

MINUTES OF THE JOINT CHESHIRE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING AND BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY, JUNE 23, 2020, AT 6:30 P.M. VIA VIDEO TELECONFERENCE (PER EXECUTIVE ORDER OF THE GOVERNOR OF CONNECTICUT)

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Present

Robert J. Oris, Jr. Chairman; Timothy Slocum, Vice Chairman; David Borowy, James Jinks, Sylvia Nichols, Sandy Pavano, Peter Talbot, David Veleber, Donald Walsh. Staff: Sean M. Kimball, Town Manager; Arnett Talbot, Asst. Town Manager; James Jaskot, Finance Director; PW Director George Noewatne.

Chairman Oris called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

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.

Budget Committee

Budget Committee Chairman Borowy and Committee members Councilors Jinks and Slocum reviewed the proposed annual capital expenditure budget for recommendation to the full Town Council.

Mr. Borowy thanked the Town professional staff and Council members for their participation in the CEP process. The annual budget had 16 items, and with elimination of the Bartlem Park South/Chapman Property project, the list is now 15 items for review and decision making. Mr. Borowy explained the Bartlem Park expenditure of \$+\$5M was removed due to the COVID-19 situation and inability for public participation and input on this important community project. This project will be considered at a future date with public participation, and it is a long-term project for the community.

Review of 2020-2021 Annual Capital Expenditure Budget Items – Mr. Borowy

1. Technology Reserve Fund-Replacement Equipment (CNR) - \$310,000. This is a multi-year process to keep up with technology equipment.

2. Vehicle Equipment Replacement Fund (CNR) - \$290,000. There are vehicles included in this appropriation.

- 3. Capital Planning Account and Business Assessment Design (CNR) \$215,000.** This appropriation replenishes the fund for projects requiring planning and design.
- 4. Boiler Replacement Fire Station Annex and Police Station - \$110,000.**
- 5. HVAC and Locker Room Improvements at Police Station - \$1.4M.** This appropriation will fund the CPD locker room and HVAC improvements.
- 6. Street Light Pole Replacement (CNR) - \$110,000.** Funding to replace light poles for town owned street lights.
- 7. Public Works Dump Truck and Plow - \$215,000.** This funding continues the orderly replacement of the PW Department truck fleet.
- 8. Public Works Vehicles (non-dump truck) and Equipment - \$160,000.**
- 9. Road Improvement Program - \$1.6M.** Funding reduced from Town Manager request of \$2M due to COVID-19 situation; program will resurface 9 to 10 miles of town roads.
- 10. Sidewalk Improvement Program - \$200,000.** This is funding for sidewalk improvements; it is coupled with \$386,000 project for extension of Jarvis Street sidewalks to tie in with the Linear Trail; next summer Cheshire Road will be in the sidewalk program to tie in with Quinnipiac Park. Following these projects the Council and staff will work towards a master plan for future sidewalk projects.
- 11. Storm Water Drainage Disconnects (MSA Sediment Disposal - \$110,000.** This is a State mandated program to insure runoff does not get into the water supply and discharge areas; the program adds more control of water runoff.
- 12. Heavy Duty Vehicle-WPCD \$395,000.** This funding is for a WPCD vehicle used for cleaning out blocked sewers, pump stations, etc.
- 13. Roof Replacement/Dodd Middle School - \$250,000.** This funding is to replace a portion of the school roof which needs to be done due to its condition.
- 14. District Sidewalk and Masonry Repairs - \$125,000.** The funding will replace and repair sidewalks and masonry on school properties.
- 15. Road Reconstruction Industrial Avenue - \$620,000.** This road needs a new base, solid work to be done; East Johnson Avenue could follow with this work next year, along with other industrial roads.

MOTION by Mr. Slocum; seconded by Mr. Jinks.

MOVED that the Budget Committee approves the Annual Capital Budget for Fiscal Year 2020-2021, items #1 through #15, and forwards this budget to the full Town Council for approval.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

MOTION by Mr. Borowy; seconded by Mr. Slocum.

MOVED that the Budget Committee approves the Five-Year Omnibus Capital Expenditure Plan for Fiscal Years 2020-2021 through 2024-2025, and forwards this budget to the full Town Council for approval.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

Chairman Oris expressed appreciation to the Budget Committee for their work on the capital budget, and to Mr. Borowy for chairing the committee through the process.

3. ADOPTION OF FISCAL YEAR 2020-2021 FIVE-YEAR CAPITAL EXPENDITURE PLAN AND ANNUAL CAPITAL EXPENDITURE BUDGET

MOTION by Mr. Borowy; seconded by Mr. Slocum.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Council approves Resolution #062320-1

RESOLUTION #062320-1

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Council adopts the Annual Capital Budget for Fiscal Years 2020-2021, Items #1 through #15.

(a copy of this resolution is attached to the minutes)

1. **Technology Reserve Fund-Replacement Equipment (CNR) - \$310,000**
2. **Vehicle Equipment Replacement Fund (CNR) - \$290,000**
3. **Capital Planning Account and Business Assessment Design (CNR) \$215,000.**
4. **Boiler Replacement Fire Station Annex and Police Station - \$110,000.**
5. **HVAC and Locker Room Improvements at Police Station - \$1.4M.**
6. **Street Light Pole Replacement (CNR) - \$110,000.**
7. **Public Works Dump Truck and Plow - \$215,000.**
8. **Public Works Vehicles (non-dump truck) and Equipment - \$160,000.**
9. **Road Improvement Program - \$1.6M**
10. **Sidewalk Improvement Program - \$200,000.**
11. **Storm Water Drainage Disconnects (MSA Sediment Disposal - \$110,000.**

12. **Heavy Duty Vehicle-WPCD \$395,000.**
13. **Roof Replacement/Dodd Middle School - \$250,000.**
14. **District Sidewalk and Masonry Repairs - \$125,000**
15. **Road Reconstruction Industrial Avenue - \$620,000.**

Discussion

Mr. Borowy commented on the Town Council being judicious with bonding of some of the annual CEP projects. The recommended total budget was \$12.1M; this has been reduced to \$6.1M; with a lower net cost due to \$1M put into CNR; items #1 through #4 will be paid with CNR funds (cash), and will not be added to the bond indebtedness. The plan is a good one that addresses the needs of the community, what the public expects in services and facilities, without a financial burden on the taxpayers.

Regarding leftover funds from road projects, Mr. Walsh asked if they are in a separate fund, how much is in the fund, or if it is depleted. He asked about approving the funding at \$1.6M (\$400,000 reduction), the impact on the road projects, and noted Cheshire roads are in good condition.

The Council was told by Mr. Noewatne that there are some leftover funds this year, and depending on the road work completed it could be \$30,000 to \$100,000.

The \$395,000 for the WPCD Heavy Duty Truck was questioned by Mr. Walsh about whether it is a replacement truck, and put off purchase another year.

Mr. Noewatne cited the fact that the current WPCD truck is a 2001 vehicle with high mileage, showing its age, and is not as reliable as needed. This truck must be available at all times for WPCD emergency services (cleaning/servicing blocked sewer lines/pump stations etc.). As for delaying purchase of this truck out one year, Mr. Noewatne said it is operable, showing its age, has had numerous repairs this year, is rusting out, and should be replaced.

Chairman Oris commented on the road paving budget with inclusion of the Industrial Avenue road project for a total of \$2.2M for road improvements.

The Council and staff discussed the \$1.6M appropriation for road improvements which will enable 10 miles of road work to be completed this year with this funding. The question of LoCIP funding being available to Cheshire was raised by Mr. Slocum. According to Mr. Noewatne this funding is still available, was used for the Mt. Sanford and So. Brooksvale bridge. Cheshire has received \$2M LoCIP funding over the past 3 to 4 years.

Councilor Nichols stated her support of the annual capital budget, and cited the importance of continual maintenance of the Town. Regarding the Bartlem Park South project, she agrees there should be careful thinking, public input, moving it out a year, and doing this project logically with input from the residents.

The issue of the State funding of the Jarvis Street sidewalks project was raised by Mr. Jinks. He also expressed interest in working on a sidewalk master plan and formation of this plan.

Jarvis Street was largely a State funded project, and Mr. Noewatne explained that the town did some of the project work.

Mr. Borowy noted the interest in a sidewalk master plan was raised during the budget process, and it should be revisited by the Council. He said there are areas where connections need to be made, and a multi-year sidewalk plan could be developed.

Chairman Oris stated there has been structure to the sidewalk plan, and the town could use a rating plan similar to the road rating system. Cheshire has a Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) which speaks to advancement of sidewalks where neighborhoods can be connected to busy areas (downtown, schools etc.). The extending of new sidewalks with the funding appropriated by the Council has been following the POCD. Mr. Oris talked about the resistance from residents about sidewalks (i.e. Lanyon Drive)...an area that could use sidewalks because it connects a to schools and main shopping areas/restaurants in town. The sidewalk plan must be palatable to the neighborhoods being considered. A good plan is in place; it could be better; and Mr. Oris supports looking at a more structured plan for advancing sidewalks, where appropriate. He said it is unfair for anyone to suggest Councils have not looked at sidewalk issues...as Councils (current and past) have been supportive of advancing new sidewalks with an ongoing maintenance program.

Mr. Slocum cited the fact that the West Main Street project was supported by STEAP grants, and there were sidewalks on both side of this street. He noted a programmatic approach for sidewalks has been in place, and review and expansion could be a useful road map for the Council.

Stating his support of the CEP, Mr. Jinks said many items were taken care of in this budget. Last week he made a reasonable proposal to move some of the road resurfacing funds into a more extensive sidewalk plan and wishes this was done. Going forward the Council can take a programmatic approach filling in the gap in sidewalks in town. Mr. Jinks said the road construction budget is a good number, Cheshire roads are in good shape, and the number could be a little reduced with funds moved into sidewalks and filling in gaps.

Ms. Pavano commented on the outstanding job the Council did on the CEP with fiscal responsibility dealing with many projects. She cited support of the \$1.6M for the road program and moving Bartlem Park project out to next year.

Mr. Talbot supports the CEP as presented, and thanked Mr. Kimball, Ms. Talbot, Mr. Jaskot, department heads and town staff for their work on the capital budget with the funding numbers and backup information. He supports Mr. Jinks' initiative for more

sidewalk funding. For some time the request has been \$2M for road work and repairs. He would like Council to get more strategic with sidewalks and get into the road resurfacing. It would be beneficial to have an overview map of the town where sidewalks are lacking, where they could be strategically placed, with buy-in from the community. A number could be plugged into the capital budget which equaled what these sidewalks would cost. Mr. Talbot stated his agreement with Ms. Nichols' comments on the Bartlem Park property, the timing issue due to COVID-19 along with halting of community participation and support. At the present time, Bartlem South is getting used as passive recreation with walking trails, etc. This project must be done the right way; there is a consultant hired with great ideas; and community buy-in is needed before moving this project forward.

Mr. Veleber stated the CEP is well balanced with lots of areas covered in a fulfilling and prudent manner providing for many community needs. He agrees with comments about the Bartlem South project. Council is engaged with this project, and options were ready to be introduced when the pandemic set in. The Bartlem project is a big one; it will be a focal point of Cheshire; there is currently passive use of the property; everyone looks forward to public feedback on this future development. Mr. Veleber commented on the \$1.6M appropriation for road work and the fact the PW Department can work with this funding to complete the road projects.

With regard to sidewalk projects, Mr. Slocum noted this budget includes repair work on existing sidewalks, driveway aprons, etc. He asked what portion of this budget goes towards this work.

Mr. Noewatne explained the sidewalk budget is a replacement budget, not for design or installation of sidewalks. The budget has \$250,000 from Council appropriation. Cheshire has 107 miles of sidewalk; one mile costs \$250,000; and the town keeps up with sidewalk replacement. Mr. Noewatne said he would be pleased to discuss a sidewalk enhancement program with the Council and a rating system.

Mr. Slocum supports the capital budget, and said at this time projects will be paid over 20 years and it is a good time to responsibly spend the money. For the Bartlem Park project this is not the year to advance a \$5.6M project, and he has advocated for a deliberative approach to this project. There was a high response to the survey; the walking trail is getting good use; and the project should be looked at next year. Mr. Slocum supports a \$1.5M range of funding for this project with delivery of incentives over a few years. The coming months are a good time to sell this project and get public support and input.

Chairman Oris pointed out that there has been allocation of funds for new sidewalk expansion. He cited the Lanyon Drive sidewalk project which did not go forward, and funding was reallocated. The town initiated getting State funding for the Jarvis Street sidewalk project on Jarvis Street. There was a safety issue to be fixed and providing

walking trails etc. The community must know the Council has supported new sidewalks and expansion of projects in the past...which will continue into the future.

The Cheshire Street sidewalk project was referenced by Mr. Jinks with \$225,000 in year #2 of the CEP.

Mr. Noewatne commented on Cheshire having a good sidewalk infrastructure. The Council has provided funds for sidewalk repairs and there is a new sidewalk plan for Cheshire Street.

Safety is an issue and Mr. Oris said the recent tragedy has the thoughts and prayers of the community. The Council stands united to enhance safety, especially for our children.

With the annual capital budget the Council is being fiscally prudent. Mr. Walsh talked about not rushing into the Bartlem South project without a good plan in place, and doing it in phases. He questions just putting \$5M into a plan. Mr. Walsh supports the CEP budget as presented. He has hesitancy about the \$300K truck for WPCD, but Mr. Noewatne has explained the truck is on its last legs...so he will support this expenditure. Mr. Walsh thanked the Budget Committee, Chairman Borowy for his leadership, and town staff for their hard work.

Chairman Oris supports the capital budget which had substantial but important cuts. It is a bare bones budget with necessities and Councilors have commented on some items. He had concerns about funding the WPCD truck this year, but noted the importance of this vehicle and what it does to insure reliability of the sewer system...emergency situations with blocked sewer systems, cleaning of pipes etc. The WPCD does not want this truck to break down when needed for emergencies. Mr. Oris commented on there being more concerns for next year's budget.

This budget has \$2M in road projects which keeps Cheshire ahead of the curve with good, quality, well maintained roads. Mr. Oris talked about Bartlem Park and his interest in advancing something for this park project...sooner than later...and being fiscally appropriate. He supports advancing a dialogue with the community to get the final design done and the project shovel ready. At that point, the Council and community with referendum vote, can decide when to move forward with this project. The COVID-19 prevented finalization of potential options with the community, and Mr. Oris wants to begin the process and determine when the process should start on this project. In a recent meeting, there was discussion and agreement to interact with the community as soon as possible.

Chairman Oris supports the lean CEP budget, and thanked Mr. Kimball, Ms. Talbot, Mr. Jaskot, department heads and town staff for their hard work on this budget. He expressed appreciation to Mr. Borowy and the Budget Committee for their work throughout the budget process.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

MOTION by Mr. Borowy; seconded by Mr. Slocum.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Council approves Resolution #062320-2

RESOLUTION #062320-2

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Council adopts the Five Year Omnibus Capital Expenditure Plan for Fiscal Years 2020-2021 through 2024-2025 in accordance with the recommendation of the Town Council Budget Committee.

(a copy of the resolution is attached to the minutes)

Discussion

Mr. Borowy explained this is adoption of the five year capital plan, years #2 through #5. It is a guide on future projects, costs, and a place holder for the next five (5) years, and will change, as needed.

The issue of a letter from a Cornwall Avenue Extension resident regarding expansion of this road was raised by Mr. Slocum. He noted this project is in year #5 of the plan, and wanted to note the resident's concerns.

Mr. Veleber commented on the Cornwall Avenue Extension project in year #5 of the CEP as a place holder subject to change. He supports the five (5) year plan.

Mr. Walsh asked about the CHS turf field which is 10 years old and replacement of the field in the next 4 to 5 years...and if this is a BOE capital project.

In that regard, Mr. Oris said his understanding is there is a replacement fund for the turf field without a lot of money in the fund. It is likely this is a project for funding consideration in the out years of the CEP. The Cornwall Avenue Extension road project is in year #5, and he noted many things will happen between now and then.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

4. APPROVAL OF SUBMISSION OF REFERENDUM QUESTIONS AND AUTHORIZATION FOR EXPLANATORY TEXT.

MOTION by Mr. Borowy; seconded by Mr. Walsh

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Council approves Resolution #062320-3

RESOLUTION #062320-3

RESOLVED: That the resolutions entitled “Resolution Appropriating \$1,400,000 For HVAC And Locker Room Improvements at Police Station And Authorizing The Issuance Of \$1,400,000 Bonds Of The Town To Meet Said Appropriation And Pending The Issuance Thereof The Making of Temporary Borrowings For Such Purpose”; “Resolution Appropriating \$1,600,000 For Road Improvement Program And Authorizing The Issuance Of \$1,600,000 Bonds Of The Town To Meet Said Appropriation And Pending The Issuance Thereof The Making of Temporary Borrowings For Such Purpose”; “Resolution Appropriating \$620,000 For Road Reconstruction Of Industrial Avenue And Authorizing The Issuance Of \$620,000 Bonds Of The Town To Meet Said Appropriation And Pending The Issuance Thereof The Making of Temporary Borrowings For Such Purpose” adopted by the Town Council on June 23,2020, be submitted to the Town Electors for approval or disapproval at a referendum on November 3, 2020 between the hours of 6:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. (E.T.), and that the warning of said referendum shall state the questions to be voted upon as follows:

(a copy of the resolution is attached to the minutes)

Discussion

Mr. Borowy stated the Town Charter allows the Town Council to take care of housekeeping items, and only send out larger items to referendum for approval. For the items cited in the resolution there is no help with funding; they are significant; and \$3.6M total will be added to the debt service.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

Chairman Oris was recused from agenda item #5. Vice-Chairman Slocum conducted the rest of the meeting and executive session.

5. CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS (executive session)

MOTION by Mr. Veleber; seconded by Mr. Walsh.

MOVED that the Town Council enter Executive Session at to include Town Manager Kimball, Asst.Town Manager Talbot, Town Planner Voelker, Economic Development Coordinator Sitko to discuss contract negotiations.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

The Town Council exited Executive Session at 8:16 p.m.

6. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Mr. Walsh; seconded by Ms. Pavano

MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 8:16 p.m.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

Attest:

Marilyn W. Milton, Clerk