



BOARD OF ALDERMEN  
SHELTON, CONNECTICUT  
SPECIAL VIRTUAL  
BOARD OF ALDERMEN MEETING MINUTES  
THURSDAY, JUNE 11, 2020

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**Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance**

Mayor Mark Lauretti called the Special Virtual Meeting of the Board of Aldermen to order in the Auditorium at Shelton City Hall at 11:45 a.m. 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 David Gidwani- Present via phone

Alderman Stanley Kudej- Present

Alderman Noreen McGorty- Present via phone

Alderman Anthony Simonetti- Present

Alderman Bernie Simons- Present via phone

**Administration**

Mayor Mark A. Lauretti – Present (*departed meeting at 12:19 p.m.*)

Fran Teodosio, Corporation Counsel – Present via phone at 12:00 noon

Paul Hiller, Director of Finance - Present

1. MINUTES FOR APPROVAL

Alderman Anglace MOVED to waive the reading and approve the following meeting minutes:

1.1 SPECIAL VIRTUAL MEETING – MAY 14, 2020

SECONDED by Alderman McPherson.

A voice vote was taken and the motion passed 8-0.

Alderman Anglace MOVED to waive the reading and approve the following meeting minutes:

1.2 SPECIAL VIRTUAL MEETING – JUNE 5, 2020

SECONDED by Alderman Simonetti.

A voice vote was taken and the motion passed 8-0.

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

Mayor Lauretti: Dan, did you have something you wanted to say with respect to the minutes?

**Daniel Bednarsky, IT Director, City of Shelton**

Good Morning Mayor and members of the Board of Aldermen.

I would like to address an issue that arose concerning the virtual meeting of the Board of Aldermen on Friday June 5, 2020. The issue in question pertained to one Aldermen's claims that "someone at City Hall" disconnected him from the virtual meeting before he could cast his vote on the adoption of the proposed budget.

There are several issues here:

1. There are several departments at city hall that this alderman could have immediately contacted regarding his issue, including the Mayor's Office, the Clerk of the Board of Aldermen or IT, to ask what may have happened. This option was not used.

2. Instead, he took to social media claiming that someone had disconnected him. Well, I assure you that this is not the case. He was connected throughout the entire meeting without issue. There is no way I could have known who was who on the caller list, as it only displays the last 3 digits of the caller's phone number. Without knowing what number each alderman had called in from, which I assure I did not, I could not have disconnected, muted or transferred the call to the waiting room.

Rather than immediately contacting someone via text/cell phone who was present in the meeting to notify us of the disconnect, in which case we could have paused the vote and waited for him to reconnect, he just waited a few minutes and attempted to call back in. At that time, the meeting had already been adjourned which is why it would not let him reconnect. It is very concerning that an Aldermen for the City of Shelton would take to social media, and make accusations that are completely false and baseless and have absolutely no evidence or truth to support such a claim.

Even though I was not named on the social media post, it is common knowledge that I was the one who was operating the equipment and controlling the virtual portion of the meeting, and therefore I feel personally attacked by these comments. I have provided many years of service to the city as the IT director and have always conducted business with the upmost dignity and professionalism. I have worked very hard to establish and maintain a reputation and would never do something like this that would jeopardize it. I am extremely hurt and disappointed by these baseless accusations, which is why I wanted to address this issue directly.

In a world of technology and cellular communications, we rely on our cell carriers to provide excellent service without interruption. This is not always the case. If anyone here claims that they have never experienced a dropped call while on their cell phone I will tell them they are either lying or do not use their phone very often in multiple locations. Again, I assure you that nothing was done from City Hall to cause this. I thank you for your time.

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2. SIDEWALK REIMBURSEMENT REQUEST – HOWE AVENUE, 42  
CANAL STREET

Alderman Anglace MOVED to approve the sidewalk reimbursement in an amount of \$62,537.40 made payable to Canal Street Properties II, LLC, Attn: Alicia Orkisz, 42 Canal Street, Shelton, CT for the repair of the sidewalk at Howe Avenue, 42 Canal Street per Ordinance #877 (Section 14-9 of the Code of Ordinances) with funding to come from Aldermanic Bonding pursuant to Section 7.16 of the City Charter.

SECONDED by Alderman Simonetti

Alderman McPherson: Mr. Mayor, I drive by there every day and I just want to say that they have done an amazing job. It looks fantastic.

A voice vote was taken and the motion passed 8-0.

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### 3. COMCAST LEASE AT 216 HUNTINGTON STREET

Alderman Anglace MOVED to approve the extension to the lease between the City of Shelton and Comcast for the building at 216 Huntington Street.

Further authorize Mayor Mark A. Lauretti to sign any and all documents necessary to effectuate said agreement.

SECONDED by Alderman McPherson.

Alderman Anglace: This seems to be bringing a nice chunk of change for the city. Ten years we have been doing this now.

A voice vote was taken and the motion passed 8-0.

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### 4. 2020 NEIGHBORHOOD ASSISTANCE TAX CREDIT

Alderman Anglace MOVED to approve the proposals for the Neighborhood Assistance Tax Credit Program as submitted by the Community Development Director and authorize the proposals to be submitted to the State of Connecticut Department of Revenue Services:

- |  |          |
|--|----------|
| 1. Shelton Economic Development Corporation        | \$15,000 |
| 2. Boys & Girls Club of the Lower Naugatuck Valley | \$50,000 |
| 3. Junior Achievement of Western Connecticut, Inc. | \$25,000 |
| 4. Housatonic Council, Boy Scouts of America       | \$ 2,000 |

SECONDED by Alderman Kudej.

Mayor Lauretti: Just for the record, this is something we do every year and as you can see it's administered by the Community Development Director.

A voice vote was taken and the motion passed 8-0.

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## 5. FUNDING FOR COVID-19 MODIFICATIONS AT CITY HALL

Alderman Anglace MOVED to approve funding in an amount of \$10,000 for COVID-19 related modifications at City Hall with funding to come from General Fund Surplus to be reimbursed by the FEMA Grant.

SECONDED by Alderman McGorty.

Alderman Gidwani: Mr. Mayor I have a question. Do we have any idea when City Hall will be open for regular business?

Mayor Lauretti: City Hall has never closed for regular business. We've been open.

Alderman Gidwani: I mean when people can come in and they don't need to make a phone call or an appointment?

Mayor Lauretti: For the most part, they can access City Hall from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Some departments require appointments, others do not depending on the foot traffic and the volume of activity in that particular office.

Alderman Gidwani: Thank you.

Mayor Lauretti: Paul, I was questioning why General Fund Surplus? I know it's a reimbursable item but I thought we would take it out of Contingency General?

Paul Hiller: That's fine.

Mayor Lauretti: We kind of want to leave the General Fund alone. I would entertain an amendment to that effect.

Alderman Anglace MOVED to amend the motion to approve the funding in an amount of \$10,000 for COVID-19 related modifications at City Hall with funding to come from Contingency General Account #001-9900-900.99-00 to be reimbursed by the FEMA Grant.

Mayor Lauretti: We will now vote to amend the motion.

Alderman Anglace: So moved.

Seconded by Alderman McPherson.

A voice vote was taken and the motion passed 8-0.

Mayor Lauretti: Now we will vote on the amended motion.

Alderman Anglace: So moved.

Seconded by Alderman McPherson.

A voice vote was taken and the motion passed 8-0.

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## 6. AFFORDABLE HOUSING PLAN TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM GRANT

Alderman Anglace MOVED to adopt the following resolution:

Whereas, pursuant to Connecticut General Statute Section Chapter 127C, the State of Connecticut Housing is authorized to extend financial assistance to a municipality; and

Whereas, it is desirable and in the public interest that the City of Shelton (hereinafter, the “Municipality”) make an application to the State for funding not to exceed \$15,000 in order to prepare and adopt an Affordable Housing Plan under the provisions of Connecticut General State 8-30j and to execute an Assistant Agreement for such purpose.

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the City of Shelton Board of Aldermen,

1. That it is cognizant of the conditions and prerequisites for the state financial assistance imposed by the Connecticut General Statutes, particularly CGS 8-30j; and
2. That the filing of applications for Connecticut Affordable Housing Plan by The City of Shelton is hereby approved and that Mayor Mark A. Lauretti is directed to execute and file such applications with the State of Connecticut Department of Housing, to provide such additional information, to execute such other documents as may be required, to execute an Assistance Agreement for State financial assistance if such an agreement is offered, to execute any amendments, decisions, and revisions thereto, and to act as the authorized representative of the City of Shelton.

Seconded by Alderman McPherson.

Mayor Lauretti: This is in respect to the City of Shelton having an Affordable Housing plan, which I think is appropriate.

A voice vote was taken and the motion passed 8-0.

*Attorney Fran Teodosio joined the meeting via phone at this time.*

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## 7. CORPORATION COUNSEL BILLING

Alderman Anglace MOVED to appropriate a total payment of \$2,581.25 to Corporation Counsel Teodosio Stanek, LLC, for services rendered per statements dated April 30 & May 31, 2020, with funds to come from the following Legal Services Accounts:

Professional Services -	001-1900-411.30-01	\$
Legal Fees -	001-1900-411.30-03	\$2,581.25
Foreclosure Fees -	001-1900-411.50-01	\$
Court Costs -	001-1900-411.80.84	\$

SECONDED by Alderman Kudej.

A voice vote was taken and the motion passed 8-0.

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## 8. PURCHASE OF A USED TRUCK – WAIVER OF BID

Alderman Anglace MOVED, per the recommendation of the Purchasing Agent, to waive the bidding process for the purchase of a used 2017 GMC Pick-up truck for the Parks & Recreation Department and the Highways & Bridges Department with funding in an amount of \$29,250 to come from aldermanic bonding pursuant to Section 7.16 of the City Charter.

SECONDED by Alderman Balamaci.

Mayor Lauretti: As you know, we just purchased a brand-new GMC vehicle that was almost twice the price. We have advocated over the years to buy used vehicles that have low miles, as this one does. I just want to check the purchase price because I don't think that's it. As I suspected, the purchase price is wrong. We will need a modification on the purchase price. The purchase price is \$25,950.

Alderman Anglace MOVED to amend the motion to reflect the purchase price from \$29,250 to \$25,950.

Seconded by Alderman Simonetti.

A voice vote was taken and the motion passed 8-0.

Mayor Lauretti: Now we will vote on the motion as amended.

Alderman Anglace: So moved.

Seconded by Alderman McPherson.

Mayor Lauretti: Just for the record, this is coming from Dadarrio Buick. We have bought, over the last couple years, a few vehicles, all GMC, it makes our lives so much easier in terms of maintenance if the dealer is required and when you buy a used vehicle like this, this dealer is good about standing behind anything that could go wrong in a short period of time.

A voice vote was taken and the motion passed 8-0.

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## 9. FINAL FUNDING FOR LANE STREET BRIDGE REPLACEMENT

Move to appropriate an amount of \$110,240 for the replacement of Lane Street Bridge over Means Brook with funding to come from aldermanic bonding pursuant to Section 7.16 of the City Charter with funding in an amount of \$393,00 to be received from grants from CT State Department of Transportation.

Seconded by Alderman McPherson.

Mayor Lauretti: This is an ongoing issue in terms of funding. You should know that the bridge is now completed and it will open up tomorrow.

A voice vote was taken and the motion passed 8-0.

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## 10. REPORT OF THE MAYOR

*No report.*

Mayor Lauretti: Alderman Anglace is there something you would like to say?

Alderman Anglace: I thought we would finish the agenda items and then go back to mine because I will be lengthy.

Mayor Lauretti: Okay we will go to Item 12 then and circle back to your report.

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## 12. APPOINTMENT TO WATER POLLUTION CONTROL AUTHORITY

Alderman Anglace MOVED to appoint the following member/members to the Water Pollution Control Authority effective immediately:

Mr. William Miko - U  
7 Brae Loch Way  
Shelton, CT 06484

SECONDED by Alderman Simonetti.

A voice vote was taken and the motion passed 8-0.

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Mayor Lauretti: Alderman Anglace will now make his comments.

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## 11. REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

I spent quite a bit of time putting this together in reply to a number of questions I have received.

**CONSTITUENTS ASK, WHY HAS THERE BEEN A CONTENTIOUS RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN YOUR BOARDS?** MY REPORT TO YOU IS NOT INTENDED TO LECTURE NOR CAST BLAME, IT IS INTENDED TO PUT THE ISSUES FACTUALLY IN PUBLIC VIEW SO THAT WE CLEAR THE AIR, BURY THE HATCHET AND COMMENCE WORKING TOGETHER FOR THE BENEFIT OF ALL THOSE WE ARE ELECTED TO SERVE.

TO UNDERSTAND OUR DISAGREEMENTS, ONE MUST EXAMINE A NUMBER OF FISCAL ISSUES OVER A PERIOD OF TIME.

### **LET'S START WITH THE SPED EXCESS COST SHARING PROBLEM**

Five weeks ago, I submitted to the local newspaper information explaining this in detail but it's never been published, so all the more reason for me to say it here today.

- BOE FILLED OUT THEIR ANNUAL BUDGET REVENUE STATEMENTS INDICATING SPED EXCESS COST MONEY WOULD REVERT TO THE CITY.

- THEN, CONTRARY TO THEIR WRITTEN STATEMENT, (This isn't the current board mind you, it's the previous boards.) THE BOE SPENT THE ANTICIPATED SPED EXCESS COST MONIES.
- THE AUDITOR CALLED THIS TO THE ATTENTION OF THE BOE BUT THEY MADE THE SAME MISTAKE (OR DID IT INTENTIONALLY) IN EACH OF THE NEXT TWO FISCAL YEARS.
- THE AUDITOR INCREASED THE SEVERITY OF HIS AUDIT COMMENTS EACH YEAR
- THE CITY STEPPED IN AND THE BOE RESPONDED WITH A LEGAL CHALLENGE CITING STATE STATUTE AS THEIR AUTHORITY AND EVEN FILED AN EHTICS COMPLAINT AGAINST THE CITY AUDITOR.
- SPENDING THE SPED EXCESS COST REIMBURSEMENT IS TANTAMOUNT TO SPENDING IN EXCESS OF THE BUDGET ALLOCATED TO THE BOE AND VIOLATES THE CITY CHARTER.
- GIVEN THE LACK OF PROGRESS TO RESOLVE THIS ISSUE, THE BOA VOTED TO SUE THE BOE. THAT CASE IS STILL PENDING.
- SUBSEQUENTLY, THE STATE OF CT, BOARD OF EDUCATION, OFFICE OF INTERNAL AUDIT (OIA) WAS ASSIGNED TO AUDIT THIS ISSUE.
- THE OIA CAME TO SHELTON AND AUDITED THE CITY AND BOE BOOKS
- THEY ISSUED A JANUARY, 2020 FINDING INDICATING THAT THE BOE SPED EXCESS COSTS WERE SUBMITTED TO THE CITY AS INCURRED AND PAID BY THE CITY ON A PAY AS YOU GO BASIS THEREFORE, THE BOE HAD NO SPED ACCOUNTS PAYABLE AT YEAR END AND THE ENTITY TO BE REIMBURSED WAS THE CITY.
- AS OF JUNE 30, 2019, THE CITY AUDITOR DETERMINED THAT THE BOE EXCEEDED THEIR ALLOCATED BUDGET OVER THOSE 3 YEARS BY \$3.1 MILLION WHICH THEY SPENT IN ERROR AND HE WROTE IF OFF AS A BAD DEBT.
- THE IMPACT ON CITY FINANCES WAS A REDUCTION OF \$3.1 MILLION OF CITY GENERAL FUND SURPLUS.
- DESPITE THE STATE BOE OIA FINDING, THERE ARE STILL BOE MEMBERS WHO CONTINUE TO CITE CGS AND CLAIM THEY ARE RIGHT AND THE BOE DID NOTHING WRONG. SUCH CONTINUED DENIALS IN THE FACE OF OVERWHELMING FINDING TO THE CONTRARY DOES NOTHING TO IMPROVE THE WORKING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN OUR BOARDS.
- THIS CONTENTIOUS ISSUE WILL NOT RESOLVE ITSELF. IF OUR BOARDS CANNOT ACCEPT THE FINDINGS, IT WILL BE RESOLVED IN

COURT AND, AS MUCH AS WE DO NOT WANT TO PURSUE THAT ROUTE, IT WILL BE PURSUED TO CONCLUSION.

Mayor Lauretti: Before you get into that, I just want to weigh in on the impact of that Excess Cost Sharing money that was incurred and the impact it has had on the City. For the benefit of the people who want to tell me that we don't fund education properly, and that it's not a fact that the pandemic has had an impact on our finances, which has had an impact on everyone's finances, more importantly what wasn't mentioned last week was the fact that when the fund balance was taken down to zero, it impacts our ability to pay bills. It's called cash flow. We have no fallback position. Now the pandemic shows up, and now the Governor through Executive Orders, wants to give people the opportunity to do late payments by the tune of 90 days with taxes. So, when you have no money in the bank, and then the tax collection period gets extended out 90 days, it will have an effect on our ability to pay bills. Even now, even the balloon payment for the BOE, that's coming up at the end of this month, is \$5.2 million. It has a severe impact on our finances and I need to impress this upon all these people who seem to think that we should just give a check to education because they said they need it or because they asked for it. That point really needs to be dwelled upon and impressed upon people that that's an issue, at least for the short term. The second point I want to make with respect to education funding, comes from the notion that they are being flat funded two years in a row which in my mind is not accurate. I know you want to touch upon the school bus contract, but the differential in the school bus contract for this year as opposed to what they paid through Durham in the previous year, is \$1.3 million. If the BOE did not have to incur that expense, they paid less the amount by \$1.3 million, which means that they have that money to spend on other items. You could look at it as money that was made available to them to be spent on other things.

### **NEXT IS THE BUS PROGRAM**

THE CITY PROPOSED A SIGNIFICANT BOE COST SAVING IDEA THAT WAS MET WITH DISDAIN BY THE PRIOR BOE.

- THE CITY HAD TO TAKE THE BOE TO COURT TO GET THEM TO LISTEN. THE STIPULATED COURT AGREEMENT SAVED THE BOE \$1.3 MILLION PER YEAR, GUARANTEED OVER THREE YEARS FOR A TOTAL OF \$3.9 MILLION (FY 2019, 2020 & 2021).
- **THE BOE BUDGET WAS NOT REDUCED!**
- THE PRIVATE BUS VENDOR WAS PAID \$4.4 MILLION AND THE CITY IS DOING IT FOR \$3.15 MILLION.

- AS THE CITY FISCAL AUTHORITY, THE BOA POINTED OUT THAT SAVING THE BOE \$1.3 MILLION PER YEAR IS TANTAMOUNT TO INCREASING THEIR BUDGET BY \$1.3 MILLION.
- THIS FACT IS STILL DENIED BY SOME BOE MEMBERS.
- BOE COST SAVINGS IDEAS DEVELOPED BY THE CITY ARE STILL NOT ACKNOWLEDGED BY SOME BOE MEMBERS.
- THE FISCAL AUTHORITY ASKS WHERE WAS THAT MONEY USED???
- IT WASN'T USED FOR CHROME BOOKS, TECHNOLOGY, STUDENT SUPPLIES. WAS IT USED FOR SALARIES?
- THE SAME FISCAL ISSUES ARISE EVERY YEAR AND THERE IS NO EVIDENCE OF COST-EFFECTIVE USE OF THE BOE FUNDS ALLOCATED. THE BOE MAY THINK SO BUT THEY HAVE MADE NO ATTEMPT TO COMMUNICATE THEIR POSITION WITH THE FISCAL AUTHORITY AND THAT LEAVES A VOID.
- THAT IS A MAJOR REASON WHY A CONTENTIOUS RELATIONSHIP EXISTS.

I ALSO POINT OUT THAT MAJOR BOE COST SAVINGS IDEAS HAVE PRETTY MUCH EMANATED FROM THE CITY. SOME HAVE WORKED WELL AND RESULTED IN SAVINGS. IN ADDITION, SOME NEW PROGRAMS SUCH AS PRE-K HAVE BEEN FUNDED BY THE CITY AND SHOW EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS.

WE ARE OPTOMISTIC THAT THE NEW BOE LEADERSHIP WILL BE MORE RECEPTIVE TO COST SAVINGS IDEAS OFFERED AND EVEN COME UP WITH SOME OF THEIR OWN. WE HOPE TO CREATE A CONTINUED RECEPTIVE BOA/BOE/MAYORAL LEADERSHIP RELATIONSHIP TO HELP IMPLEMENT COST SAVINGS, NEW STUDENT PROGRAMS AND TECHNOLOGY INNOVATIONS.

### **LET'S TALK TECHNOLOGY:**

LAST YEAR THE BOE DID NOT SUBMIT A SIX-YEAR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN. IT WAS CALLED TO THEIR ATTENTION AND THEY WERE GIVEN AN EXTRA MONTH TO SUBMIT IT. IT WAS NEVER RECEIVED. THERE WAS ONE SUBMITTED WITH THE BUDGET THIS YEAR.

- DURING BUDGET DISCUSSIONS BACK IN FY 2018 THE BOE WAS ASKED TO SUBMIT A CHROME BOOK STUDENT MEASUREMENT PLAN.
- THEY HAD NONE IN PLACE!
- GIVEN THE AMOUNT OF MONEY BEING SPENT ANNUALLY (\$250-350,000) THE CITY FISCAL AUTHORITY WANTED AN ASSURANCE THAT STUDENTS WERE BENEFITING FROM THIS INVESTMENT.
- THE FISCAL AUTHORITY ALSO WANTED TO RECONCILE THE ANNUAL COST EXPECTED AFTER FOUR YEARS IN THE PROGRAM.
- WE ANTICIPATED THAT THE ANNUAL AMOUNT WOULD DOUBLE AFTER FOUR YEARS, GIVEN USE BREAKDOWN AND THE NEED TO THEN POPULATE FIFTH GRADE AND REPLACE THE FRESHMEN CHROME BOOKS DUE TO OBSOLESCENCE.
- AGAIN, THE BOE HAS NO PLAN IN PLACE. THEY ASK FOR MONEY BUT FAIL TO CONVINCING THE FISCAL AUTHORITY OF THE RESULTS TO BE ACHIEVED. IT IS NOT REASONABLE NOR REALISTIC TO EXPECT FUNDING WITHOUT SUPPORTING AND CONVINCING DOCUMENTATION.
- HOWEVER, I WOULD NOTE THAT DESPITE THESE PERCEIVED SHORTCOMINGS THE BOA, BASED ON THE MAYOR'S RECOMMENDATION, DID APPROPRIATE 158,000 THIS YEAR FOR CHROME BOOKS.

HERE AGAIN, THE CITY HAS TAKEN THE INITIATIVE TO RECOMMEND TO THE CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION THE FORMATION OF A **CITYWIDE TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE**. HISTORICALLY, SUCH A COMMITTEE PROVIDED TECHNOLOGY OVERSIGHT THROUGHOUT OUR COMMUNITY AND MADE GREAT PROGRESS.

WE ARE HOPING TO HEAR THAT THE NEW BOE WILL LEND ITS SUPPORT TO THIS SUGGESTION AND WE BELIEVE THAT THERE ARE MANY WAYS FOR THE CITY TO BUILD UPON OUR JOINT AND COOPERATIVE TECHNOLOGY EFFORTS WITH OUR STUDENTS AND CONSTITUENTS BEING THE BENEFICIARIES.

### **STATE OF EMERGENCY IN AMERICA & CT**

- MOST WOULD AGREE THAT THE CT AND AMERICAN ECONOMY HAS BEEN HIT HARD. THE PRIVATE SECTOR HAS LOST SOME 25% IN THE

FIRST QUARTER OF 2020 AND 266,000 CT PEOPLE HAVE LOST THEIR JOBS.

- GIVEN THE IMPACT OF COVID-19, MANY LOCAL BUSINESSES AND INVESTORS ARE LOSING THEIR LIFETIME INVESTMENTS AND MANY MAY NOT REOPEN THEIR DOORS.
- THE STATE OF CT PROJECTS A REVENUE LOSS OF \$500 MILLION IN THIS FISCAL YEAR AND ANTICIPATES A \$1.4 BILLION REVENUE LOSS IN FY2021.
- THIS SAME SENERIO IS ECHOED THROUGHOUT EVERY STATE IN AMERICA.

**THERE CANNOT BE AN EMERGENCY EVERYWHERE EXCEPT AT THE SHELTON, CT BOE...**

**WE WELCOME THE NEW BOE AND FIND THEIR WILLINGNESS TO WORK WITH THE BOA TO BE REFRESHING AND HOPEFUL. THE "BUSINESS AS USUAL." ATTITUDE OF THE PAST MUST BE EXAMINED IF WE ARE TO SEE EDUCATION PROGRESS.**

- THE GOVERNOR HAS ORDERED THAT EVERYONE CONNECTED WITH EDUCATION BE FULLY COMPENSATED DURING THIS COVID-19 EMERGENCY ... FROM THE ADMINISTRATORS TO THE CUSTODIANS AND EVEN THOSE WHO PROVIDE TRANSPORTATION.
- WHAT MAKES EDUCATION BETTER THAN ALL OTHERS ... DOCTORS, NURSES AND MEDICAL STAFF ... WHO ALL WORKED WITHOUT GUARANTEES WHILE BEING EXPOSED TO THIS DEADLY VIRUS. HOSPITALS ARE LOSING THEIR SHIRTS. BUSINESSES ARE ON THE BRINK OF DISASTER. CITY AND STATE EMPLOYEES RECEIVED NO SPECIAL CONSIDRATION.
- AND, JUST AS SOON AS THIS EMERGENCY IS OVER, THIS SAME STATE GOVERNMENT WILL AGAIN RAISE OUR TAXES AND INSTITUTE TOLLS THROUGHOUT CONNECTICUT.
- ADD TO THIS THE TEACHERS CONTRACT SETTLEMENT WHICH CALLS FOR A WAGE INCREASE OF 3% WHEN THE C.O.L. IS AT 1.7%. NOW, THE BOE MUST FIND \$1 MILLION IN NEW MONEY TO COMPENSATE THE TEACHERS ... HOW DOES THAT HELP OUR STUDENTS?
- AS WITH THE STATE, CITY REVENUES ARE IN QUESTION FOR THE CURRENT FISCAL YEAR AND EXPECTED TO BE LOWER NEXT YEAR.

- THE CITY CANNOT ASK ITS TAXPAYERS TO PAY MORE WHEN SO MANY ARE UNEMPLOYED, SENIORS ARE STRUGGLING TO STAY IN THEIR HOMES AND BUSINESSES ARE CLOSING THEIR DOORS.
- THE BOE MUST EXAMINE CAREFULLY WHERE TO SPEND ITS MONEY. WHICH AREAS DESERVE THE HIGHER PRIORITIES ... STUDENT SUPPLIES, STUDENT ATHLETICS, STUDENT PROGRAMS AND STUDENT ACTIVITIES **OR** RAISES FOR ADMINISTRATORS, TEACHERS AND OTHERS.

*Mayor Lauretti departs the meeting at this time.*

### **ANOTHER ISSUE OF CONTENTION - CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS TO SCHOOL BUILDINGS AND FACILITIES**

- SOME \$4.4 MILLION IS DUE THE CITY FOR BOE COMPLETED CAPITAL PROJECT WORK.
- UNFORTUNATELY, ONLY THE BOE CAN APPLY TO THE STATE FOR THIS MONEY.
- THIS IS SHELTON TAXPAYER MONEY THAT HAS BEEN USED TO PAY FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS.
- PAST BOE ADMINISTRATIVE/FINANCIAL INCOMPETENCE IS ONE REASON FOR THIS ALMOST 10 YEAR REIMBURSEMENT DELAY IN RECEIVING THE \$4.4 MILLION DUE THE CITY.
- THE IMPACT OF THIS COUPLED WITH THE SPED EXCESS COST ISSUE HAS REDUCED THE ONCE COMFORTABLE CITY GENERAL FUND SURPLUS DOWN NEXT TO NOTHING CHALLENGING THE CITY FISCAL OUTLOOK TO SLOW SPENDING AND REGROW OUR ONCE HEALTHY RESERVES.
- **HOW CAN ANYONE EXPECT TO REGROW OUR CITY RESERVES AND INCREASE OUR SPENDING WHEN ALL THE PROJECTIONS FOR THIS AND NEXT YEAR ARE FOR LOWER REVENUES?**

### **SOME POSITIVES AND CAUTIONS**

- THE OIA HAS OUTLINED AREAS IN NEED OF CITY/BOE COOPERATION. SINCE DEC. 2019 WITH THE ARRIVAL OF RICK BELDEN, THOSE AREAS ARE BEING ADDRESSED BUT THEY ARE DAUNTING AND WE ALL AGREE, WILL TAKE TIME. ON THE CITY SIDE, WE WELCOME MR. BELDEN'S PROFESSIONALISM, EXPERIENCE AND KNOWLEDGE. HE HAS OUR SUPPORT AND COOPERATION. THAT IS A MAJOR STEP FORWARD.

- THE COVID-19 PANJDEMIC HAS MADE IT MORE DIFFICULT FOR OUR BOARDS TO MEET AND TALK IN PERSON BUT WE ARE WORKING TO FIND WAYS TO CIRCUMVENT THOSE CHALLENGES. THERE ARE POSITIVE SIGNS OF BETTER CITY/BOE COOPEERATION. I REMIND EVERYONE THAT WE CANNOT MAKE PROGRESS BASED ON CONSTANT COMPLAINING AND FINGER POINTING. EACH SIDE MUST TRY TO UNDERSTAND THE DIFFICULTIES FACING THE OTHER SIDE AND OFFER SUGGESTIONS TO ACHIEVE EVERYONE'S GOALS.
- HOPEFULLY, THIS EMERGENCY WILL BE OVER SOON AND THINGS WILL BE BACK TO NORMAL (WHATEVER THAT IS) BUT ACCORDING TO THE GOVERNOR AND STATE PLANNERS, THE ECONOMY MAY NOT RECOVER UNTIL WELL INTO NEXT YEAR. CONSEQUENTLY, WE MUST WATCH OUR FISCAL P'S AND Q'S.
- TO THOSE WHO CONTINUE TO REFER TO BOE BUDGET CUTS, LET ME POINT OUT THAT IF YOU GET THE SAME BUDGET YOU RECEIVED LAST YEAR AND THEN RECEIVE ALMOST \$1 MILLION MORE FROM STATE, FEDERAL AND OTHER SOURCES, WHY IS THERE A NEED TO CUT ANYTHING? IF YOU INSIST IN TALKING ABOUT "BUDGET CUTS" WE WILL MAKE LITTLE PROGRESS.
- WHAT HAPPENS YEAR AFTER YEAR IS THAT THE BOE REQUESTS A BUDGET BASED ON PERCEIVED NEEDS. WHEN REALITY SETS IN THEY REFER TO THEIR BUDGET REVISION AS "CUTS." IF YOU NEVER HAD IT, IT IS NOT A REDUCTION IN THE AMOUNT YOU ARE RECEIVING?
- THE REQUESTED BUDGET HAS TO BE REVISED (NOT CUT) TO MEET THE REALITIES OF THE MARKETPLACE. IT'S THAT SIMPLE!

## **WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?**

THE CITY HAS REACHED OUT TO THE NEW BOE LEADERSHIP AND OFFERED AN ONGOING CLOSER FISCAL REVIEW RELATIONSHIP SINCE WE ARE BOTH FACED WITH DAUNTING CHALLENGES.

THE BOE MUST ADOPT A COVID-19 BACK TO SCHOOL PLAN WITH UNCERTAINTY WHERE TECHNOLOGY MAY PLAY A MORE PROMINENT ROLE AND THE CITY IS FACED WITH REVENUE UNCERTAINTIES. THIS IS ANYTHING BUT A "BUSINESS AS USUAL" ATMOSPHERE AND IT IS GOING TO TAKE A LOT OF CHANGE AND UNDERSTANDING ON BOTH SIDES TO WEATHER THE STORM. OUR FIRST STEP IS TO CREATE A LEADERSHIP WORKING/TALKING RELATIONSHIP!

WE ARE COMMITTED TO BUILDING A MORE POSITIVE AND REALISTIC RELATIONSHIP AND IT IS NOT GOING TO HAPPEN ON SOCIAL MEDIA NOR WILL IT HAPPEN IF PARTICIPANTS ARE NOT WILLING TO RECOGNIZE THE REALITIES OF THE MARKETPLACE.

RECOGNIZING THE ISSUES THAT DIVIDE US, SETTING THE TONE FOR CONTINUING DIALOGUE AND UNDERSTANDING EACH OTHER'S NEEDS, POSITIONS ON THE ISSUES IS OUR BEST APPROACH TO BUILD TRUST AND LEAD TO SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS

I can only hope that this report will ignite the ongoing progress we all hope to achieve. Thank you for your patience.

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Alderman Anglace MOVED to take a five minutes recess.

Seconded by Alderman Simonetti.

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

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### 13. EXECUTIVE SESSION

#### 13.A REQUEST TO MOVE TO EXECUTIVE SESSION

##### 13.1 BUS CONTRACT LITIGATION

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

SECONDED by Alderman McPherson.

A voice vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

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

SECONDED by Alderman Simonetti.

A voice vote was taken and the motion passed 8-0.

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13.1 BUS CONTRACT LITIGATION

No Action.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Alderman Anglace MOVED to adjourn the Special Virtual Board of Aldermen meeting.

SECONDED by Alderman Balamaci.

A voice vote was taken and the motion passed 8-0.

Meeting adjourned at 12:43 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted

*Theresa Adcox*

Theresa Adcox  
Board of Aldermen Clerk

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