

MINUTES OF THE CHESHIRE TOWN COUNCIL PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING  
HELD ON MONDAY, MARCH 17, 2014 AT 7:30 P.M. IN ROOM 207 TOWN HALL, 84  
SOUTH MAIN STREET, CHESHIRE CT 06410

Present

James Sima, Chairman; Patti Flynn-Harris, David Schrumm  
Town Manager Michael A. Milone; Louis Zullo, Personnel Director; George Noewatne,  
PW Director; Vincent Masciana, Dept. of Education Director of Management Services.  
Guest: Dr. Robert Giddings, Friends of Boulder Knoll

1. ROLL CALL

The clerk called the roll and a quorum was determined to be present.

2. FRIENDS OF BOULDER KNOLL EXPANSION REQUEST

Dr. Giddings stated that the Friends of Boulder Knoll operate the 3 acre farm on the Lassen property through a lease with the Town. 2014 is the 6<sup>th</sup> year of the operation of the farm, producing vegetables for 65 to 70 families, soup kitchens, a restaurant, CT Food Bank. The farm has an education component, and has hired an environmental educator the last 3 years to conduct this program. Both the preparation of the vegetables (washing, sorting, packaging) and the education program are held in the same hoop house. Dr. Giddings informed the Council that they belong in separate hoop houses, and the Friends group would like another smaller hoop house next to the existing one for the education program. The existing hoop house is 24 ft. x 22 ft. The Friends want electricity in the hoop houses, will contact CL&P about putting in the land line for electric service, and the group will absorb the costs

The list of priorities outlined in his November 2013 letter were cited by Dr. Giddings.

- One more hoop house adjacent to the existing hoop house
- Move the education program into the new, smaller hoop house
- Get electricity to the hoop houses through CL&P at Friends expense
- Use of the old shed for storage of non-valuable items

Town Manager Milone distributed a copy of the aerial map of the farm, and along with Dr. Giddings pointed out where the 2<sup>nd</sup> hoop house would be placed, the Three Sisters Garden, the Ann Giddings Memorial Garden, cement slab, storage shed, and telephone pole to which CL&P can connect the land line for electricity. Mr. Milone will have the Town Attorney look at the lease agreement as it may be necessary to add a few things to the lease to conform with what the Friends are doing.

Mr. Schrumm suggested Dr. Giddings contact DeVlyder Farms for a hoop house.

It was pointed out by Mr. Sima that the Friends want to double the size of the hoop house for agricultural and educational uses, and be allowed to have storage in the metal shed, and bring in electrical service through CL&P.

Dr. Giddings commented on the need to have a refrigerator for the produce during the summer months. There is one in his barn, but it requires people to drive back and forth, so he would prefer one on site. With regard to the electrical service he reaffirmed it would be in the name of The Friends of Boulder Knoll who will be responsible for the charges. He agreed that the lease will have to be looked at in case the requests must be made part of the lease agreement.

MOTION by Mr. Schrumm; seconded by Ms. Flynn-Harris.

MOVED that the Planning Committee move the requests of the Friends of Boulder Knoll to the full Town Council for approval, pending review of the lease by the Town Attorney to include: one more smaller hoop house adjacent to the existing hoop house; move the education program into the new, smaller hoop house; get electricity to the hoop houses through CL&P at Friends expense; use of the old shed for storage of non-valuable items.

VOTE           The motion passed unanimously by those present.

### 3.     SMARTBUS CAMERAS

Mr. Sima stated that this issue was reviewed by the former Town Council which had concerns that supplying cameras for school buses did not go out to bid.

Mr. Masciana, BOE, distributed a sheet on the program summary about the Student Guardian proposal to place cameras on some of Cheshire's school buses for a trial period of 90 days. He noted that the deal is the same as last time; installation of equipment will be at no cost to the Town; the program will be free for 90 days (up from the original 60 days); with the goal to deter vehicles from passing stopped school buses. Mr. Masciana informed the Council that despite newspaper articles and police stops, school buses are still being passed by motorists. There is a safety reason to install this camera equipment. The Town also stands to make some revenue from the program.

With 800 tickets written in a year at \$450+ per ticket the revenue will be \$100,000, with 50% or \$50,000 revenue to the Town. Mr. Masciana explained that the Police Department, following a violation on camera, will determine whether or not a ticket should be issued. If this deterrent works, we will have accomplished our goal, and no vehicles will pass stopped school buses with their arm out.

Since the last meeting on this issue, Mr. Masciana advised that Student Guardian has purchased the other company offering the same services - Smart Bus Company. Student Guardian has been approved by the Centralized Infraction Bureau in Connecticut to issue tickets; and the Police Department reviews the evidence and processes a ticket. This is a turn key solution which includes all the necessary administrative services. There is no cost to the Town; there is no financial risk; and the trial period is 90 days. This program will improve safety in the Town. Other nearby communities using the cameras on school buses include Southington, Wolcott, West Hartford, Naugatuck, Prospect, Hamden, Milford. Following the trial period the Town

makes the decision to enter into a 3-year contract, or cancel out the program. During the 3-year contract the company can opt out at any time, and the Town is committed to the full 3 years.

Mr. Milone advised that Mr. Masciana and Chief Dryfe have discussed the program, and the Chief has no concerns about the role of the police department supporting the program, and is supportive of cameras on school buses.

It was stated by Ms. Flynn-Harris that the safety of school buses and the children with passing vehicles has been a problem for a long time, so there is police support of cameras on the school buses. The only police department work will be judgment of whether or not a ticket will be issued, and they are the traffic authority and cannot be over-ridden on issuance of the ticket.

If the ticket is contested, Mr. Schrumm asked who stands up for the Town.

Luther Miller, Transportation Coordinator, said the police department described what happens when they last appeared before the Council. The ticket can be contested. One example is someone saying they were not driving the car, and this does not matter. If the car is in violation this is not a defense. The camera shows the license plate of the car in violation, and 99.9% of the tickets are paid, and Mr. Miller has this data confirmed by the New Britain Police Department.

Mr. Sima asked about the 90 day trial period, and if the contract comes back to the Council or stays with the BOE. He would expect some response on the program by 60 days to the Council.

This will be done, and Mr. Masciana said the program is a contract with the Town, and he will take the lead to provide updates to the Council and Police Chief.

According to Mr. Sima the big issue is driver compliance, with cars still passing school buses, and not being reported on the camera on the bus. This is the test on whether the program is working or not.

Mr. Miller said there is a driver survey report within two weeks of the vehicle passing the school bus.

Mr. Masciana advised that the Town Attorney has extensively reviewed the contract.

#### PUBLIC

Cindy Kleist, 251 Lancaster Way, understands that the ticket cost is \$450 to \$475, and that the camera is not rolling until the car passes the school bus, and then it records the incident. 99.9% of tickets are paid because the car is on camera. She knows of one company that takes a photo of the driver and the license plate.

Ms. Flynn-Harris noted that Student Guardian has always said it takes a photo of the license plate.

Derf Kleist, 251 Lancaster Way, said the person may have to go to court as owner of the car and could contest the ticket. If one child's life is saved this program is worth while.

MOTION by Mr. Schrumm; seconded by Ms. Flynn-Harris.

MOVED that the Planning Committee move the Student Guardian cameras on school buses program to the full Town Council for review and approval.

VOTE           The motion passed unanimously by those present.

#### 4.     REVIEW OF ROAD REPAVING AND CHIP SEALING SCHEDULE

Mr. Milone distributed copies of the treatment bands description to the Council, and said the list from the PMI will be e-mailed to Councilors.

PW Director Noewatne stated the Town is facing the final version of the pavement management report, which will be given to the Council. The rating has improved from 76 to 81, and it took \$7.5 million to get to this point. He said the consultant has informed the Town that this is the best you can get in New England. Mr. Noewatne and Mr. Gancarz met with RWA and Yankee Gas, gave them a complete list of Town roads and await a list of their projects in the five year plan. Cheshire will reciprocate with the Town's five year plan. Yankee Gas is talking about extending the gas line down Cornwall Avenue to Doolittle School; this does not affect paving; RWA doing some relining work which is not invasive. Some of the roads to be done include Quell Court for micro-paving and chip sealing and Williams Road in 2018. Water main replacements will be on Willow Street and Woodbury Court, this year or next spring; Payne Drive, later this month. Regarding money in lieu of permanent repairs from RWA, Mr. Noewatne said this will be reviewed and a recommendation made to the Council.

Excavations – Mr. Noewatne reported that street excavation and permanent enhancements permits are handled by Warren Disbrow, and he leads the program. There is a requirement for contractors to request a permit in advance of construction, and then a permit is given in 48 hours. Pre-construction meetings will be required for excavations over 200 square feet; there must be approval to back fill a hole; there will be an inspector on site to insure the road is done right; and density testing will be required. Yankee Gas and RWA have issues with the compaction requirements. A Public Works crew member will re-visit all excavation sites. Last week there was a letter sent to bond holders in Town; two meetings have been held; and the bonds are for two years.

Map of the Roads – Mr. Noewatne displayed a map of all Town roads and the condition of the roads based on the color code.

Red – worst roads; blue – best roads; green – 2<sup>nd</sup> best; yellow – 3<sup>rd</sup> best; orange – 4<sup>th</sup> best. The roads on the PW list are the worst roads.

Mr. Noewatne explained how roads that partner with each other are worked on together due to the high milling costs and trying to do the bigger areas of roads.

Mr. Sima asked about knowing the contractors who did road work 20 years ago and now these roads are in poor condition, and PW Department insuring proper work is done in the future.

In response, Mr. Noewatne stated that Mr. Disbrow is familiar with all the developers and road work, and the new permit process will help with better work.

With \$1.75 million appropriated for road work, Mr. Schrumm asked about keeping up with the road project.

There will be 6.9 miles of road done this year, milling and paving, and Mr. Noewatne said this does not include the RWA roads and chip sealing. There is \$372,000 in reserve; the bid for asphalt has not been awarded yet; the State bid goes to firms that apply; and Tilcon is usually the successful bidder. There is some contingency in the plan for extra road work. Testing of asphalt will be done through a private testing lab, and the testing costs will be \$15,000 and well worth the money spent. Smaller roads such as Steward) could be overlaid.

Curbing Requirements – all roads will be surveyed for curbing; there is a contingency for this work; no new curbing will be added; and there could be removal of some curbs. Mr. Schrumm suggested granite curbing.

It would be a major expense, and Mr. Noewatne said the curbs will be sawed off and replaced with asphalt curbing.

The road map will be e-mailed to Council members. Mr. Noewatne said this is the plan and he will provide updates to the Council on the progress of the work.

Regarding the consulting doing the testing of asphalt, Mr. Milone said it is a wise investment and money well spent.

##### 5. PREFERRED VENDOR RFP FOR ELECTRICIANS

Mr. Sima commented on this being a discussion with Mr. Milone a few years ago for plumbing contractors. The next biggest cost was electrical work, and the question is where to start the process.

Mr. Masciana has looked at the list of electrical contractors for work, and stated two of the DOE maintenance staff are licensed electricians, who do most of the work in-house. Last fiscal year the BOE spent \$30,000 for outside electrical services; this year it is

\$60,000 because of the Darcey School work; plumbing costs are about \$200,000 annually.

In discussions with Mr. Milone a few years ago, Mr. Sima said that plumbing was the biggest cost factor, and the goal is to save money.

The Council was told by Mr. Noewatne that the PW Department has no electricians on staff. They do work with G.C. Electric in Cheshire, and there are few electrical upgrades. Most electrical work is paid out as part of a project. It is hard to get unit pricing, and the department gets hourly rates. Most of the plumbing is handled in-house.

Mr. Sima commented on getting the hourly rate for the primary person, the higher rate for emergencies/after hours, and the percentage markup for materials. This is now protocol for private corporations for private contractors, with completion of a preferred contractor form.

Ms. Flynn-Harris said it should be an easier process now with the learning process the first time around, and there is a template in place.

Regarding the vendors list, Mr. Sima asked Mr. Milone to look through the list, and if he sees some type of work between two departments, at \$100,000 a year, we might want to look at something out there.

Mr. Masciana stated the going rate for a plumber is \$120 an hour, and the BOE is paying \$90 per hour.

## 6. LONG TERM CAPITAL PLANNING PROCESS

This is a discussion item, and Mr. Sima said during the capital budget a large capital item comes before the Council, such as a fire truck or new building, and he would like the process started before we get to the capital process. There is one week for departments and Mr. Sima wants more discussion time before a \$500,000 to \$1 million capital item comes across and hits the capital budget time.

In this regard, Mr. Milone has said in the past and said again that the Town Charter has a well designed capital planning process. No decision is required until November; and the Council has tried to do in 8 weeks what the Charter gives 20 weeks to do. As a result, some things do not get the time they deserve because the time constraint is self imposed. He suggests extending the process through its natural cycle of 5 months, and not duplicate efforts. If there is a referendum item from this outcome, then a special referendum is needed, with additional cost, and lower voter turnout than a November election. The process under the Charter is well designed, well protracted, and allows for review and analysis that the Council is requesting.

Mr. Schrumm suggested there be talks well before a project comes out in July, and look at years 1 and 2 (from the last budget) and review them. This way, if a consultant is needed or schematic designs etc. there are two extra months to do it.

Stating he would review the matter with staff, Mr. Milone noted that the capital process is a compressed process, with much done in a short time, and the consequences are significant because of the dollar values.

Ms. Flynn-Harris said there is impact on the Town Manager and Town staff if the intent for the capital budget is to move things around, i.e. 2<sup>nd</sup> year projects to the 1<sup>st</sup> year or 3<sup>rd</sup> year. But, it is worth having some preliminary meetings and discussion.

Mr. Masciana stated that the BOE capital budget will have funds requested for the CHS cafeteria project. The new generator is on hold because of uncertainty of location and location of the ramp for the sports locker project. If necessary, the Town's generator can be hooked up at the high school. Electrical issues at the high school need to be resolved. On June 1<sup>st</sup> the BOE Capital Budget request is submitted to the Town Manager, and it could be a Planning Committee agenda item for discussion.

As long as he has a sense of what the Council wants, Mr. Milone will establish a process for the capital budget and move it along focusing on years #2 and #3, which would be years #1 and #2 in the new capital budget.

## 7. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Mr. Schrumm; seconded by Ms. Flynn-Harris.

MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 9:10 p.m.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

Attest:

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Marilyn W. Milton, Clerk