

NEW HAVEN INDEPENDENT

IT'S YOUR TOWN. READ ALL ABOUT IT.

Perez Finds \$150K For Homeless

BY **Thomas MacMillan** | MAY 23, 2008 8:08 AM

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THOMAS MACMILLAN PHOTO

The homeless got a little help. Otherwise six hours of fiery public testimony and heated aldermanic debate led to few changes to the city's controversial new budget, as proposed property tax increases and senior center closings moved forward.

"Everybody's talking about how we've got to bite the bullet and then in the end — status quo." That's how Hill Alderwoman Andrea Jackson-Brooks summed up Thursday night's marathon meeting of the Board of Alderman Finance Committee.

The committee met to hear public testimony and to pass last amendments to the [\\$466 million](#) city budget before it goes to the full Board of Aldermen for a final vote on June 2.

The one major change came from Hill Alderman Jorge Perez's successful bid to use \$150,000 in fire department overtime instead for endangered homeless shelters.

Dozens of people came to the aldermanic chambers at City Hall, observing the proceedings and laying out the case for the funding of various programs that are seeing cuts in this year's budget. In sometimes table-pounding rhetoric, members of the public, including former Mayor John Daniels, spoke out against budget cuts and tax hikes and in favor of funding for homeless services, senior citizen centers, and the Fair Rent Commission. (The commission and two centers are slated to be eliminated. Homeless services are being cut back far enough that one shelter might close and adult males may be turned away from others.)

The persistent beeping of Chairman Yusuf Shah's three-minute timer, intended to limit testimony length, was routinely ignored.

The latter portion of the evening was devoted to a discussion of budget amendments, few of which passed. The biggest change to the budget was a reallocation of \$159,500 — mostly from the fire department — to mitigate some of the proposed cuts to homeless services.

Testy Testimony

City homeless programs, which are looking at a \$500,000 reduction in funding, received the most vocal support during the public testimony portion of the meeting. Several groups of homeless services professionals stepped to the table to make their case before the aldermen.



"It's gonna be real rough in the city," said Wesley Thorpe (pictured at the microphone), the [recently honored](#) executive director of Emergency Shelter Management Services homeless shelter, speaking about what might happen if a lack of city funding prevent homeless shelters from operating. He explained that the city's shelters handle people who would otherwise be on the street, perhaps committing crimes, including recently released prisoners delivered to New Haven by the state.

"I had 16 sex offenders sent to the shelter,"



he said.

Downtown Alderwoman Bitsie Clark advocated greater regional cooperation on homelessness with nearby towns so that homeless people would not be drawn to New Haven.

“The more we do, the more we attract people that are not New Haven residents,” she said. (This comment drew some chuckles from the representatives of the anti-illegal immigration [Community Watchdog Project](#).)



Former Mayor Daniels (pictured) offered a number of suggestions for where the aldermen could find more money in the budget. He recommended that they first eliminate expensive consultants hired by the Board of Education. “Each year in June a number of school administrators retire and in July they’re rewarded with consultant contracts,” he said.

Daniels went on to speak about school administrators who are also state legislators. “During the legislative session they’re not here to do their job but they’re paid by the city,” he said. He called for a policy requiring such administrators to take a leave of

absence from city positions during legislative sessions.

The former mayor also proposed that the city deal with a shortage of police officers by asking the governor to temporarily send in state troopers until the 55 new officers getting ready to enter the force are ready to hit the streets. He said the plan “wouldn’t cost the city one dollar” and would address crime in New Haven.



The most brimstone-laden sermon of the evening came from Brenda Fulcher (pictured), who said that it was her first time coming to a meeting at City Hall. Starting quietly, she gradually gathered steam and was eventually loudly orating, gesturing broadly, and eliciting multiple rounds of applause from the chamber as she decried tax hikes, [corruption](#) in the police department, the mayor’s expensive [armoire](#), his [\\$16,000 raise](#), and the [suspension](#) of two senior services workers for speaking with the press. She was just bringing in [Billy White](#), when Shah gently interrupted to ask if she had any suggestions for the budget.

“This is my proposal,” Fulcher said, “...take more from the Shubert [Theater], give more to the homeless.”

The Shubert was the target of a number of budget criticisms from the public. Citizen activist [Jeffrey Kerekes](#) referred to documents that he said showed that the Shubert ended the year with an “excess of \$407,000,” a number nearly equal to the \$410,000 that Kerekes said the theater received from the city.



In the face of such claims, John Fisher (pictured), the Shubert’s executive director, felt compelled to come forward even though he hadn’t planned to speak. He said that the theater’s budget on paper was misleading since much of the money was “working capital reserves” that came with significant restrictions on how and whether it could be spent. Fisher also said that the theater was unable to raise ticket prices because of contractual agreements and stiff competition from other area theaters, like the Bushnell.

Amendment Arguments

Public testimony gave way to deliberation over budget amendments, which was





characterized by a polarization of the Finance Committee into two voting blocs. Alders Jorge Perez, Migdalia Castro, and Andrea Jackson-Brooks (pictured, left to right) often found themselves on the same side of the issues — the losing side.

Perez had some early success, passing his amendment to reduce the fire department's overtime budget by \$150,000 and increase funding for homeless services by the same amount.

"I think the time has come when we start holding people accountable," said Perez, who argued that cuts in the fire department would

lead to better management.

Clark agreed. "Unless you make people have to be creative, it's business as usual," she said. Clark said that budget sacrifices should be shared by all. "I think it's wrong to let people off the hook. Everyone should have cuts," she said, making an argument that was shortly used against her.

"As was stated before, everyone has to feel the pain," said Perez as he introduced an amendment to cut \$28,000 from the \$140,000 allocated for "Downtown Special Services." Perez characterized the program, which sets aside extra money for downtown projects, as a "corporate welfare service." His amendment called for the \$28,000 to be applied to a mill rate reduction. Clark, the alderwoman for the downtown area, opposed the amendment.

Beaver Hill Alderman Carl Goldfield was also opposed, on the grounds that downtown is currently "driving economic development in New Haven." He added, "I don't want to kill the goose that laid the golden egg."

After Perez's downtown amendment was voted down by the committee, Brooks introduced one, without much hope that it would pass: "This is another one going down, but..."

Brooks' amendment proposed a \$500,000 reduction in the Tweed Airport development subsidy, with the money going instead to mill rate reduction and homeless services. "When are we going to stop the bleeding?" she asked, referring to the money that goes to support Tweed.



Goldfield (pictured at left) was concerned that this cut would cause the airport authority to collapse and that the responsibility for the airport's operation would fall back to the city. Fair Haven Heights Alderman Alex Rhodeen, also opposed, said that the airport spending was already reduced by 30 percent in the current budget.

"We've cut more than 30 percent from other budgets," said Perez, referring again to homeless services.

Brooks' amendment failed, as she had predicted.

The next failure was Brooks' amendment to close the Westville Senior Center instead of the West River Senior Center, as the proposed budget [calls for](#). Perez, who had drafted a nearly identical amendment, supported Brooks' plan, arguing that the West River Center costs less to operate and has better attendance.

Clark, who opposed the amendment, said that she had gone to visit both centers and found that "just from looking at them there is no question that the one in Westville is better." She said that the facilities are more attractive in Westville and that there is a rodent control problem at West River.

"Beauty is in the eye of the beholder," responded Perez. "I bet the seniors that go to that center [West River] think it's the most beautiful center there is."

After a discussion that was muddled by conflicting rent figures and senior center names that are confusingly similar, Brooks' proposal to save West River and close Westville was voted down.

Brooks' amendment to restore funding to the Fair Rent Commission was also voted down, to her exasperation.

An amendment for a \$40,000 increase under the category "Other Contractual" passed, as did a proposal designed to save the [Whalley Avenue police substation](#). The substation amendment also did away with the plan that would have begun charging for bulk trash pick-up.

Asked after the meeting about her apparent frustration with the proceedings, Brooks said that "sometimes you just get tired," when there's "no changes and no effort."

Perez felt similarly. "It was a fix before we even got there," he said. The budget as proposed "took it out on the backs of the poor in the city," Perez said, adding that the Finance Committee had offered "no tax relief whatsoever to the taxpayer."

The amended budget now passes to the full Board of Alderman for a final vote on June 2. New amendments may be introduced at that meeting.

Commenting has closed for this entry

Comments

posted by: [jeffreykerek](#) on May 23, 2008 8:42am

This is a sad state of affairs that nothing more could be done. It is a strategic success for the status quo-ers. See, the smart thing about this is that they have us fighting to find a few dollars for the homeless so that we do not focus on the larger systematic changes that are needed. So we have the shubert supporters fighting the homeless supporters. It sad. The real cost is in personnel. That is the single largest driver of the budget. If there is any savings to be had, it is here. We have multimillion dollar short falls in workers compensation fund, the *early* retiree healthcare benefit we give, 50-55% employee benefit packages etc... If we want to be so generous, which we might want to be, then we simply cannot have as many employees. We can't have it both ways. We can have generous compensation packages with fewer employees or less generous packages with a larger number. I agree with Mayor Daniels that we need to get rid of the double dippers—the ones who retire and come back as highly paid consultants. Particularly in the BOE where it has been failing our kids. Do we really need a policy to bring back the same people that have been delivering failing schools? How does that saying go: Doing the same thing over and over agin but believing you will get a different result?

posted by: [FIX THE SCHOOLS](#) on May 23, 2008 9:20am

JEFFREYKEREKES

You've got it exactly right - as does former Mayor Daniels. Trying to balance the budget in New Haven without taking on the BOE is like trying to wipe out the federal deficit without looking at the cost of social security, Medicare, and the Iraqi war - all combined.

Whether or not the BOA has any formal power to over ride the BOE on it's budget is besides the point. If the alders really want to do the right thing by their constituents, they need to make BOE spending (and the failure of the district) a major political issue.

Analyze the schools budget, break it down, compare the personnel budget with other districts and models (and yes, look at ALTERNATIVE models which are FAR more effective with the same \$\$). Compare performance among peer districts. Put pressure on this mayor to value the education of the kids over jobs for adults.

Fix the schools - and transform the regional economy.

posted by: [cedarhillresident](#) on May 23, 2008 9:36am

OK first!!! I luv you...Brooks and Perez. Thank you for being the real voice of the people!!!!!!!!!!!!

I agree with Bitsey when she says the more we do the more we attract people. We can not" non profit" ourselves in a hole. I believe that churches and state will step up to the plate if the need is there.

Lastly I am sickened and pissed and totally mortified that this city is that corrupt! The rose color glasses are now off!! I was hoping that this year, a year where house cleaning can be done, it would be! And here we are again playing the same BS game we did last year.WTF!!! (sorry Paul not using real swear word but I am so mad). As Daniel's said the Double dippers need to go!!! That would lower the mill rate and save some of the other cuts from happening! The over staffing of the town (not in all dept) needs to be addressed to! Let me tell you that if this budget goes through as it is the citizens will be up in arms and in Hartford wanting to know where our money is being spent.

When times were good we let these things slide because we were in a position to...but we are not in that position any more and the FREE RIDES need to end!!! The budget can still be mortified and amendments can still be presented...

MY SUGGESATION IS:

City Hall make the cuts and lower the mill rate!!!!

You want to make this city desirable, you want companies to move to New Haven and fill in all those development plans (and not Yale) Then LOWER THE MILL RATE and make this city an attractive place for them to come!!!! CUT THE DOUBLE DIPPERS!!! AND CLEAN HOUSE!!!

posted by: cedarhillresident on May 23, 2008 9:39am

Yes John that last statement was addressed to you.

posted by: strangerthanfiction on May 23, 2008 9:56am

Those with good memories will remember that when John Daniels was elected Mayor, he at first expressed the desire to remain as a State Senator while he also served as Mayor. Also, regrettably, while he was Mayor he did nothing himself to trim back the Education bureaucracy or top heavy administrative salaries. More sour grapes from the ex-Mayor directed at his successor. It's easy to talk about this stuff, but Daniels had his chance and just didn't do the job, I'm sorry to say.

posted by: cedarhillresident on May 23, 2008 10:32am

strangerthanfiction

You are right, but that does not justify this administration from ignoring the facts! And running the taxes up and the citizens down! They are smart people and everyone of them know where the money can be cut but because it is there friends and family's they are unwilling to make the cuts... maybe the state should come in and do it. They would have no personal commitment to the double dippers

posted by: Edward_H on May 23, 2008 10:36am

I have got to say the picture of Moti Sandman says a thousand words. That is exactly how I feel everytime I read about New Haven's budget problems.

posted by: Gary Doyens on May 23, 2008 10:43am

These finance committee meetings have been an exercise in mental intercourse and nothing more.

Taxpayers are on the receiving end and what we're left with is the hard decision to tell our kids they can't go to camp this summer, music lessons have to end, and that family vacation will be a day trip some place close because the City Hall has conspired to protect the status quo.

BOA President Carl Goldfield, when re-elected to that post this year, promised a more vigorous, more engaged New Haven Board of Aldermen. Mayor John DeStefano when announcing his re-election plans said he wanted "good politics" where the result of public policy and elections was not a zero sum game with only winners and losers.

It was all a crock. There is no leadership - with the exception of a few alders - there are only rubberstamping votes, squishy, whiney defenses of runaway spending and a bombastic mayor who refuses to take responsibility or make the hard decisions that real leadership requires despite clear evidence he is engineering a train wreck.

In the end, after hours and hours of public testimony from the very people who bear the tremendous burden for paying the cost of the city's bloated and mind blowing spending, the Finance Committee couldn't trouble themselves and the mayor couldn't be bothered to find the internal fortitude and integrity to provide any relief to taxpayers or to make the substantive cuts to staff and benefits that make up the vast majority of city spending. They are no better than big oil or anybody else who uses their power to diminish our lives for their gain.

This budget has a hidden 2+ mil increase in property taxes and when combined with revaluation, will escalate property taxes by 10 - 12%. As a result, homeownership in New Haven will continue to decline, poverty will continue to increase and it will put the dream of home ownership out of reach for new, young families who otherwise might choose to put down roots here.

I can barely contain my excitement in anticipation of the pontification of the many alders who will stand up at the full board meeting next month to decry the cuts as sacrificial and defend the tax increase as "bare bones." That, of course, will be an exercise in verbal intercourse.

The tax bill will arrive just before July 1. That will be an exercise in taxpayer XXXXing. Fill in the blank.

posted by: Fairhavengal on May 23, 2008 11:27am

I really do not understand why we keep funding Tweed...can someone explain that to me?

posted by: Exiled Italian Shill on May 23, 2008 11:46am

cedarhill - the problem with cutting the mill rate is this: every mill is worth \$4.8-5M in collected tax revenue. If you were to drop the mill rate, say 2 mills for FY08-FY09, the city starts the budget with \$8-10M in the whole.

The city was some \$14M in the whole this budget cycle. Almost \$5M of that was due to the rocket scientists that dropped the mill rate a single mill, just to say they cut taxes in an election year. But no one talks about that.

So cut another mill or two from the budget, possibly get even less money from the state next session, maybe deal with a decline in tax collections, the only increases would be in wages, health care and pensions and you are still back to a \$10-13M problem next year.

So what do you do then? Well same as this year only at that point they would need to make a massive personnel cut and drop or charge for some services in the altogether. You might wind up paying for garbage

pick-up if they privatized the DPW jobs in solid waste. They would need to close firehouses, maybe even sell a park for development.

That is why cutting the mill rate is risky. Reducing revenue must lead to reducing expenditures or else you wind up like the state. The policy question is what expenditures are cut?

posted by: Gary Doyens on May 23, 2008 12:15pm

Schill:

1. Cut the mil rate, cut the spending. They're both bloated.
2. The only reason the city started out with \$14 million hole is because the mayor used phoney baloney, good time rock and roll revenue numbers from the state he had no hope of getting and he damn well knew it. He fraudulently proposed a budget as balanced when he knew it wasn't. By the way, the \$6 million in concessions from the unions isn't real either and is still not set in stone. Yet the alders voted last night on a budget that said it was.
3. Tweed is a complete cluster. United is cutting 9% of their domestic flights; American is cutting 11% of its domestic flights. Rates are rising and fees for carrying on a single bag is going up. Nobody is going to be putting an airline at puny little Tweed - I don't care how how Chrissy B flies out of there. It's a dead horse goof for general aviation and business travelers who are more interested in convenience than they are about budget. Period. Any other plan is like spitting in the wind.
4. Cut employees and the 55% benefit package. It's the only thing that will save the city and its few remaining taxpayers. Other than that, there will never be enough money.

posted by: What on May 23, 2008 12:20pm

Exiled:

Cut everyone's budget by 25%. Either the unions can take a 25% pay cut, or lay off 25% of the workforce. Painful, but simple.

posted by: cedarhillresident on May 23, 2008 1:04pm

Thanx Gary well said.

My jaw dropped when the union guy was up and they asked him what was going on and the answer was pretty much "I don't know!" I have no answers I am waiting to see what you guys cut because maybe I will not have to cut anything at all because after all it is only taxpayers money and we know how the taxpayers of new haven LOVE when we give there money away!

"What" that is the simple plan and we would survive it!

My

posted by: Exiled Italian Shill on May 23, 2008 1:25pm

Doyens & What - It was my experience in New Haven that those recommendations are over simplifications of a growing problem in the city: revenue that is equally raised across the board on residents, business and non-profits.

CT needs to enact property tax reform quickly. Too many cities are required to pay for their costs through only one source: property tax. Think how much better it would be if muni's had the right to enact an income tax on those that choose to work in the city as opposed to just property tax?

The problem I always felt to be in NH was that the two largest employers in the city, Yale and YNNH, are both tax exempt. Therefore for them to grow jobs, which they will always do as they are a non-mobile industry and will never close their doors and go to Mexico, they need to expand. Since they are tax exempt it increases the amount of non taxed property in the city, currently about 49% of all property is tax exempt.

Its a catch-22. To grow jobs you need to allow a non-taxable entity to expand and lose revenue. So the burden gets further pushed onto homeowners. The state, way back when, said it would make up the difference through payment in lieu of taxes (PILOT) and set the rate at .77 on the taxable dollar. The only problem is that the state never lived up to its promise and pays only in the .50 cent range on the taxable dollar.

Cutting your workforce to an unacceptable level gets you in trouble. Services go down and people move out. There are two types of people that live in NH: 1) the ones that choose to live there because it offers something unique with city services and 2) those they have to live there because they are kept hostage to their own poverty and cannot afford to live elsewhere.

Do either of you remeber when Mayor Daniels was running the show and how high the grass was in our parks? How bad the tree trimming was? What downtown looked like? Crime and murder? And the mill rate was in the 60's!

When I left the parks department was doing a better job with less workers. Grass was getting cut and trees were getting trimmed. Downtown is now a mecca and people come from all across the region to eat, drink and play in NH. No more boarded up buildings, no high grass, a much lower murder rate, by large the most

affordable housing in the region or state. And a mill rate in the around 42. And all this with less employees.

Now lets go cut 5%, 15% or 25% of the workforce. Lets go back to the days of Daniels Administration when no one came downtown, all the deadwood employees that are now 100 years old and still on the union protected payroll still exist were hired based on patronage, Yale was losing out because parents would not allow their kids to attend a school in NH, and there were 3X as many employees on the payroll. Oh and lets go back to a mill rate in the 60's because property values went to 0 and the city could not raise ANY revenue.

Who cares about Tweed and the Henry Fernandez experiment or that Vito's daughter flies out of there. If it collapses do you really want to create, once again, a department of Airport with a staff on city payroll once again? Is it worth the few hundred thousand pumped into it to keep it afloat rather than the \$1.7M it will cost to have the city run it again? If you are gonna be made over Tweed be mad at those Mataro jerks in East Haven for never allowing the airport a chance to succeed. They are the cause Tweed never took off (no pun intended).

And lets give the employees next to no benefits so that NH can model its self right after Wal-Mart. I am sure you guys will get quality employees just like Wal-Mart does, some might even be able to speak English.

It was a bad fiscal year and it aint looking any better next year from the state's perspective. Remember 2003 when Rowland rescinded state monies to munis across the board? So cut the mill rate and lower tax revenues and deal with recessions that will pull \$5-8M from the NH budget.

Doyens you just like to throw rocks when you live a glass house yourself and have no knowledge of what it takes to run a large urban area.

posted by: cedarhillresident on May 23, 2008 1:48pm

PS

Remember this people when election time comes because I am, and no ward is off limits this time. I will be starting as soon as some one says they want to run against some of these people....If they can't make the cuts then they need to be cut!

posted by: jackie on May 24, 2008 9:08am

E.I.S. and others have mentioned this:

"The state, way back when, said it would make up the difference through payment in lieu of taxes (PILOT) and set the rate at .77 on the taxable dollar."

Anyone know where I can find more about this? Are there grounds for the city/its residents to sue the state? That would be a great platform for the new mayor/BOA.

I've never seen so much inequality (of so many kinds) in one state in my life—and it's about time that somebody did something about it:

Equality breeds no strife.—Solon.

posted by: The Trix Rabbit on May 24, 2008 1:25pm

I couldn't put it better than Exiled Italian Shill. Proposing massive cuts in personnel will badly hurt the city in the long run. There are departments that could be "streamlined," but those cuts that have not already been made would not deeply impact the budget deficit, nor would they stop taxes from going up (this year or in the near future). At this point, without seriously damaging vital services or the very programs that make our city livable, no one can really "fix" the budget. Note that the same commenters who are complaining about the services that just got cut are the same ones who beg and pray for cuts all year. In other words, this problem isn't really solved that easily on the city level, and it's a good idea to look at the bigger picture.

The United States is currently in a recession of its own, with job losses, a huge drop in homeownership, rising taxes, and probably inflation. Certainly, food and gasoline, two of the most universal commodities in the United States, have skyrocketed this year. Why is this? Partly a huge federal tax cut that left the federal government broke and incapable of fixing these domestic problems immediately before a major terrorist attack, which forced us into a very costly overseas war that is nowhere near ending (that's Afghanistan). The subsequent Iraq war didn't help one bit.

Partly, this is because of an economy that was trashed by bad federal policy in the '80s under the Reagan and Bush administrations. This was fixed by the '90s economic boom (which was not really Bill Clinton's doing, so don't worry Republicans, I won't give him credit for that), but without the economic problems created in the '80s, and the subsequent destruction of our budget surplus by Dubya, it didn't do the U.S. the kind of long-term good it should have.

More than either of these, it is the way we live. We drive further and more often than most other people around the world, and we do it in bigger and less economic cars (if you want proof, go to states that have had massive suburban development in the last couple decades, like Florida—most parking spaces there could easily accommodate a tank). We spend crazily as we send jobs overseas, we don't save properly, and what "went around" starting in the aftermath of World War Two is starting to "come around" for us. Not much we can do to change history, but we can get on the ball for the future so our children aren't in even more trouble.

By this point I'm sure my reader has lost all interest, but...in Connecticut, this is a big problem. We are last in job growth, which is dragging the half of our state's population that doesn't work in major out-of-state

corporations under. It is hurting our children. It is increasing the polarization of the people in our state (I believe we also get the trophy for the greatest divide between rich and poor in the United States). The result is that all those folks with enough money to buy a big house in Woodbridge have no problems finding jobs. They can pay higher taxes, so their schools are better, and their kids go to college. In New Haven, our people make less and less money, have more trouble paying taxes (which, again, are rising across the nation, meaning that there is very little that the city government can do), and that means that we have the choice of a) bigger problems with schools, which we can't afford in the long run, or b) bigger cuts in services, which we won't survive in the short run. Additionally, the state basically tells us how much money we need to pay the schools, so our municipal government has next to no influence in that field.

The only real solution is to funnel some of that money from the rich towns in Connecticut into state coffers, and from there into cities. That will be a tricky maneuver and will require massive revision of the way taxes work in our state, and will not happen without a majority of dynamic, powerful state legislators from the cities as well as a similar governor. Governor Rell is not that person. To make matters worse, she hates Mayor Destefano, and has badly screwed New Haven several times in the last couple years. This is an election year for state legislators. Far more important than the presidential election, everyone should take part in pressuring your legislators to confront the Governor, on a united front with City Hall, and get some of the money we badly need. That means cooperation between the state delegation and the mayor. Luckily we have an opportunity to pressure our legislators this year to work harder for these goals. I certainly will be.

posted by: citysavior on May 24, 2008 2:46pm

good job to perez and brooks. How can the city bring into the fold changes from the perf report if there no money in the city? Here's the answer get on with the search get a chief in. delay the asst.chief positions until fiscal year 2009-2010 and only fill the last assitant chief poistion that chief badger vacated when he retired. This money can be spread out to the city to save educational programs and may be a cut in the mill.

posted by: Ken Langley on May 24, 2008 8:15pm

Jorge Perez was the President of the Board of Aldermen (and a good one) until Czar John decided to dump him in favor of a puppet who would do what he (the Mayor) wanted. It is time for the Board of Aldermen to start acting like it represents the voters and taxpayers of this City, not the Mayor. New leadership would help.

posted by: Fedupwithliberals on May 25, 2008 8:15am

CEDARHILLRESIDENT

I ran out of the house after reading this thread for the first time and saw pigs flying! Then I remembered hearing about biblical events like The Rapture, which foretells the end of days when a certain 10th district New Haven liberal starts talking like Barry Goldwater. Do I have to be afraid? Think about the whole space-time continuum! For the sake of all things holy, please stop making sense!!!

posted by: cedarhillresident on May 27, 2008 8:23am

Fedupwithliberals

Can you clarify which 10 district Alder....the old one Ed or Allan my new one.

posted by: Exiled italian Shill on May 27, 2008 11:47am

Ken - Do you really think that Perez is all that different from Goldfield? Or from Phil Voigt for that matter? No matter who the President of the Board is, no matter who the person that is sitting in the seat at any given moment might be the same thing is always true: they work with the administration during their tenure.

posted by: Gary Doyens on May 27, 2008 4:18pm

Exiled Italian:

You're fact challenged. Private citizens had more to do with downtown re-development than the city. Joel Schiavone was the primary - David Nyberg and others have followed including Yale. The city had a hand here and there, but small by comparison.

Second, Tweed will not fold without New Haven tax dollars - it can lay user fees on the 40K flyers who choose to use Tweed despite its relative high cost when compared to other nearby airports.

Third, cutting the number of city employees is possible and desirabile - the BOE has a lot of administrative fat - special assignment teachers with no classroom responsibilities; principal interns; and any number of consultants and patronage jobs. There are some city departments which could be consolidated and we could reap the savings of not having as many managers.

Fourth, the number of jobs is just one problem. It's the benefit package which according to City Hall costs 55% of payroll. That's more than twice what private enterprise pays and it's way rich. If that figure was cut by 15 - 20%, city employees would still enjoy a robust benefit package in excess of all the rest of us.

And finally - we need an administration which is going to stay within the budget that is set, even with its out of control spending in place. It hasn't even done that little bit responsibly, including the mayor who has overspent his mayoral budget.

And while you think this is a large urban area - think again. New Haven is relatively small. It's only large by CT standards which is a pretty low bar.

One last point: Aside from the people who reside here because of economic/poverty issues, I don't know anybody who lives in New Haven for city services. In fact, studies show those who pay property taxes consume a disproportionately low share of city services. We live here because it used to be affordable, because it's near where we work, and has a diversity we appreciate.

posted by: Daniel Sumrall on May 27, 2008 6:33pm

This kind of stasis was one of the reasons I chose to put myself forward as an alder candidate. Too bad most who want change don't really vote for it. Ah, well, guess the city deserves what it gets...

posted by: cedarhillresident on May 27, 2008 6:57pm

****standing up and clapping**** Well said Gary!!!! Now if we can only get the Alder's to listen and town hall to listen! I can't for the life of me understand WHY not one person has made know REAL cut proposals! Chump change was presented. There is know way these people do not get it! And I don't care who votes it out at least put it one the table. who knows maybe by the grace of god they will make some real change!

Sorry I am posting this poem everywhere it just seems so fitting.

ROAD LESS TRAVELED

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth

Then took the other as just as fair
And having perhaps the better claim
Because it was grassy and wanted wear
Though as for that, the passing there
Had worn them really about the same

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet, knowing how way leads onto way
I doubted if I should ever come back

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence

Two roads diverged in a wood
And I took the one less traveled by
And that has made all the difference

Robert Frost

posted by: Fedupwithliberals on May 27, 2008 7:43pm

CEDARHILLRESIDENT

Sorry you didn't get it. I was talking about you.

posted by: cedarhillresident on May 28, 2008 9:07am

Fedupwithliberals

Ouch... Now you know I had to ask is that good or bad to the History major in my office and his response was that it is a slap in the face to who I am (with an explanation). But I will say this much, the more I get involved and the more I learn about government my views are varying from my original understanding.

posted by: Fedupwithliberals on May 28, 2008 4:07pm

CEDARHILLRESIDENT

The comment was not meant as a slap in your face. I was complimenting you on your clarity of thinking. Barry Goldwater is not exactly a figure of shame for those who are on the right side of an issue.

posted by: cedarhillresident on May 28, 2008 8:05pm

hmm...well then big wet sloppy kisses :)

I do have to say as I watch the whole budget thing unfold in New Haven and see elected officials choose to cut

homeless shelters and theaters rather than cut the double dippers and high priced useless positions, I am getting jaded. Some of the cuts that were offered up were cuts that were already on the plate. The school closing was in place and the move to troop was happening long before it was offered up as some kind of tragedy. The 6 mill. in union cutshmmm still have heard nothing on that. Is that going to be the news in a few months that the budget fell short six million sorry suckers. And not one meaningful cut has been offered up...not one real move to change the way the city is ran has been offered up. I fear the thought that my republican friend makes sense to me....and that scares me :0
OHHH stay away from the dark side.....
