

MINUTES OF THE CHESHIRE TOWN COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING AND BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY, JULY 18, 2017, AT 7:00 P.M. IN ROOM 207, TOWN HALL, 84 SOUTH MAIN STREET, CHESHIRE CT 06410

Present

Council Chairman Robert J. Oris, Jr; Vice Chairman Paul A. Bowman; Budget Committee Chairman Timothy Slocum; Michael Ecke, Jeffrey Falk, Patti Flynn-Harris
Absent: Sylvia Nichols, Thomas Ruocco, Peter Talbot
Staff: Michael A. Milone, Town Manager; James Jaskot, Finance Director; Gina DeFilio, Deputy Finance Director.
Dept. of Education – Jeff Solan, Supt. Of Schools; Vincent Masciana, Chief Operating Officer.
BOE Members – Anne Harrigan and Catherine Fabiani

1. ROLL CALL

The clerk called the roll and a quorum was determined to be present.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The group Pledged Allegiance to the Flag.

3. DISCUSSIONS RE: FISCAL YEAR 2017-2018 FIVE-YEAR CAPITAL EXPENDITURE PLAN AND ANNUAL CAPITAL EXPENDITURE BUDGET.

Mr. Milone talked about “technology items” for the capital budget, and advised that Anthony Verrill, Apex Technology, will attend a CEP meeting to discuss and review them with the Council.

EDUCATION

Mr. Masciana referred to page 44 of the budget book “Technology Reserve Fund Replacement Equipment”, \$210,000 moved to FY 2020-2021 of the CEP, as recommended by Mr. Verrill. The first priority is to replace WIFI access points at Cheshire High School; second is replacement of switches in data closets (network core switches). Mr. Verrill is putting together a detailed equipment list to be reviewed by Council next week.

In FY 2017-2018 there is \$250,000 in the CEP to update town and school building security with video surveillance upgrade. \$155,000 to upgrade town buildings, install access to the police department; \$80,000 for the schools is changing the video surveillance and camera and cable.

Year #2 – FY 2018-2019 has \$464,000 budgeted for upgrade to the school door access. Regarding State reimbursable grants for this project, Mr. Masciana is unaware of any money available. There is \$55,000 left in the technology reserve account, some of which can be used for the work at the police department building. There was a school security grant to upgrade video surveillance at the schools, but it is uncertain if this money has been appropriated yet.

Town buildings are a priority and the first to get door access. The schools are all secured. The current school security system does not connect to town buildings, and once town buildings have the security system they will be inter-connected with the schools.

Mr. Milone has not yet met with Mr. Verrill to review the technology needs in detail. He stated there is adequate security system in the Town Hall building, and has no problem going with other town buildings first.

Council Chairman Oris stated that safety issues are a priority for town buildings, and we must insure the public and staff is safe.

BOE Capital Budget Proposal – Mr. Milone summarizes the BOE proposal, and stated their budget came in before the Council vote on the middle school building project (page 113). Renovations to Doolittle and Norton Schools is on hold pending final decision on the middle school project.

FY 2018 to 2021 – the total is about \$7M less than the recommended plan adopted by the Council; no changes were made.

Mr. Masciana gave a short power point presentation on the BOE capital budget requests. He cited the fact that the school buildings are aging rapidly; average age is 64.5 years.

The BOE capital budget submissions summary FY 2006-07 to 2021-2022, Five Year Plan totals \$17.397M. Maintenance and repairs are needed for the current school buildings; there are no costs related to the Facilities Master Plan.

2017-2018 funding request is \$1.060M. CHS Storage Solution, \$100,000; District Lavatories, \$375,000; Window Replacements, 250,000; Roofs, Paving, Walks and Chimneys, \$200,000; Boiler Replacements \$150,000; Replenish Building CNR Fund \$110,000.

The schools have 600,000 sq.ft. of roofs; 56% are out of warranty; there is a risk associated with these roofs going forward.

Mr. Masciana cited projects in the five year CEP.
Humiston School Code Compliance (ADA compliant) \$2M;
CHS cafeteria upgrade, \$3.5M; upgrade to other school cafeterias \$1M;
Total Window Replacement, \$3.7M;
Roofs, Paving, Walkways, \$3.5M;
Boiler Replacements, \$750,000;
CHS - Press Box Elevator/Civil Rights Compliance \$437,000;
TOTAL - \$17.59M

Facilities Master Plan had recommendations for school renovations, and without this plan more money will be in the CEP for the buildings.

There was a brief discussion on the actual need for an elevator to the press box at the CHS football field.

Mr. Masciana noted that the Civil Rights Compliance requires access to the press box by everyone, and talked about moving the press box down to the field area for access. With regard to “compliance” with the Civil Rights mandates, Mr. Masciana said there is nothing in the law which states compliance by a date certain. The Dept. of Education does send reports to the State DOE on compliance projects as they are completed.

To date, the Cheshire School System has constructed a new concession stand with ADA compliant bathrooms, improved locker rooms/access ramp.

Mr. Bowman stated we have \$437,000; the concession stand cost \$600,000; locker room improvements were \$800,000; storage facility is \$110,000...and these are not a field house. These are the problems the Council has with kicking the can down the road. This is a travesty of a plan, and Mr. Bowman requested dates when these projects were introduced. He cited the need for a thought process for a long term plan which makes sense of what we are doing. We are talking about the overall high school facility and sports area...locker rooms, storage, stands, press box...compliance, and these are large numbers. The high school could have had a new building, fully compliance, more square footage and more efficiency with this money.

Supt. Solan cited code compliance issues at the high school with closure of the green house area; entrance on the south side is not handicapped accessible; and there are more issues out there.

Mr. Ecke commented on having visited many stadiums with beautiful buildings, stands, locker rooms underneath the building, and the need to push for a field house in Cheshire. He stated the CHS locker rooms were an embarrassment from day one, and when they were done it was waste of money.

BOE Funding Requests – Mr. Masciana pointed out that the average approved CEP funding is 52% of what is requested, and liabilities to maintain the school buildings continues to grow.

It was noted by Mr. Slocum that there was \$11M to town and school buildings under the performance contracting.

2017-2018 funding request is \$1.060M. Mr. Masciana reviewed the 2017-2018 information for BOE projects. CHS Storage Solution, \$100,000; District Lavatories, \$375,000; Window Replacements, 250,000; Roofs, Paving, Walks and Chimneys, \$200,000; Boiler Replacements \$150,000; Replenish Building CNR Fund \$110,000.

At CHS storage is needed, and a 3,000 sq.ft. building is recommended near the practice field under the seating; storage is needed on the visitor's side of the track area for equipment. There had been talk about a Butler Building. The \$250,000 estimated cost is not enough, and a supplemental \$100,000 is requested. Mr. Masciana advised that Milone & MacBroom did price this work at the prevailing wage.

This job is under \$400,000 and Mr. Oris said prevailing wage is not involved.

The Council was told by Mr. Bowman that the Cheshire Community Food Pantry built a 5,000 sq.ft. pre-engineered building, fully air-conditioned, finished offices, etc. without prevailing wage. He asked about the size of the maintenance garage, noting it is prime real estate and why this could not be moved elsewhere on the site, and utilize this building for something else. This building is in the middle of the sports complex and could be better utilized.

Mr. Masciana stated these are good options to be looked at for the high school complex.

Summary of the requested CEP – Master Plan Improvements, \$113.5M for the new middle school; reduced to \$106.4M; and was in FY 2017-18 BOE capital budget. Doolittle School renovations, year #4, \$20.690M; Norton School renovations \$19.590M; Total Request - \$153.820,000. Mr. Masciana stated that discussions need to continue on how to improve our schools over time.

Mr. Slocum asked the BOE to take a hard look at renovating the school buildings. He noted the importance of getting the pulse of the community, what the public wants, and believes it would be more in the area of renovation of the schools.

Throughout this process, Supt. Solan met up with many people with differing approaches to the situation with the schools, and something significant needs to happen within the schools. Conversations must continue, people must be involved, and we must move forward.

Catherine Fabiani, BOE member stated the BOE did look at renovation projects for the school buildings. At this point in time, other stake holders must be brought into the discussions, and understand the ability to consolidate facilities. She said Dodd cannot be renovated, and there is no way to go forward without a 6-8 middle school program and curriculum. The entire project must be back to the community.

With regard to a 6-8 middle school, Supt. Solan explained this plan has advantages; curriculum is now modeled for a 6-8 middle school; there are economic advantages, efficiencies in savings, and the recommended model.

Ms. Flynn-Harris commented on past referendums which failed at the first go round, and then were approved the second time...the community pool, library. For the second

time with the school project, there must be a look at changes which must be made, as change impacts the costs, and a look at the wish list.

Anne Harrigan, BOE Member, noted the BOE now has lots of information, a two year study, all of which can be reviewed and discussed.

Mr. Ecke commented on the excellent job the City of Meriden did with renovation of the high school. He suggested consideration of building a new high school, and turning the high school into the middle school.

That is a proposal, and Supt. Solan said it is something to be looked at and evaluated. He does not recall this idea being raised during discussion about the middle school project.

The middle school is not going to referendum because it is too expensive, and Mr. Ecke said this must be discussed and considered.

Ms. Fabiana talked about a joint meeting of BOE and Town Council to discuss ideas.

Mr. Bowman said there is no foolish idea coming out of dialogue, and all ideas must be embraced and assessed in order to go forward.

Stating there is good information from the process for the middle school project, Chairman Oris said there is a broad base of people who could be involved in the process, people who know something must happen, and work to move it forward. Mr. Oris suggested a study group which will review the project, come up with some answers, as this is a town issue, not just BOE issue, and working together it can be solved. This year the Dodd Middle School project was a BOE only project, and something must be advanced that is a community project.

If the project goes out into the future, Ms. Harrigan asked about the town's 5, 10 and 15 year plans, and how they would fit with the BOE plan. She said this is a town project, and dividing it into a town or school project is not the way to go.

Mr. Ecke advised there was once a Town Strategic Plan which has died over the years.

Town Manager Milone said there is agreement on the importance of bringing everyone together to strategize and move forward. There must be focus. There could be 2 or 3 groups focusing on certain parts of the whole, and then they come together.

Supt. Solan commented on the four subcommittees with different vibes and interests, issues with attendance at meetings...but he will look into these groups.

This could start with a review of what the BOE based its decision on, and Mr. Slocum said it starts with Council, BOE and some other people for a fuller understanding of the project. He noted we still do not know the cost of renovations of the schools. Ms. Flynn-Harris stated the BOE dealt with "A, B, C"...and came to agreement on one plan. The Council did not go into depth with this; the BOE made a decision; and a good starting point is to go back, look at the pros and cons of the plans and start there.

It was pointed out by Mr. Milone that the key to success is the nature of the organization or group given the task to study the project.

Mr. Slocum suggested review of plans A, B, C by the Council and BOE.

Mr. Masciana presented updates of the FY 2016-17 school system problems and issues. They included the following: Cheshire High School, Highland School, Norton School, Humiston School ADA compliance, Cheshire High School sidewalk project completion, Chapman School sidewalks being requested; CHS courtyard replacement and structural issues, emergency generator being installed at CHS, Concession Stand project built, approved, and certificate of occupancy issued, and dedication and grand opening on Sept. 8th, at the first home football game.

Mixville Pavilion overview – Mr. Milone read the memo from PW Director Noewatne into the record. \$8,000 to \$9,000 spent on the pavilion project; Public Works and Parks Division crews worked on the project with completion in two days; no revenue was lost; camps are using the back room for some activities, and can use some area of the pavilion for other activities; roof replacement cost is \$16,000; capital plan has \$60,000 for capital park improvements; the roof is safe for now and will be replaced after the summer season; the facility is structurally sound. Mr. Noewatne will have a full evaluation of all the Town park facilities in his capital budget presentation to the Council.

RECAP

4. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Mr. Bowman; seconded by Mr. Ecke.

MOVED to adjourn the special meeting at 8:30 p.m.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

Attest:

MARILYN W. MILTON, CLERK

