

To: The Honorable Board of Finance

From: Benjamin G. Blake, Mayor

Date: January 21, 2015

Subject: GENERAL BUDGET for the Fiscal Year from July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016

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In accordance with Article VI, Section 1 of the Charter of the City of Milford, I respectfully submit, herewith, the general government portion of the City budget for fiscal year 2015-2016.

Local government is mandated to provide services for residents, businesses, and students in the most responsible manner possible. The current proposed budget accomplishes these objectives with a reliable, conservative, and balanced approach that has been the hallmark of Milford's fiscal management.

Achieving a prudent budget is the City's most fundamental obligation. While the annual budgetary process formally begins with an inter-departmental meeting in October of each year, "next year's budget" is the crucial issue that, as mayor, I examine, discuss, and piece together every day of the year. The City's department heads work diligently with me to determine a sensible financial future for our City. For the three months following our initial meeting in October, I engage these directors and their staff, as well as local officials, experts, and most importantly, the citizens of Milford, and collectively we develop a budget to recommend.

I am happy to report that this 2015-2016 Mayor's Budget protects our community's core values by ensuring our public safety departments operate at optimal levels, our public infrastructure is properly maintained, and our social safety network is robust. At the same time, each of our department heads has been challenged to hold the line on spending and streamline the approach by which services are delivered – guaranteeing that Milford City Government will be more efficient and productive than ever before.

Under this budget plan, there are a few personnel adjustments, the net result of which bears no new employees and no additional cost. Instead, the new positions in Accounting and Open Space are offset by targeted reductions in the Health and Sewer departments. For the past several budget cycles, the Finance Department has requested a new accounting position to keep pace with the ever-increasing requirements brought on by contractual and statutory changes in employee benefits, the growing complexity of recent accounting pronouncements, and the escalating demands of regulatory mandates. With

respect to the Open Space and Natural Resource Agent, this position has been funded by Open Space accounts on a Seasonal/Temporary basis for the past two years. During this time, this position has reaped huge benefits for our community, including the development of a comprehensive inventory of open space properties, as well as the acquisition and management of millions of dollars in never-before-seen Federal, State, and private grants. The accomplishments of Milford's Open Space and Natural Resource Agent are clear and I am therefore advocating that this position be folded into the operating budget so that we might make certain the continuation of these important services.

Ultimately, your board, the Finance Board, as well as the Board of Aldermen will have the opportunity to further fine-tune and finalize this budget. As you enter deliberations, please know you have my full support and the support of all City personnel. I encourage you to thoughtfully consider the advice of our residents, taxpayers, employees, department heads, actuaries and other subject matter authorities, as you review this proposed budget and adopt your own recommendations. Together, we will create a better, stronger, more prosperous Milford. Thank you for your consideration.