fonda
Acting Clerk, Board of Aldermen

DATE APPROVED _____ BY: _____
Mayor Mark A. Lauretti