

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL TOWN COUNCIL MEETING AND BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, AUGUST 2, 2012 AT 7:00 P.M. IN THE MAIN OFFICE OF CHESHIRE HIGH SCHOOL, 525 SOUTH MAIN STREET, CHESHIRE CT 06410.

Present

Town Council: Tim Slocum, David Schrumm, Michael Ecke, Patti Flynn-Harris, Sylvia Nichols, Thomas Ruocco, James Sima, Peter Talbot. Absent – Andrew Falvey.

Board of Education: Gerry Brittingham, Tod Dixon, Sandy Pavano

Staff: Michael A. Milone, Town Manager; James Jaskot, Finance Director; Gina DeFilio, Deputy Finance Director.

Dr. Greg Florio, Supt. Of Schools; Scott Detrick, Asst. Supt. Of Schools; Vincent Masciana, Director of Management Services; Jeff Solan, CHS Principal; Michael Papa, Dan Marsaglia, Madeline Diker, Bob Garbukas, Victor Sandoval.

PBC Members John Purtill and Mark Nash

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: FY 2012 – 20-13 FIVE YEAR CAPITAL EXPENDITURE PLAN AND ANNUAL CAPITAL EXPENDITURE BUDGET.

EDUCATION

The group met in the cafeteria/commons area of the high school. Ms. Dieker gave a tour of the kitchen and cafeteria facilities of the high school, pointing out the areas which need renovation and repair. The kitchen equipment is old, inefficient, and needs to be replaced, and the kitchen needs to be redesigned for more efficiency and safety. There are 17 women working in the kitchen during the school year; there are sometimes 20 workers for special events; and there is only one bathroom for the workers. She informed the group that there are 1,600 students in the school, and 1,000 receive food service. There are long lines each day for students to receive lunch, and the current system is inefficient and even unsafe at times as there are cross paths of people during lunch waves. With a renovation the loading dock would be expanded; paper storage would be moved; and space would be opened up for more student service lines.

Cheshire High School was built in 1952 for 500 students, and now has 1,600 students. Since construction of the school, there have been no renovations or upgrades to the kitchen and cafeteria. This area of the school also serves as the emergency shelter for the Town of Cheshire, and during Storm Alfred housed and fed people for a few days.

The CHS kitchen renovation project is in the Capital Plan in year #2, FY 13-14.

Mr. Masciana took the group on a tour of the outside of the high school building. He pointed out the roof and chimney on the kitchen area which needs repair at a cost of \$60,000, with a request in the CEP for this project.

Information on the generator was outlined by Mr. Masciana, who explained that in an emergency the generator is unable to provide power for all the areas used as a shelter. For example, there is no lighting in the bathrooms when the generator is in use, and extension cords must be used. There is a need for a permanent, natural gas, larger generator to provide 50% of the high school with power during an emergency.

Locker Rooms – the group went down to the locker room area, which has been a topic of discussion due to its poor condition. Mr. Masciana advised that the area would be painted (walls and floors) and put into acceptable condition for the new school year.

Outside Repairs – Mr. Marsaglia pointed out the areas where work must be done, particularly on sidewalks, front areas and parking lots. The current repairs being done are temporary. All areas and sections of concrete must be replaced due to continuous cracks and breaks. It is estimated this work will cost \$175,000. Repairs are being done at Norton and Doolittle Schools.

Technology – Mike Pappa, I.T. Specialist, showed the group the main data closet, and explained that all data passes through this closet. The telephone system is housed in this closet. Students are encouraged to bring their own devices to school, and are connected to the internet.

BOE – FIVE YEAR CAPITAL PLAN REQUEST

Mr. Masciana gave a power point presentation on the BOE's requests in the five year plan. The total five year expenditures would be \$24,220,250; the FY 2012-2013 request is \$6,385,250.

In FY 2012-2013 the categories are the following:

Code Compliance -	\$ 3,905,250
Roofs, Paving, Walks, Chimneys -	\$ 70,000
Flooring -	\$ 600,000
CHS Utility Tunnels -	\$ 500,000
Technology Infrastructure -	\$ 150,000
21 st Century Classroom -	\$ 325,000
Technology Improvements (BYOD) -	\$ 175,000
Emergency Shelter -	\$ 165,000
TOTAL	\$ 6,385,250

In year #2, FY 13-14, the BOE has a request for \$2.675 million for CHS cafeteria improvements. There is a \$1.1 million request for code compliance; \$1.5 million for roofs and walkways and chimneys.

Mr. Masciana noted that with the infrastructure improvements, HVAC, window replacements, cafeteria improvements, etc. some of these projects can fall within the scope of the energy performance contracting work, and costs could be reduced by about \$8 million. These projects would be paid by reduction in energy performance over the next 10 years.

In looking at the pie chart for FY 12-13 requests (\$6.38 million), Mr. Masciana pointed out that 9% is for flooring, 3% for emergency shelter, 2% for technology, 3% for BYOD, 5% for Smart Boards, 8% for CHS utility tunnel work, 9% for roofs, paving, walks, chimneys, and 63% is for code compliance. He noted that the code compliance for CHS includes the Library, with moving of shelves to widen the area for handicapped access, new carpeting, and it is hoped to get this done next year.

Over the last 5 years of the CEP, the average approval of the BOE projects has been 84.3%, and approval of one year of the CEP is 49.4%.

School buildings – Mr. Masciana commented on the aging school buildings in Cheshire. The youngest building is 41 years old and the oldest is 100 years old, along with portable (permanent) classrooms, maintenance garage, bus depot, storage trailers, concession stand, and other aged structures. Cheshire's schools have 300 learning spaces, 760,000 s.f. of buildings, and old parking lots, roofs, and outside grounds. The operating budget of the BOE has been flat for the last 4 years, and less maintenance equates to growing facility liabilities.

Key points of the BOE request were cited by Mr. Masciana.

\$160,000 for the emergency shelter to include a permanent, natural gas generator, rewiring of the transfer switch for power in the Commons, bathrooms, and main data closet. A small generator is also needed at Highland School where the government freezer is housed with food for the entire school system. Also, Highland School could be used as a second shelter in an emergency.

\$1.25 million in year #2 of the CEP for the high school kitchen and cafeteria renovations.

With regard to an emergency situation, Mr. Masciana explained that the Town just participated in a preparedness drill. If 10% of the population needed shelter, that is 2,900 people, with 2,000 at the high school, 600 at Highland and 200 at the Youth Center. The Red Cross has told the Town that 20 s.f. per person is required at a shelter. During the last storm the Town housed 80 people a night and fed over 200 people each day.

Technology Needs – the request is for \$150,000 in FY 12-13 for infrastructure upgrades, with CHS as a priority. A critical task is the updating of the main data closet.

The telephone system is old, and must be replaced, and the expected cost is \$120,000 in FY 13-14.

Smart Boards - \$325,000 in FY 12-13, and \$175,000 in FY 13-14. At the present time there is about 70% deployment of the Smart Boards.

PC replacement – has been \$185,000 a year out of the operating budget, and 77% of the pc's are 5 years old or more.

Students can bring their own device to school, and the BOE has tablets which students can borrow during the school day. There is free storage space, email, administrative tools, and the devices and BYOD are well used and received.

Virtual desk top infrastructure (50 in the Fall 2012); eliminates the need for 70% of the pc work stations; improves reliability and reduces long term replacement and fixed costs.

Mr. Masciana stated that technology is the key investment in student education that needs to be supported.

District Modernization Plan – Mr. Masciana stated that the Town needs a road map on what to do with its facilities over the next 10 years. There should be a long term plan developed for classrooms and facility modernization. In five years out with this plan, the newest school will be 46 years old and the oldest will be 105 years old.

Code Compliance – Cheshire has two years to complete its plan for compliance with the Civil Rights Act. In FY12-13 there is \$2.7 million requested for code compliance, and the other compliance costs are spread out in the plan over 5 years.

A new athletic structure, field house request is in FY 12-13 at \$1.18 million. There is State reimbursement for code compliance at 40% of the eligible expenses, and about 50% of the 40% reimbursement will be for code compliance. Once the project is approved at referendum, it is submitted to the State for reimbursement.

Mr. Masciana stated that the PBC has concluded that a new structure resolves the compliance deficiencies and resolves the sports locker problems and concerns. He showed photos of the Middletown CT complex which has storage, lockers, concession area, public bathrooms, press box, elevator.

Mr. Schrumm stated that a \$2.7 million code compliance number is very large, and he asked about a priority list from the State and Cheshire on the projects.

In reply, Mr. Masciana said the State has not been asked for a priority list, and Cheshire can have its own priority list. There is a process to be followed for the reimbursement piece, and once the money for the project is approved, the Town does not have to spend all the money in one year. All the detailed items and solutions have been provided to the State, Council and BOE. When an architect and engineer begin working with the Town, the priorities may change. There is an elevator requirement in the code compliance plan.

According to Mr. Masciana all the projects may not be done in one or two summers, and a consultant will be needed to advise on the projects, how long they will take, etc.

Mr. Marsaglia informed the group that the elevator for the auditorium was eliminated from the code compliance plan because the projection system is now on the floor level.

\$2.7 million is the number to be worked with for the code compliance projects and Mr. Masciana said this number must be approved before going to the State for reimbursement.

Ms. Flynn-Harris asked about the modernization plan and the scope of the work.

In response, Mr. Masciana said there are 8 buildings and the Humiston School. There needs to be an understanding of what is happening in terms of student population and the modernization plan for the schools. Some classrooms at the high school are too small for the number of students, and we need to identify what is needed for high school students.

With regard to the storage areas at the high school, Mr. Masciana reported there are 9 storage trailers, 3000 s.f. of storage space, which house band, athletic, graduation, theater equipment.

Mr. Nash from the PBC stated that the PBC committee will analyze storage needs in the code compliance discussions with input from user groups. He noted there is a whole process to be undertaken.

For the code compliance part of the athletic complex, Mr. Masciana said there is State reimbursement. It would be about 20% for the athletic structure, and 40% for anything inside the school building. With renovation of the existing locker rooms there would only be 20% reimbursement for the code compliance part of the project.

The total cost of a new structure is about \$2 million.

Mr. Schrumm commented on the urgency of the new structure when there were discussions earlier in the year about \$500,000 for a retrofit and ramp for the locker rooms, and \$800,000 with a retrofit and elevator. He commented on the fact that PBC endorsed this plan, and is now endorsing a plan for construction of a new field house.

PBC Chairman Purtill informed the group that the PBC went back, did an investigation, took field trips, and their conclusion is that money should not be put into retrofitting the locker rooms, as compared to a new facility. A new and better facility will last longer than a renovation of locker rooms.

It was stated by Mr. Schrumm that the locker rooms should be renovated, and in 3 years or further down the road, a new field house could be constructed.

Dr. Florio commented on the request a few years ago from the BOE for a comprehensive study at \$150,000 and this never being followed through.

Mr. Ruocco stated that the locker room project is now larger and different than what it was, and it was tabled by the Council because there was no decision on an elevator or ramp at that time.

Council Chairman Slocum said that the PBC was asked to look at a separate structure.

The group was told by Dr. Florio that this was a BOE project, and the Council gave it to the PBC. When the PBC was ready to go forward the project was tabled.

With the field house request, Mr. Schrumm commented on taking the risk to put it out to referendum at \$1.5 million. He noted there is also a \$32.3 million plant upgrade project for referendum on the November ballot. The question is whether the field house project is ready to go to referendum.

BOE Chairman Brittingham stated that, in the end, we all want the most effective use of the taxpayer's money to solve problems. The field house solves many problems at the high school athletic complex. To renovate the locker rooms at \$800,000 is a band aid approach, and the PBC concurs with this fact.

PUBLIC

Rob Daly commented on the image of the Town of Cheshire when people come to events such as the Relay for Life, CIAC events, and the poor first impression of the high school complex, i.e. the bathrooms. He said money should be spent wisely and the field house facility is long overdue, and should move forward.

Mr. Slocum asked about the \$2 million for a field house project, and where we would be with the locker rooms.

In reply, Mr. Daly said we would be right where we are now. We should not put money into the current locker room space, and in 3 years come back to the taxpayers for money for code compliance for a press box, elevator and concession stand. For now, we should get the locker room space as usable as possible, and be diligent and look at the best bang for our buck.

Ms. Nichols stated we are hearing two things – the need for locker room space and making best use of taxpayer dollars, and a referendum for \$2 million for a new structure or \$800,000 for locker room renovations. We are not comparing two like projects – but comparing a locker room renovation with another project that encompasses much more than this. Ms. Nichols expressed concern about the modernization plan for the school system and recommends that this plan be developed. The field house is a separate structure with a long life span and the exact number is needed for this project. The number for referendum should include the actual cost and what the entire project would be.

According to Mr. Purtil the PBC can have the actual number once the decision is made on what the project will be.

Mr. Sima raised questions about the technology numbers, i.e. \$175,000 in one year for Smart Boards, and what percentage of the students will get devices. He asked if, in 3 years, there will be another big number or if this number is it.

In response, Mr. Masciana said we are building an internet infrastructure for the school system. The concept is BYOD; there is internet connection for the students; the \$175,000 request is to provide students without means the loaner devices, and 30 devices have been purchased.

Mr. Sima asked about the indoor air quality and drainage issues, and if another \$500,000 is needed for concrete paving in the tunnel. He also asked about the project's completion.

PBC Member Nash stated that there is no definitive number yet, and the company has done an analysis, looked at the tunnels, has solutions, and this is a multi step process. They ran cameras through all the drains, and did more compressions. For a summer project, Mr. Nash said all the details must be known in the prior Fall.

With regard to the CHS cafeteria improvements and the generator, Mr. Sima asked if \$160,000 is for the high school only.

Mr. Masciana explained that the CHS generator is \$60,000, with \$40,000 for electrical work, and the Highland School generator is \$60,000. The new

generator at the high school would take care of powering 50% of the school building.

After Storm Alfred, Mr. Milone said there was a debriefing held, and we do not want to rely on temporary generators, and permanent generators are required.

Mr. Masciana will email the Council information on the percentage of the CEP in the first year and the full five years for the high school.

Regarding the civil rights compliance Mr. Sima asked if inside issues of the high school building have been addressed.

Mr. Masciana said there re several more things to be done inside the building, i.e. the Library. They amount to about \$1 million in improvements, and another large improvement is the elevator.

4. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Ms. Nichols; seconded by Mr. Ruocco.

MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 9:22 p.m.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

Attest:

Marilyn W. Milton, Clerk