

**MINUTES OF THE CHESHIRE TOWN COUNCIL BUDGET COMMITTEE
MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2012 AT 6:45 P.M. IN
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, TOWN HALL, 84 SOUTH MAIN STREET, CHESHIRE
CT 06410**

Present

Chairman David Schrumm; Michael Ecke and Thomas Ruocco.

Councilors Peter Talbot and Patty Flynn-Harris.

Staff: Town Manager Michael A. Milone and Finance Director James Jaskot.

Dr. Greg Florio, Supt. Of Schools; Scott Dietrick, Asst. Supt. Of Schools; Vincent Masciana, Director of Management Services.

BOE Members Gerry Brittingham and Anthony Perugini.

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. SYNTHETIC TURF FIELD REPLACEMENT FUND

Mr. Schrumm commented on the fact that there have been discussions about funding for the turf replacement, and that the Town has many funds in operation at the same time. The proposed fund is to establish funds for the CHS replacement of the turf field.

The proposed resolution was read into the record by Mr. Schrumm.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town establish a "Synthetic Turf Field Replacement Fund" to create a source for funding the future replacement of the existing synthetic turf field at Cheshire High School.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this fund will be a repository for gifts, donations, field rental fees and ticket surcharges that are specifically charged for and accounted for as they are received. No Education Department Operating or Capital Funds may be placed in this account.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Town Council will accept, appropriate and disburse these funds for the sole purpose of the future replacement of the existing synthetic turf field at Cheshire High School.

Mr. Masciana explained that the money raised through the rental fees, ticket surcharge, and other events would be transferred once a year into this turf field replacement fund. Any gifts or funds on the BOE side would go into this fund. At the present time there is \$2,480 in rental fees and \$1,956 in ticket surcharges, for a total of \$4,436 to be put into the replacement fund.

Dr. Florio advised that the BOE Student Activity Line Item would be the repository for the funds until there is an annual transfer. The ticket surcharge fee is \$1 for adults for all school events.

The issue of whether there would be enough money in the replacement account to fund a new turf field in 10 years was raised by Mr. Ruocco. He suggested changing the wording of the proposed resolution to read "towards replacement of the existing synthetic field".

There was a brief discussion about the last sentence in paragraph #2, and whether this was a change from the original resolution. Mr. Masciana gave an example...the BOE realizes savings from another item and wants to put these funds into the replacement fund.

According to Mr. Schrumm this could be a violation of the Town charter by setting up a BOE capital fund.

Stating this would not happen out of capital funds, Mr. Masciana said he could see operating dollars contribution from the BOE.

Dr. Florio said that savings which will be realized over time are part of the equation that replacement of the field will be offset by money raised and BOE savings among maintenance items. If the BOE saves money in grounds maintenance, there was anticipation that this money would be for the replacement fund.

Mr. Ecke stated he does not have a problem setting up this fund.

BOE Member Perugini said that the BOE is trying to make this a savings account, i.e. \$4,000 savings in maintenance and this money could be appropriated to the replacement fund. He informed the Council that the Finance Committee of the BOE passed a motion to place money saved from maintenance into the turf field replacement account.

Mr. Schrumm stated that there must be identification of the ticket sales surcharge money going into the fund.

A detailed report of the money raised to date was shown to the committee by Mr. Masciana, who informed the committee that there is reporting in place within the CHS Athletic Department.

The issue of the amount of money saved from maintenance costs was raised by Mr. Ruocco.

Dr. Florio said that turf maintenance will not be a line item in the BOE budget.

There is a counter argument about setting up this special fund, and Mr. Schrumm questioned maintenance savings being used for heating purposes.

It was noted by Mr. Ecke that this fund was set up because of the reluctance of the Town Council about going ahead with the turf field project.

BOE Chairman Brittingham stated that the fund was to be set up so the BOE could be proactive on the replacement issue.

Because the field is generating revenue, Mr. Perugini said the question is where should this money be placed, and the BOE is trying to lessen the cost of future field replacement.

With regard to paragraph #2 of the proposed resolution, Mr. Talbot said the BOE Finance Committee stated no budget savings could be used, and this defeats this purpose.

According to Mr. Perugini, specific revenue is being raised towards replacement of the field and future savings are not germane to the issue now. The BOE has not had a full year cycle for the field, and the focus should be on revenue generated.

Stating he has no problem with setting up a rental fee and surcharge fund, Mr. Schrumm said he has an issue with maintenance savings being placed in this fund.

It was stated by Mr. Perugini that any appropriation to this fund must go through the Town Council.

Dr. Florio commented on the Town Council encouraging ways to prove that field costs to the Town would not be great in the future. His view is to take that \$12,000 difference, a factual contribution from the BOE, and in 10 years there is \$120,000. The BOE wanted to show people and the Town Council it was serious about defraying future replacement costs, including banking maintenance savings. And, setting up a separate account would force the BOE to keep its word.

Mr. Schrumm said it is simple to keep track of field fees and ticket surcharges, but he questions what will be saved over grass field maintenance versus turf field, and taking this money and putting it into the replacement gift account.

The committee was told that this number would not be a line item based on the base line and BOE could make an annual recommendation to the Council.

The matter was continued to a future meeting for further discussion.

4. LIBRARY FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE

Mr. Schrumm read a proposed resolution into the record.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Library Board and staff may conduct activities to raise money for the Cheshire Public Library, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that said activities will be approved by the Town Manager in advance, and that all funds raised will be accepted and appropriated by the Town Council as it deems necessary.

Mr. Schrumm explained that the Library Board wants to raise funds to support and enhance what is done by the Friends of the Library organization. There is uncertainty about whether this can be done, and Mr. Milone wants the matter to come before the Council.

Mr. Milone reported that he reviewed this matter with the Council when the Library was undergoing renovation and expansion. The Library Board wanted to do fund raising but felt it was not authorized to do so. Ms. Burkee, Library Director, has been finding ways to generate additional revenue and there are opportunities out there to be pursued. Due to the nature of the ordinance governing the Board, the members want to make sure that they can aggressively fund raise. This would take incorporation of the proposed resolution into the ordinance CD2-24(g). This would have to be done by ordinance review, holding a public hearing, and incorporation of the new language into the ordinance.

Mr. Schrumm said there could be a paragraph #3 in the resolution that stated the Council authorizes the Library Board to do fund raising.

Town Manager Milone advised that the only clear way to do this is to add wording to the ordinance and a public hearing would be required.

(Mr. Talbot left the meeting, and Ms. Flynn-Harris entered the meeting)

Ms. Flynn-Harris informed the committee that another reason is that the Friends of the Library is a 501c-3 and fund raising organization. Trustees of the Library Board want to engage in a different level of fund raising. She noted that the Town of Southbury trustees cannot accept direct requests and the Town itself is trying to take the requests. The "Friends" receive donations and they go to the Town with allocations made of these funds into the Library budget. The Friends and the Library Board have not had open discussion about joint fund raising.

According to Mr. Milone the "Friends" want to limit the type and nature of fund raising and not go beyond what is being done now. The Board wants to go beyond what they are doing now and wants protection and insurance that the

ordinance would not be violated. He will discuss this matter further with Mr. Schrumm, work with Ms. Burkee, and come back to the Ordinance Review Committee for discussion and decision. He also requested that the word "staff" be deleted from the proposed resolution.

Mr. Ruocco noted that Ms. Burkee emailed information about a fund raising committee and asked if this would be a committee of the Board.

In response, Ms. Flynn-Harris said that there could be a sub-committee set up in order to handle particular types of fund raising. She explained that a check that comes to the Library Board goes to the Town and the Council can determine how much of the bequest will be given to the Library. Funds that go to the "Friends" stays within this 501c-3 group for the Library.

Mr. Milone will work on the language changes, return the issue to the Budget Committee, for follow up.

5. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Mr. Ruocco; seconded by Mr. Ecke.

MOVED to adjourn at 7:35 p.m.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

Attest:

Marilyn W. Milton, Clerk