

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL CHESHIRE TOWN COUNCIL AND BUDGET
COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY, AUGUST 7, 2018 AT 6:30 P.M. IN
ROOM 207-209 TOWN HALL, 84 SOUTH MAIN STREET, CHESHIRE CT 06410**

Present

Robert J. Oris, Jr. Chairman; Paul A. Bowman, Vice-Chairman; Jeffrey Falk, Patti Flynn-Harris, Sylvia Nichols, Thomas Ruocco, Timothy Slocum, David Veleber.

Staff: Sean Kimball, Town Manager; James Jaskot, Finance Director; Gina DeFilio, Deputy Finance Director.

Dept. of Education: Jeff Solan, Supt. Of Schools; Vincent Masciana, COO; BOE members Ms. Sobel and Ms. Harrigan.

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. DISCUSSION RE: FISCAL YEAR 2018-2019 FIVE-YEAR CAPITAL
EXPENDITURE PLAN AND ANNUAL EXPENDITURE BUDGET**

BOARD OF EDUCATION – CEP Book Page 118 Supt. Solan and Mr. Masciana

Supt. Solan and Mr. Masciana reviewed the BOE information on the Five-Year Capital Plan and annual Budget 2018/19 through 2022/23. A copy of the presentation document is attached to these minutes.

Page 1 - Age of School Buildings – average age 67.25 years.

Page 2 - Facility Master Plan – In 2014 the BOE hired Perkins Eastman Architects, at a cost of \$108,000, to develop a facility assessment and long term plan for modernization of the Cheshire Public Schools. A new middle school was identified as the first step in the plan, which was not successful. In the facility assessment summary, Perkins Eastman cites exteriors, interiors and building systems showing age; accessibility as a challenge; program and space issues; site access, traffic, circulation issues; school finishes needing work; code updates needed; security and safety issues; hazardous material abatement.

Facility Master Plan Update – the first step was a new middle school which was not a successful plan; in 2017 other options were looked at but were not successful; 2018 recognition that there is a plan, and the need to explore how to bring it to realization or some facsimile of the plan into reality. This is not imminent and impacts DOE decisions on what is put forward in the capital plan.

Page 3 – Summary - The middle school would be grades 6 through 8; Dodd Middle School building would become a town use; shifting students around when the new middle school is built; close and repurpose Darcey School; renovate/improve Doolittle, Norton, Highland for grades K-5; build new high school on current site; demolish old

high school building; repurpose Chapman for other uses; close Humiston/repurpose for town use.

Enrollment Update/Graph – blue line (Perkins Eastman) identifies report with future enrollment projections; red line (NESDEC) lower enrollment projection by birth rate of 900 students; green line (URBANOMICS) actual to 2018 surpasses NESDEC projections by about 520 students. Reports recognize more people moving into Cheshire resulting in larger bump up in student enrollment. Urbanomics analysis was more detailed and looked at factors going out to 2025-2026; additional housing (40 per year for 10 years) is projected resulting in more people moving to Cheshire.

Mr. Bowman stated these numbers are not even close.

The original number was 100 new housing units per year over 10 years, and Mr. Masciana noted this number was reduced as it was beyond projections.

Chairman Oris asked about the ability to consolidate schools whether or not a new school is built. On the graph he cited the green line and asked if it is based on current enrollment.

The Council was told by Supt. Solan that consolidation of schools is something the BOE is monitoring. The BOE wants to balance consolidation without destroying any programs, and must find a good balance. Darcey School has the least student enrollment.

In the CEP there is not much shown for Humiston School, and Mr. Oris noted this is an expensive building in which to do work, and there could be a less costly alternative.

Consolidation – Mr. Oris said there must be more discussion about consolidation. The BOE plan must be supported with efficiencies and alternatives, without throwing good money after bad. Mr. Oris stated he does not like the Perkins Eastman plan as everything is to repurpose a building, creating another capital project to put on the backs of taxpayers. It is too big a plan that Cheshire cannot afford.

According to Supt. Solan the BOE makes an effort to not spend money on something without a return. There are things to be done at Humiston from a safety perspective, but BOE has not undertaken them...i.e. handicapped accessibility and other limitations.

In looking at a consolidation plan, without a new middle school, Mr. Masciana said there could be space added to Highland School.

Page 4 – Projects Update – the recently completed projects (CHS emergency generator, CHS courtyard windows, district roof repairs, sidewalk replacements, CHS concession stand, repaving, CHS locker rooms, CHS and Highland electric heat replacement, etc. were cited by Mr. Masciana.

Projects Underway – Norton lavatories, Doolittle Cafeteria renovations, district rolling generator connections, UST removals at Dodd and Highland, CHS exterior storage building.

Pending Projects – CHS interior and exterior civil rights compliance (\$1.6M); CHS Science Lab upgrades (\$500,000).

Capital Requests for 18-19 to 22-23 – total request of \$26,280,000; most of the funding is for window replacement, cafeteria improvements, paving, roofing, sidewalks and masonry. Code compliance \$2.4M; \$2M in year #5 for Humiston School; HVAC replacement \$2.320M; CEP request has inflation built in.

Page 5 – Capital Approval Rate Five Year Plan – 88% approval rate; Actual Funding approved = 53%; FY 2016-17 and FY 2017-18 BOE request was average of \$3.3M.

Page 6 – 2018-19 Funding Request - \$3,237,500; funding requested for building maintenance and improvements; school security request \$1.090M.

Mr. Masciana reviewed the 2018-19 project requests.

Roofing/paving/sidewalks/masonry \$410K; UST removal \$340,000; Cafeteria improvements \$282,500; Buildings and Improvements \$270,000; Window replacements \$250,000; District lavatories \$250,000; Lighting and electrical improvements \$235,000; HVAC improvements \$110,000; Total = \$3,237,500.

Natural Gas to Doolittle School – this connection would cost about \$800,000; connection is +4000 feet from the school; payback is not attractive; timing would take more than the two (2) years to get the tank replaced.

Pipe installation at CHS - \$110,000; Mr. Masciana explained that the steam heats up the concrete floor up to 100 degrees in the front area of CHS (south to north under the main office area and classrooms); some pipes have been wrapped, more pipes and joints need to be wrapped. The tunnel is inspected annually, and inspection was done last week.

Lighting at Game Field – \$135,000; there should be 30 feet of standard candle light; LED lights have a 15 year payback; payback is just energy savings; existing bulbs are expensive as well as many hours/labor to replace the bulbs.

Supt. Solan stated there are efficiency savings at the football field, with district cafeteria improvements, and security measures are eligible for 41% reimbursement. The reimbursement money goes back to the Town.

Storage Building - With the grant reimbursement of about \$400,000, Mr. Talbot cited the cost at about \$2.28M. For the storage building, Mr. Talbot asked about it handling all of the storage needs for the high school, and questioned the additional funding of \$50,000.

Mr. Masciana explained that all the storage needs of CHS were looked at. The track and field equipment has been stored underneath the visitor's seating, and will now be stored closer to where the events are held. The new building is 3,000 S.F. (reduced from 4,000 S.F.); this is what funding would allow; and the building is sized for its location on the campus. Once the old storage containers are cleaned out, the sports and band equipment will be moved into the new building. Storage is still needed for track and field equipment, and the \$50,000 is requested as a place holder for a small unit under the visitor's seating. The old trailer will be removed.

Mr. Talbot asked about pushing the \$50,000 out to FY 2020, and see what the new storage building will be able to hold.

It is possible this money could be allocated and not used, and Mr. Masciana said it could be moved out in the CEP.

Mr. Oris addressed this issue. He commented on his recollection of discussions regarding the new storage building, track and field not going into this building, and consideration to do something, i.e. D zone (create an aluminum canopy for equipment) for track and field equipment. He has concerns because of the new building location creating another capital project at \$50,000. If the new storage building cannot store all equipment, except for track and field, he said it should not be built.

The Council was told by Mr. Masciana that the BOE wants track and field in the new building. When using track and field equipment during the season it could be stored on the far side of the complex, as this equipment is large and heavy. The original request was a 4,000 S.F. storage building; it was reduced to 3,000 S.F.; and this size will get to 95% of what is needed.

Mr. Bowman commented on the reduction to a 3,000 S.F. building due to limited amount of funding, which is stated about everything. He requested the Town Manager to have the Finance Department review, over a 10 year period, what the mill rate would be today if everything was appropriated for Town and BOE requests. It is a matter of what the Town can afford, and he expects the mill rate would be +50 mills. Mr. Bowman has concerns about being where we are now...because the Town Council did not approve all of the town and BOE requests.

It was clarified by Mr. Slocum that the \$50,000 request is another piece of the storage project (for track and field) that was left out of the original equation.

The new storage building is in the right place and Mr. Masciana said track and field needs this ancillary storage.

Mr. Bowman did not support the storage facility on the Council level, and he said one reason was because the current location of the storage building is prime real estate. We are wasting this space when equipment (lawn movers, snow plows) could be stored in a building at the town garage.

The lighting upgrade was cited by Mr. Talbot who asked if additional structures were involved or just LED lights. He commented on his recollection of power outages at the game field, and believes this has been addressed.

Mr. Masciana said it is replacement of 44 light fixtures with LED lights.

Supt. Solan noted it is just additional lighting, using LED lights which are less costly.

On the performance management side, Mr. Talbot asked Town Manager Kimball to provide Council with what is left in the account, and if there could be another contract.

Cafeteria Improvements – Mr. Slocum cited year #4 with CHS cafeteria improvements. He thought there was a more immediate need, and questioned the reason for pushing this project out.

The total number is \$3.5M for this project, and Supt. Solan said there are other more important and priority projects, i.e. slate falling off the Humiston roof, and safety issues, that must be addressed first. The facility master plan is also getting a second look.

There is a \$156,000 request for CHS cafeteria equipment, and Mr. Masciana said this is part of what would be done with a full replacement project. He stated the Council and BOE and DOE administration should have a discussion about the facility master plan in order to have a road map to follow.

Chairman Oris stated the CHS cafeteria project is something which must happen, and he asked about the benefit of pushing it out to year #6.

According to Supt. Solan part of the issue is the age of the facilities, and being unable to plan because something unforeseen comes along to be immediately addressed. BOE does have some funding in the C.N.R. emergency fund. The CHS cafeteria project should not come off the table because it is known that this project must be done.

School Security – Mr. Masciana stated the BOE wants to have Mantraps in all the schools, with the exception of Humiston School. He reviewed the components of the \$1.090 M project costs.

- Entrance Door Framework Replacements and Mantrap Construction - \$525,000
- Entry Door Improvements including Access Control System & Door Numbering - \$100,000

- Video Surveillance Camera System Expansion/Enhancements - \$220,000
- Fire Alarm System Replacements - \$245,000

There will be overlap for the video camera system and technology improvements requests. A meeting will be held with Apex staff, and the assumption is to leave funding with BOE requests and reduce technology fund requests.

This is a referendum item; the project is up for two grants.

PUBLIC

Tim White, 1682 Orchard Hill Road, stated the Energy Commission requested the BOE and Town get together on future CEP projects, and look at alternative funding mechanisms. He commented on old cafeteria equipment consuming more energy; gas connection to Doolittle School from Higgins Road with reduction in the \$800K estimate with connection as part of the road paving project.

Ms. Flynn-Harris referred to the school security number and enumeration of some of the schools (BOE book page 8), and asked if the number cited is for all schools.

Mr. Masciana said the number cited covers all the schools.

In year #2, page 6 BOE book, Ms. Flynn-Harris cited the CHS game field, removing the secondary viewing tower, and security/safety issues with this tower in disrepair.

Mr. Masciana said there is no safety issue there. This is broken into two years, with the tower being removed in the first year. Regarding the LED lights on the field, the replacement project will get them to energy savings and 30 foot candle standards. Other benefits would be the ability to hold CIAC sporting events on a better lighted field with generation of revenue.

Tim White referred to the performance contract and balance of \$4,000 in an energy related grant (Bright Ideas). He expects it would be about a \$4,000 cost for assistance with drafting an RFP for another performance contract.

Regarding the performance contract, Mr. Veleber asked if there are other areas where this contract might work in the BOE capital projects.

With the energy performance contract, Mr. Masciana said another look can be taken, do it again, have a vendor do a sweep of all the buildings and identify where improvements might be. Everything in the CEP has energy components, and it will not be costly to go through the buildings again.

Finance Director Jaskot informed the Council and BOE that the funds which were left in the performance contract have been earmarked for debt service.

There was agreement between the Council and BOE on the need to have a discussion about the facilities master plan.

Chairman Oris agreed this conversation must be advanced as the first step towards modernization of the schools, and it should be in a public forum.

Chairman Oris thanked the BOE members and DOE staff for their presentation on the BOE capital expenditure plan.

4. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Mr. Veleber; seconded by Mr. Talbot.

MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 7:55 p.m.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

Attest

Marilyn W. Milton, Clerk