

City of Shelton
Board of Apportionment & Taxation
Budget Workshop
March 3, 2009



MINUTES OF BOARD OF A&T BUDGET WORKSHOP
7:00 PM Tuesday, March 3, 2009
SHELTON CITY HALL
54 HILL STREET

Auditorium _____
SHELTON CT 06484

REVISION 1

Formatted: Font: 16 pt

Roll Call

Board of A&T:

Mark Holden, Chair, present
Judson Crawford, present
Vinny Capece, present
Nancy Dickal, present
Greg Kodz, present
Charlotte Madar, present

Other Persons Present:

Board of Aldermen:

Alderman John "Jack" Finn
Alderman Stanley Kudej
Alderman Eric McPherson
Alderman John Papa
Alderman Anthony Simonetti
Alderman Lynn Farrell

John Cook, Wetland Administrator
Marge Domorod, City/Town Clerk
Fred Ruggio, Vice President, Economic Development Comm.
Richard Shultz, P&Z Administrator
Thomas Harbinson, Chairman, Conservation Commission
Noreen McGorty, EMS Commission
James Tortora, Fire Marshall

Call To Order

Chairman Mark Holden called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance at 7:00 p.m.

-0060

INLAND/WETLANDS

John Cook, Wetland Administrator represented Inland/Wetlands and answered questions from the Board of A&T regarding various account line items including Mileage,

City of Shelton
Board of Apportionment & Taxation
Budget Workshop
March 3, 2009
Professional Services, Meeting, Travel & Conference, Field Supplies and Certifications,
Legal Stenographers and Part Time Employees.

John Cook agreed to the reductions in the proposed budget for Certification Fees that he did not require and explained that in an effort to eliminate redundancies, the Field Inspectors in his Part Time Employee budget would overlap with Part Time Employees under Planning & Zoning.

-1400 **CITY/TOWN CLERK**

Marge Domorod, City Town Clerk addressed the Board of A&T regarding the City Town Clerk Office's Revenue; she expects the Revenue to be approx. 50% less than what they usually take in because the conveyances, the bulk of her department's revenue, are down due to the poor housing market.

Ms. Domorod explained the Hunting/Fishing License income/expenditure for the DEP; under a new system, the DEP bills her office monthly for these licenses. She added that the new DEP system requires some training & initial start-up costs. Wal-mart and other area towns have opted not to participate in this program; therefore, Shelton is getting the brunt of this expense. She clarified that she feels that if they didn't opt to participate in this new system with the DEP now, it will probably become mandatory within a couple of years anyway and the City would lose all the revenue.

Board of A&T members asked the Town Clerk questions regarding line items for Personnel Training (required for Town Clerk Certifications); Meeting, Travel & Conferences; and Payroll changes due to her status change from Acting Town Clerk to Town Clerk.

Board of Alderman Jack Finn clarified that the increase in Payroll had been approved by the BOA under Supervisor's Contract of which Marge is now a part of.

-0700 **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**

-0800 **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Fred Ruggio, Vice Chairman of the Economic Development Commission addressed the Board of A&T on behalf of Chairman Fred Musante who could not attend this meeting. He provided an opening comment that the Economic Development Commission was a marketing and communication arm for communicating economic development to businesses and the public.

Mr. Ruggio explained that the proposed budget cut of \$1100 from their Meetings, Travel, and Conference would result in the cancellation of the Flag Day event and any other events where a politician would be invited to speak to local businesses. Board of A&T members discussed possible options of scaling down the Flag Day and other events without canceling them and the possibility of attaining grants to fund them.

Other questions from the Board of A&T concerned the quarterly publication, printing and distribution of Shelton Life and the possibility of making it a bi-annual instead of quarterly publication to reduce costs.

City of Shelton
Board of Apportionment & Taxation
Budget Workshop
March 3, 2009

Alderman John Papa suggested that he would like to see what could be done to attain donations and volunteers from companies in the City to support the Flag Day event or a scaled down version of it. Additionally, he supported Shelton Life distribution because it is a useful marketing and public relations tool for realtors and other area businesses.

-0900 **PLANNING & ZONING**

Richard Schultz, Administrator for Planning & Zoning represented his department and distributed his annual report to the Board members. He noted that the only two increases were for Payroll (Full time & Part Time) and explained that his Revenues were 50% less this year, and he projected that next year would be about the same. Big projects (PDD), large subdivisions, new construction permits, and day-to-day permits have been down for a variety of reasons.

He explained that P&Z is reviewing increases to the Fee Schedule and he is working with his Commission to adopt it shortly. He responded to questions regarding Legal Notices (Conn. Post is increasing its rates) which are mandatory and Coastal Area Management Review which is mandated by statute (CAM application pending for Marina).

The Board of A&T discussed the reduction in the proposed budget for Special Area Studies; Mr. Schultz explained that these studies (such as Downtown, Bpt. Ave.) are conducted on an as needed basis. Chairman Holden commented that this item would be partially funded with BOA Contingency funds, if necessary.

-1300 **CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

Tom Harbinson, Conservation Commission Chairman represented his department and responded to questions from the Board of A&T regarding unused line items for this year, including Mileage, Meeting, Travel/Conference, Outside Services and Programs. Mr. Harbinson responded that he would like to and needs to use the money in those line items for quoted uses but the Mayor has verbally denied any spending from his Conservation Commission budget for the remainder of the fiscal year. However, he needs the funds and requests them again for next year.

Alderman John Papa stated that now that they have become aware of the requirements needed for the Conservation Commission, and Mr. Harbinson's inability to access these funds, the BOA and Board of A&T will take the responsibility of finding out why this money is not being spent and determine why it isn't being spent.

Mr. Harbinson had questions for the Board of A&T regarding the Open Space Trust Account; He stated that under Ordinance 2-115.3, it mandates that \$50K be budgeted to the Open Space Trust Account annually and that has not happened in the last couple of years. He explained that some funds had been put in, but then withdrawn, for an Open Space Acquisition in July. He asked if \$50K would be put in the Open Space Account every year in accordance with the Ordinance.

City of Shelton
Board of Apportionment & Taxation
Budget Workshop
March 3, 2009

Judson Crawford researched this issue and responded to Tom that he contacted Corporation Counsel regarding the Open Space Trust Account. He presented Mr. Harbinson with a copy of a letter that Corporation Counsel sent to him. The letter indicates that the BOA would be responsible for putting that amount of money into the account within 45 days.

Chairman Crawford clarified that the intent is for \$50K per year, even if it is more than \$50K during one year, it should still be \$50K for the next year. Alderman Jack Finn asked Chairman Holden to flag this item and have the Board of A&T direct the BOA to act on it.

-1800 **ZONING APPEALS BOARD**

No Representation

-2000 **PUBLIC SAFETY AND EMERGENCY SERVICES**

Postponed until tomorrow's 3/4/08 Board of A&T Budget Workshop Meeting.

-2100 **EMS COMMISSION**

Noreen McGorty, EMS Commission responded to Board of A&T questions concerning a budget cut of \$60K to \$45K for Bundle Billing (Bundle Billing is a 2 ambulance response initiative – basic level service dispatch & paramedic service) which results in two separate bills.

Ms. McGorty responded that Seniors are directly impacted by this because only one of the bills is covered through Medicare. Prior to receiving this Bundle Billing Benefit by the City, there had been many incidents whereby Seniors were quite vocal about their dissatisfaction about separate bills. Her concern is that Seniors will not call for an ambulance when they require it because of their personal concerns about paying for the services. She explained that the Bundle Billing allows both bills to be bundled and sent to Medicare. It is a reduced payment shared by both the Ambulance and the Paramedic Service.

Ms. McGorty stated that just keeping it at the current year's budget amount was not easy – and that the current year's budget is not even the full Bundle Billing amount; she's worked with Echo Ambulance Corp. to supplement that Bundle Billing to keep the City budget at the same amount. She requested that the Board of A&T flag this Bundle Billing account issue for further discussion.

Other questions from the Board of A&T included line items for Personnel Training; Ms. McGorty responded that she decreased it due to the economic situation as well as decreasing her Clerical budget. She reduced the Communications Equipment Account, and the Mayor lowered it even further, due to a larger initiative for an overall communication system enhancement for all Police, Fire and EMS.

-2200 **FIRE MARSHALL**

City of Shelton
Board of Apportionment & Taxation
Budget Workshop
March 3, 2009

James Tortora, Fire Marshall, responded to questions from the Board of A&T regarding Gasoline (he purchases gasoline through the Police), Vehicle Maintenance (he has

maint/repairs done by Fire Dept. Mechanic), Technical Supplies (Fire Prevention/School materials), and Regular Payroll.

Alderman Jack Finn brought up issues regarding the Gasoline account such as what has been used this year and what is projected for next year, and the use of PIN numbers to track gasoline usage/expenditures for the Fire Marshall's three vehicles.

The Fire Marshall responded to questions from Alderman Anthony Simonetti that he would be piggybacking on the same Communications Equipment that the Police, Fire and EMS would be using.

-2400 **FIRE DEPARTMENT**

Chairman of the Board of Fire Commissioners, Mike Maglione, requested that his presentation be moved to March 11, 2009 because he had not been notified about this meeting until a couple of hours ago.

Adjournment

Due to no further interviews on the agenda for this evening, Chairman Holden adjourned the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Karin C. Tuke
Clerk, Board of Apportionment and Taxation

Tape (1) both sides on File with the City Town Clerk's Office.