

**MINUTES OF THE CHESHIRE COMMUNITY POOL (CCP) EVALUATION  
COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, MAY 23, 2013, AT 6:30 P.M. IN  
ROOM 207, TOWN HALL, 84 SOUTH MAIN STREET, CHESHIRE CT 06410.**

Present

Co-Chairmen John Purtill and Kevin Wetmore. Committee members: David Gavin, Matt Levine, Sylvia Nichols, Mark Nash, Judy Senft, Wendy Stevens, Ron Urguhart  
Absent: Lew Cohen, Keith Goldberg, Bill Kunde, Michael Ecke  
Staff Present: Sheila Adams, Aquatics Director and Vincent Masciana, DOE Director of Management Services.

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Purtill called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

**2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The group Pledged Allegiance to the Flag.

**3. APPROVAL OF 5/9/13 MEETING MINUTES**

MOTION by Ms. Stevens; seconded by Mr. Nash

MOVED that the minutes of the meeting of May 9, 2013 be approved subject to corrections, additions, deletions.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

**4. MYTHIC SPORTS LLC CONSULTATION SUPPORT**

Pending arrival of John McIlhargy, this agenda item was moved to later in the agenda.

Mr. Purtill informed the committee that there was a mini-workshop with Mr. McIlhargy, the consultant, who will be a great help to get things going.

**5. PROJECT MILESTONES/TIMETABLE STATUS**

CCP Evaluation Committee – Milestones. These were reviewed by Mr. Wetmore along with changes made since the last meeting (green are completed; red is major delay). Meetings of the Council and CCP were highlighted in yellow.

Voter information session – proposed date of June 20<sup>th</sup>; must be discussed and confirmed with Town Council before public notification. This session will bring to the public the committee's 3 or 4 options, pros and cons, and build up information to the public. Mr. Purtill will do a thorough presentation, briefly outline the options discarded, review the possibilities of the 3 or 4 options, get public input. Press releases to the media would be sent out prior to this information session. It was suggested by Ms. Nichols that the meeting be televised on the government channel. Ms. Adams commented on the need to get those people who are non-educated about the pool the information for this session.

The many ways to provide public notification about the information session included signs at local businesses, press releases to the local media, dissemination of information through the swimming community, using the Chamber of Commerce newsletter and contacts, networking with people who use and do not use the pool, and information tables outside the local grocery stores.

Technical Specs to firms – June 6<sup>th</sup> to provide more time to work with the consultant. A commitment for something to be ready in July to the Council is doable; costs are needed for the capital budget by July so there are specifications and a place holder number for this budget. With a November referendum the committee does not have to commit to one contractor or one option, as there can be continuing negotiations through October.

**Agenda item #7 was moved to current status.**

## **7. CCP OPTIONS UPDATE – All**

Mr. Wetmore reviewed the viability of options (based on priority rating) with the committee and it was determined that Tier 3-Low and Tier 4-No had the lowest ratings.

Copies of the information on the options for the community pool are attached to these minutes.

Other – Close Pool Facility. The option description and requirements were discussed, including financial impact, pros and cons. The cost of this option is approximately \$1.25 - \$1.5 million.

Mr. Purtill explained that bonds have been issued for the pool which are paid back out of taxpayer revenue. The pool is a \$4.1 million Town asset; this debt will increase the deficit, affect the Town's credit rating, increase costs of other things the Town will build, people will feel this in taxes, and it will be looked at negatively.

MOTION by Ms. Senft; seconded by Mr. Levine.

MOVED that the committee remove closure of the existing pool facility from the available options.

VOTE           The motion passed with nine (9) in favor.

Add a Competitive Pool to High School - The option description and requirements were discussed, including financial impact, pros and cons. The cost of this option is approximately \$6.5-\$7.5 million, plus the costs to winterize the existing pool.

MOTION by Mr. Urguhart; seconded by Mr. Levine.

MOVED that the committee remove adding a competitive pool to the high school from the available options.

VOTE           The motion passed with nine (9) in favor.

Present Air Structure (bubble) – This option was discussed. It is not a favorable option and has little community support. Mr. Urguhart stated this option should stay in because with new stanchions there could be a new bubble. Mr. Wetmore noted there are two other air structures to be considered.

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

MOVED that the committee remove the present air structure from the available options.

VOTE           The motion passed with nine (9) in favor.

Split Pool – This option description and requirements was discussed and explained along with the pros and cons. This is splitting the existing 25 yard x 75 meter pool into two 25 yards x 25 yards pools with a 14 foot divider. If this were the option Cheshire would be the first community to retrofit a 50 meter pool by splitting it into two pools. The estimated cost of this option is \$4.4-\$5 million.

MOTION by Mr. Urguhart; seconded by Ms. Stevens.

MOVED that the committee remove the split pool option from the available options.

VOTE           The motion passed with nine (9) in favor.

Moveable Panels – The option description, requirements, and cons were discussed for this greenhouse style enclosure with retractable moveable sections. There was no financial impact data noted, and one important con was that this is not technically feasible for the size of the Cheshire pool.

MOTION by Mr. Urguhart; seconded by Ms. Senft.

MOVED that the committee remove the moveable panels from the available options.

#### Discussion

Mr. Gavin stated that with moveable panels we are talking about accordion type panels. Mr. Wetmore said there would be rails and motors needed to move panels this large.

VOTE           The motion passed with nine (9) in favor.

To sum things up Mr. Purtill said we are down to tension fabric. In looking at the viability of options, there are two implementations of an air supported structure and

conventional construction. The committee still needs help in data and information to make a decision.

Mr. Wetmore said more data is needed on the summer only pool option. Mr. Purtill noted there was not much interest within the committee for a summer only pool, but there may be in the community, and this must be studied further before being ruled out. And, there must be supporting argument and information to rule this option out.

## **6. SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES/STATUS**

- **Structure Specifications Analysis – K. Goldberg**

Mr. Nash informed the committee that there is nothing more to report at this time.

Mr. Gavin has contacted companies, and he has advised them we are in committee status at this time. One company has a fabric structure and another has an open aire steel frame structure covered by a Teflon coated polyester/nylon fabric which has the potential, in some cases, to be removable for summer use. It will withstand winter conditions, has a lower cost structure which is, probably, not permanent with cover replacement every 10 years. Denver Airport has this type of structure.

The committee was told by Mr. Purtill that Bill Kunde stays in communication with Open Aire. Mr. Kunde told them we are back looking at an Open Aire structure in committee analysis, but it will be hard to afford. The Open Aire rep discussed the prior project and advised there were some additional costs added at that time due to partnering with a design firm, when there was probably no need for a design firm because this is a classic design-build job. Secondly, they had to have all the trades because Open Aire was partnering with a Boston based construction company, and this added to the cost of the project. The Town could do better on this structure acting as its own general contractor, using a local contractor, local trades to do the foundation work, HVAC, electrical, and put everything in position for Open Air to put a building in place. There could be a lot of savings, but no exact number was given. Mr. Purtill said the sense always was that the Open Aire cost was pumped up for many reasons, but the former committee could not put a finger on it. They went back to Open Aire to talk about willingness to do something about the cost, but the firm was locked into the construction company and design firm and could not budge or do anything.

### **Consultant, John R. McIlhargy, Mythic Sports Group, entered the meeting, and was introduced to the committee.**

In 2008, Mr. Gavin said Open Aire quoted the job, without HVAC and other work at about \$2 million, and the job was originally \$5 million, and went to \$7 million quickly.

One-half million was added because Connecticut is a prevailing wage state. Mr. Nash noted that the cost of lumber has increased 45% since 2008, and the cost of steel and aluminum has increased as well. He said things are jumping now in the industry, and he knows there are deals out there.

- **Energy Impacts/Evaluations – D. Gavin**

Mr. Gavin stated that with a permanent structure the committee could use the KBE energy numbers; and for an Open Aire structure we could use the numbers submitted.

Mr. Purtill stated that we know the energy costs of the two bubbles, energy costs of conventional, polycarbonate, and now have data about tension fabric. Mr. Gavin said there is one concern with tension fabric with opening up the roof and side panels, and have ambient conditions in warm weather months without any mechanical HVAC going, but backup HVAC might be needed. With a permanent structure there is HVAC all year round.

- **Financial – K. Wetmore**

Mr. Wetmore commented on the pool being a capital expense over an extended period of time, and a compilation of the pool expenditures, by year, 2002 through 2012, including description of the expenditure, estimated life, original cost, and depreciated book value was done. As of May 2013, the total cost is \$4.7 million; depreciated book value is \$4.1 million; bonds outstanding \$1.5 million; interest to be paid \$282,000

Mr. Purtill stated that the Town has a valuable investment in the community pool.

Pool Financial Base Case/Present Air Structure FY 2014 –. This is important information. At the end of committee work, Mr. Wetmore said a 40 year life cycle cost of the pool will be done to compare the different options and costs over an extended period of time as opposed to a one time up front cost. The base case is a normalized year with the bubble up and running for one year (using 2014); adjustments made to contractual services, budget equity zeroed out; and some years there is a negative budget impact using the subsidy, and other years there is a positive equity, keeping track of unanticipated changes in the budget. In a normalized year, without any growth, the subsidy is \$343,900. Going out 40 years with these numbers, a growth factor is needed. Under the revenue this year, using 5% growth, the revenue would be \$544,500. Expense growth rate is 2%; from 2006 to 2010 it was less than 1%; and total expense is \$888,400. The subsidy is \$343,900 in FY 2014.

Ms. Adams stated that the FY 2013 subsidy was \$360,000, with a great deal of revenue coming in May and June.

It was stated by Mr. Gavin that one problem the Town has is treating the community pool as a separate entity, and not treating the Senior Center or Library in the same way. He said the Senior Center has operating budget costs of about \$1 million.

Ms. Adams explained that the Senior Center costs do not include wages, benefits, works compensation, etc. as these are all included in the Town operating budget supported by taxpayer dollars. By taking these costs from the community pool operating budget the subsidy goes down to \$200,000 or less. She said we must visualize the pool funding not as a subsidy.

Mr. Wetmore commented on the fact that there are two Town buildings with separate operating budgets – the pool and the treatment plant. The pool receives no state funding or grants.

Ms. Adams was adamant in stating that this information about the pool must be brought to the public so they understand why there is a subsidy. When she informs people of these facts, it totally changes their outlook on the pool.

Because of the way the pool budget is treated, as a separate budget, Mr. Urguhart said this is why the subsidy is high.

Questions were posed by Mr. Purtill. As he drives around Town he sees houses being framed and foundations being poured, and asked if the Town has any projection of growth and population. He also asked about revenue and any transfer value for usage of the pool by the high school and if this is fair market value.

Regarding growth and population growth, this information can come from the building department which issues building permits.

Ms. Adams replied to the question on the transfer value for high school usage of the pool facility. The pool was designed to bring in enough revenue to be self supportive, but not wanting to overcharge the swim teams, and teams are getting a bargain with lane rental rates.

Ms. Senft reported that when teams go to different pools the rental fees for these pools is less costly than the Cheshire pool, but the transportation costs must be added to the cost. The total cost for rentals and busing is \$69,000.

Mr. Purtill asked about revenue related to “Passes Y&S” and a breakdown of this revenue.

The passes are for summer, seasonal and year round, and Ms. Adams said that 85% of the “seasonal” passes are for summer only. Out of 100% of the passes, 65% are yearly; 35% are seasonal; and out of this 35% seasonal there are 85% for summer only.

In looking at the revenue for last year Mr. Wetmore asked about swim lessons when the pool is not open in the winter time.

Ms. Adams replied that people go to Southington, Wallingford, Hamden and other YMCA facilities, and many people do not go anywhere.

With a new pool structure or existing structure, Mr. Masciana commented on the other revenue opportunities such as food, drinks, and other items which close the revenue gap.

The greatest revenue is from the swim meets, and Ms. Adams said that the pool cannot be closed on weekends for swim meets, as some lanes must be available for the public use. There was consideration of a fitness center at the site, but this would be in competition with local fitness centers.

Mr. Levine stated that the pool subsidy of \$343,900 is less than 1% of the overall Town budget of \$101 million.

It was calculated by Mr. Masciana that the pool subsidy is actually .3% of the total operating budget.

- **User/Community – M. Levine**

Mr. Levine reported that this committee discussed all the options, and is in agreement with the options eliminated at the CCP committee level. Going forward there should be consideration of the time frame for whatever option is decided, and the goal is to have something in place – a permanent structure - for Fall 2014. Other options on the table need more pros and cons.

Mr. Masciana asked about the option for this winter season, putting up a temporary bubble until there is a decision on what the final recommendation for the pool will be.

According to Mr. Levine this was discussed at the subcommittee, along with insurance money and what will be done with this money, keeping the public informed.

This is an important factor and Mr. Purtill recommended this be listed as one of the pros and cons of the evaluation of the revised bubble.

Mr. Urganhart said the income and expenses must be weighed and the bubble is a fall back option.

Another issue added to this is to have the referendum tied into the November election, and Mr. Wetmore said if we don't have this there will be a low voter turnout. This may put the bubble off to next spring, putting it back up, modify the problems, and we must work through the referendum.

Consultant, Mr. McIlhargy, informed the committee about his credentials. He is President of Mythic Sports Group, has 30+ years in the swimming business, was the facilities developer contractor for USA Swimming helping with pool problems and solutions, and worked with USA membership throughout the country. USA is the largest swimming governing body in the country.

Mr. McIlhargy was also the technical/engineering swimming consultant for the Sydney, Beijing, and London Olympic Committee, and has worked and dealt with the smallest to the largest pools. Mr. McIlhargy advised that the Beijing Olympic Pool is a membrane structure; the roof of the London pool is a membrane structure; and he has done dozens

of open air structure domes. He was a swimmer at the U.S. Naval Academy, has coached swim teams for 25 years, and went to the Olympic trials for the Academy.

There are three types of buildings – air supported dome, membrane facility and permanent building. Mr. McIlhargy stated that air supported domes are the same with the only difference being the fabric. He distributed information and photographs on enclosure options for the air supported structure, architectural membrane and permanent building.

Architectural Membrane – can be an insulated engineered tensile membrane or engineered membrane building; the membrane is the structure; it is actually a tent and stands on its own.

Permanent Building – pre-engineered building (Open Aire); and stand alone building is made of brick and mortar.

The fall back position is the air supported structure.

With a membrane structure or permanent building there must be discussion about community tolerances, how much open air is wanted in the summer. A permanent building may have skylights that open up and doors that partially open. An architecturally membrane building could be a roof and everything opens up. Almost all these structures have one problem and that is a roof – there will always be some structure.

Regarding tolerances, a permanent building is permanent, with real roof, walls, doors and not a summer building. The question is tolerances. Mr. McIlhargy thinks having a roof over a pool is a cool thing, with walls down, and ability to communicate outdoors. With a roof on a pool there is shade, people can swim in the rain, and the pool does not have to shut down.

Mr. Purtill said the committee has an idea of the considerations in choosing a type of structure, but wants Mr. McIlhargy to provide information on the considerations in choosing the type of structure. He also would like to know if Mr. McIlhargy can provide the market share of each of the options, the breakdown percentage wise among the three enclosures cited. He wants this broken down into northern and southern areas with differences in snow removal and temperatures, etc.

Mr. Urguhart asked about a pool with a permanent structure and a decrease in summer attendance because people want to be outside.

This is a good argument with a permanent structure, and Mr. McIlhargy said if walls can come down and ceiling opened up, it becomes a shade structure, and he does not think attendance is a problem. Most northern pools are in brick and mortar facilities.

Ms. Stevens commented on the Cheshire facility being built as a year round facility.

Mr. Wetmore stated that the referendum approved an indoor/outdoor facility.

To get to this end, Ms. Stevens said we may have to compromise on the summer only with no roof, knowing that most of the year is indoor use.

Ms. Adams said she does not think this matters. With the referendum stating a year round facility, the pool could still be closed or be turned into a summer only pool.

Stating his agreement, Mr. McIlhargy said the charge is to figure this out. 70% of the northern pools are some form of brick and mortar building. Over the last 5 years, he has seen pools built of brick and mortar with the exception of Brown University. Most community pools, indoors, are in a permanent building structure, and there are variations to this with a pre-engineered building. The number of air supported pools in the northeast is low. Connecticut has a few, New York has two.

With consideration of an air supported structure, Mr. Purtill said we are going against best practices and trends.

Mr. McIlhargy agreed with this statement. Air supported structures are built with bubbles going up and down, and the bubble is usually replaced every 10 years. A 15 year warranty on the bubble is not realistic for something going up and down, and storage, how the bubble is folded, mildew etc. are considerations. He believes there are two options – some form of architectural membrane structure which opens and closes as much as possible, or a pre-engineered building with sections that can be removed. There is a big cost differential.

The concept of working with assumptions of a structure ground to ground using the wall that is presently there was raised by Mr. Levine.

Mr. McIlhargy would like to use the present wall to make it look like it served its purpose, and put the structure to the wall. He drew a diagram of the Cheshire pool and wall, covering the wall with most of the membrane structure made of a variety of roofing material. An open air structure works, the roof is opened, side panels cannot come out, and it is a \$5 to \$7 million project.

The options submitted by Mr. McIlhargy are excellent, and Mr. Purtill came back to focusing on the major alternatives. He asked Mr. McIlhargy to give the committee pros and cons of each alternative, rough idea of the overall costs from where we stand now to completion, and some reasonable and recent case studies which the committee can look at on the enclosure options submitted.

Air supported structure – is a low cost structure, has high operational costs, can be open air in the summer.

Mr. Purtill asked for information on what Cheshire can do with an air structure and its mitigated risks. The bubble has had 5 or 6 events of destruction, 2 of which were total destruction, and the others involved substantial rebuilding. He is not sure the Town will tolerate this further.

According to Mr. McIlhargy the problem with the air supported dome is that it is structurally better when all four points are about the same height, whether on the ground or on a wall. This helps with the snow load and other problems.

Mr. Gavin said the concept is to take away the stanchions and be able to deflate the bubble but keep it out of the water.

Mr. McIlhargy noted that guide wires are there for immediate protection of participants in the facility.

We are talking about guide wires across the pool and Ms. Adams said the bubble rests on these wires without going into the pool.

Architectural Membrane – there is a large range here of \$25 to \$100 a sq. ft. and it depends on the type of structure and membrane. The pros are being able to look at many different options, price ranges, different materials, no worry about snow load, and there is transparency for light, part of the panels can be raised, and there can be a skylight. The tensile membrane structure can spread out 400 feet. This option has the most design flexibility; high operating costs depend on the membrane material; the average building is over R-14; and rough construction cost is under \$4 million including design and installation.

The committee was informed by Mr. McIlhargy that there is an option for lease arrangements for this type of building, and this could be considered for covering the pool for the next winter. To open the membrane sides, they are rolled up, sometimes on tracks, and they can be taken down. Hard panels, 8 foot sections, can also be used and this adds to the security and insulated value. He does not like fabric to the ground because it can deteriorate. He has done these type of structures in Oklahoma, Texas and Colorado. A tensile membrane can incorporate large beams and guide wires, are tent structures, can be moved around, and can become like a hard shell and is then a real roof. There are design options on the architectural membrane if there is a desire to have a semi-open air facility.

Mr. Purtill explained that five of the committee members have studied the permanent versus the open air. They have seen Open Aire structures, studied the numbers, and this architectural membrane enclosure represents an exciting possibility. Information from Mr. McIlhargy will be disseminated to the committee for in-depth study and review.

USA Swimming has spent a lot of time talking about the architectural membrane structures and their options, and Mr. McIlhargy will get more information to the committee.

Permanent Building – this is a steel building, simple structure, and can be ugly or beautiful. There are lots of design options, and the cost is a little higher than some of the fabric buildings. For Cheshire’s pool building, it would be about \$4 million (\$39.50 per square foot). There are maintenance issues; most of the buildings have a special type of coating; there can be some mechanical issues; the building still gets colder in the winter and you do not want a lot of sweating on the inside; and most structures now are versions of pre-engineered steel buildings. We are still talking about not being able to take huge wall sections out so the pool is completely opened up.

There are a series of windows in the Cheshire building and Mr. Wetmore said a lot of sun comes through them.

The committee was told by Mr. McIlhargy that there are hybrids...a steel structure with a membrane roof, skylight...and many of these are pre-engineered buildings. It is a pre-engineered structure based on a certain size based on a certain span, and we can get 30 bids for the project. It is a big box building, similar to a box store (Home Depot).

The Open Aire structure proposed for Cheshire had a cost of \$7 million and Mr. Purtill asked about a lower cost and what must be done to make this happen.

Mr. McIlhargy said you start to look at value. Many structures like Structures Unlimited can be more costly than other manufacturers he deals with. He said Open Aire is the leader in permanent structures, with a cost of 30% more. There are structures less expensive, but we cannot compromise on integrity of any structure. Mr. McIlhargy said he can see a \$7 million price tag. Thought must be given to occupancy revenues (swim meets); a permanent structure must meet all of the building codes, total ADA compliance/new mechanical systems for electric doors, and this structure is a major modification to the community pool. Much of this would be the same with a tensile membrane structure.

For the record, Mr. McIlhargy stated that, as a pool builder, he likes the polycarbonate panels.

## **9. NEXT STEPS/ISSUES**

- **Data Requirements to Complete Evaluations**

Mr. Purtill proposed the concept of a sub-set of the committee to meet with Mr. McIlhargy, gather all the data to be used in the completion of the analyses and pros and cons, etc. The next committee meeting is June 6<sup>th</sup>.

The committee was told by Mr. McIlhargy that he will send more specific information about the enclosure options and summer only option.

Mr. Gavin said the committee needs the very base information filling out the grids for items for each option being considered such as tensile membrane, something less than that, dollars per square foot rates.

In terms of work scope Mr. Wetmore said with the 6 options, one of which is summer only, these can be developed; 2 are for the bubble with modifications; and there are 3 enclosure/structure options.

With respect to a budget number, the committee agreed that the number is under \$4 million.

Mr. Purtill commented on a \$7 million price tag being affordable by the Town of Cheshire, which is the 5<sup>th</sup> richest town outside of Fairfield County.

Mr. Wetmore said we can look at options at \$7 million, \$4 million and a bubble – and come up with the best option for the cost...and then think about a fall back.

Written specifications, design, drawings, price ranges, etc. will be compiled by Mr. McIlhargy, who noted that the pool industry is very competitive right now. He will bring all this information back to the committee.

Mr. Levine wants to be in an offensive position with the solution to the pool.

It was stated by Ms. Nichols that it is incumbent on this committee to present the right solution, promote it, and convince people that this is the right option, facts were studied, and the benefits for the end user must be found.

The Structural Sub-Committee will meet on Wednesday, May 29<sup>th</sup>, 6:30 p.m. with Mr. McIlhargy for a review of options discussed tonight. Other CCP committee members are invited to attend.

- **Council Presentation Requirements**

## **9. ADJOURNMENT**

MOTION by Mr. Levine; seconded by Ms. Senft.

MOVED that the meeting adjourn at 9:00 p.m.

VOTE           The motion passed unanimously by those present.

Attest:

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**Marilyn W. Milton, Clerk**

