

**MINUTES OF THE CHESHIRE TOWN COUNCIL PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD ON WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2015 AT 7:30 P.M. IN ROOM 207, TOWN
HALL, 84 SOUTH MAIN STREET, CHESHIRE CT 06410.**

Present

James Sima, Chairman; Patti Flynn-Harris and David Schrumm.

Council Chairman Tim Slocum.

Staff: Michael A. Milone, Town Manager; Michelle Piccerillo, Director, Human Services Department; Stephanie Ferrall, Senior Center Coordinator.

1. ROLL CALL

Roll was called and a quorum was determined to be present.

Mr. Sima called the meeting to order at 7:32 p.m.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The group Pledged Allegiance to the Flag.

3. HUMAN SERVICES GRANT REQUEST FOR SENIOR CENTER

Ms. Piccerillo informed the committee that she is requesting approval to submit a grant request for 50% of the cost of a new software program for the Cheshire Senior Center, through a company called "My Senior Center". This is being done in partnership with the Connecticut Community Foundation, which has awarded the Senior Center prior grants. The submission date for the grant is October 2, 2015.

In her memo and information submitted to Mr. Milone and the Town Council, Ms. Piccerillo noted there was much research and diligence undertaken, over a year's time, for a data collection software program to better manage the Senior Center.

Ms. Ferrall advised she has communicated with other senior centers in area towns that use the software successfully, and are satisfied with maintenance, upgrades, and interaction with the vendor company. She explained that, currently, everything at the center is done manually by staff -- including membership enrollment and dues, registration for programs, scheduling of rooms for programs, tracking data, generation of reports for additional grant submissions, evacuation procedures, transportation on center buses, emergency contact is done manually.

In 2014-15 fiscal year, 24,453 people came through the Senior Center doors; some were duplicates. With the new software, the sign-in will be swiping a membership card; there can be tracking of who comes in and out the door; volunteer hours will be tracked; and data will be immediately available. For classes, there are 14 to 16 per semester with 35 people per class; programs and activities are 17 to 19 per month, along with special programs, entertainment and speakers, 10 weekly card games, nutrition program feeds 70 people per week = 3,640 meals annually; four buses provided transportation last year to 13,800 people.

With the new software program, membership will be tracked more accurately; emergency information will be readily available; there will be a record of who is in the building, when they leave; calls to check on members, cancel a program or change the schedule, will go automatically through a call center rather than manual calls by staff. Reports for the budget, volunteer hours, membership roster, in-kind services, etc. will all be on the computer software, and readily available. The time saved with the new program will enable staff to better interact and work with members.

Membership - Ms. Piccerillo noted the resident membership fee is \$5 per person; \$10 per couple; and there is an out of town fee. The system will track resident and out of town membership; people will swipe their membership card to participate in activities; and staff assistance will be provided for those people unfamiliar with computers. The new software system has an annual maintenance fee of \$1800, which starts in the 2nd year, and there is an organization within the Senior Center that will absorb this fee. The grant would be in the amount of \$5,430; the Town's matching 50% would be \$5,430; and CCF is confident Cheshire's application will be successful. Ms. Piccerillo reported that the non-sponsor model will be the one chosen for Cheshire.

Ms. Flynn-Harris commented on the program management of membership sign-up for resident and out of town people, classes, programs, lunches, etc. She noted that senior citizens of today are more computer savvy and can handle use of a computer.

The vendor company is based out of Massachusetts; the software program will be compatible with other technology in town; in the future, it has the ability to take credit card payments which would interface with the town system. 900 tags will be ordered; this is sufficient to implement the program; and more tags can be obtained as needed.

Privacy - Ms. Ferrall ensured the committee that the person's privacy is protected at all times. A nurse is at the center twice a month for blood pressure screening; social worker's notes are in a separate computer system; and any and all medical or personal information is confidential.

Stating it sounds like a good program, Mr. Sima expressed concerns about the vendor company discontinuing support, more money to be laid out, what the \$1800 fee includes, life expectancy of the program, future layout of \$5000+, if this is a new program or at the end of its life cycle. He questioned the ID tags, if they are RFID, or must be swiped. He asked for this information to be forwarded to the Council.

This company has been around for many years, and Ms. Ferrall said it focuses on senior centers. Future changes are not expected; the fee includes system upgrades; computers, touch screens and cards are included in the package. Regarding the cards, they have a stripe, are swiped and a laser light goes over it, recorded, and the card number is associated with one person.

With regard to senior citizen use of software and computers, Ms. Piccerillo said most are comfortable with technology and find things easier to be used. If there is resistance

someone will be available to assist a member through the process. For the transition from manual to computers, this will be an ongoing process, bringing everyone into the system. The newsletter will provide information on the new computer system. The net cost to the Town for the system is \$5,340 this year if the grant is approved.

If the grant is not approved Mr. Milone said he will bring the matter back to the Town Council for approval to spend the full amount of the program. There is C.N.R. money for software needs (balance of \$29,383); and the matter comes back to the Council for the balance of the money from the capital budget or C.N.R.

Mr. Sima asked about radio frequency option for the program.

Mr. Milone said that would be a more expensive software program.

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

MOVED that the Planning Committee move the My Senior Center software program for the Cheshire Senior Center, at a cost of \$5,340 (50% of total cost after grant) to the full Town Council for approval.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

Mr. Milone noted the submission date for the grant application is October 2nd, and it would be submitted based on approval of the full Town Council at the October meeting.

4. TOWN PROPERTY NAMING IN HONOR OF PETER GODE

Mr. Milone reviewed the March 10, 2015 letter to the Council and three letters on May 26th from members of the Gode Family with regard to honoring Peter Gode on the 15th anniversary of his death on October 3rd with a stone & plaque and park bench.

Chairman Slocum responded to the Gode Family on this matter, outlining the Town's Naming Policy and inclusion of the policy in his letter.

The committee discussed the stone and plaque to be installed at the PW Garage in Peter Gode's honor. A previous memorial was done without the involvement of the Town and was undertaken by the PW Garage crew. Mr. Milone has discussed the matter with PW Director Noewatne, and was told a plaque could be placed inside the garage, at the picnic table, or there could be another rock and plaque. Mr. Schrumm commented on the issue of setting a precedent and how far the Town should go with these requests. According to Mr. Milone the three letters meet the requirements of the naming policy. The question was raised whether there should be a rock or something else the Gode Family would prefer. The cost would be borne by the PW Department/crew, with PW Employees doing the work, including the plaque. There was further discussion about future recognition for other employees lost in the line of duty.

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

MOVED to forward the naming request for Peter Gode to the full Town Council for approval.

VOTE The motion passed 2-1; Schrumm opposed.

5. DIME SAVINGS PROPERTY RENAMING RECOMMENDATION

A request was submitted by William Sherman, Chairman, Environment Commission to rename the Dime Savings Property to "Yankee Expressway Highlands".

Mr. Milone noted the request did not include three letters as required under the Naming Policy, but the Council can rename Town property on its own motion.

The committee discussed the proposed name, and Mr. Sima said it is the old name for an area of I-84. Mr. Slocum said the Dime property has a path named Yankee Expressway Highlands, and this is noted on a map of the property. Mr. Schrumm has heard the name used for this property. Ms. Flynn-Harris found the name "Yankee Expressway" on the internet.

It was recommended by Mr. Schrumm that this matter be referred back to the Environment Commission.

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

MOVED that the Dime Savings Property Renaming be referred back to the Environment Commission, with the Town Council's comments and considerations.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

6. TOWN OWNED SPACE - LOGGING

Mr. Sima distributed information on the Connecticut DEEP site.

Mr. Milone reviewed the September 15th memo from Ms. Simone on the forestry plan, and read #4 into the record.

The DEEP information was cited by Mr. Sima who explained DEEP has a forestry group that will evaluate a site for forests.

It is important to know the purpose and objective of seeking such a plan and Mr. Milone said there should be specifics in mind. He said it is not just the Dime property but town wide property, and the Town wants to get an open space management plan adopted.

Mr. Slocum pointed out that best practices management of forests require they be thinned, kept healthy, and they require attention.

Ms. Flynn-Harris expressed her support of open space and properties with access should be a priority, as they have trails, maps, and are being used.

According to Mr. Sima there is a piece of State property which touches the Dime property and this should not be excluded. He noted that east of I-84 was thinned out and has grown in nicely.

Three properties are of concern for a forestry plan -- Dime Savings Property, DeDominicus Property and upland Casertano Property.

With help from a state forester, Mr. Schrumm said there could be an unbiased review and information on the potential for the properties.

Mr. Slocum pointed out that with the credentials of a state forester it is better for the Town in knowing what to do with the property.

If DEEP would do only one parcel, the first choice is Dime Savings and the second is DeDominicus Property.

Mr. Milone will coordinate calling DEEP with Ms. Simone about the three locations and there will be a report back to the Council. He said he wants the forest plan incorporated into the open space management plan. Mr. Milone distributed maps of the Dime property. The committee reviewed the maps, discussed creation of public access of property that belongs to the subdivision and the Town, and ownership of the old Kings Highway right-of-way.

7. LINEAR TRAIL PROJECT - UPDATE/COMPLETION SCHEDULE

Mr. Milone distributed information on the Trail, West Main Street to Jarvis Street, progress update as of September 22nd. The report cites major work items completed and major work items to be completed, and a time line chart. The paving of the trail is scheduled for October 15th; bridge delivery for the parking lot on September 30th; completion of the parking lot does not affect the opening of the trail at this end; completion date is November 1st; there is a punch list with open items; plantings will be done in the spring of 2016; culverts will be installed by the end of this week; plaza opening to West Main Street will have pavers, benches and signage; trees are part of the planting scheme for West Main Street. The viewing platform, \$83,000, is in the \$2.6 million cost. The HAWK system must be completed by November 1st. The State has started their construction near Sandbank Road and will move rapidly on this section of the trail.

According to Mr. Sima there is one more culvert to be installed. Regarding the HAWK system he asked about traffic and people crossing the road.

Without the HAWK system in place and operational, Mr. Milone said one end could be blocked and one opened.

The committee discussed the art murals on the Southington section of the trail, and the possibility of ArtsPlace introducing art murals for the Cheshire section.

8. DISPOSAL OF SURPLUS PROPERTY POLICY

On November 6, 2014 there was a policy proposed for disposal of surplus Town property. Mr. Milone reviewed the minutes of the Council meeting and the sequence cited in the policy. It is recommended that item #4 be deleted from the policy (auction among Town employees). Sequence #1 and #2 remain; sequence #3 will remain, with a company hired at a fee (usually 10% to 15%) to auction the property; sequence #5 offers items as donations to non-profit or civic organizations and town employees; sequence #6 has the remaining property scrapped.

Mr. Milone will rewrite the policy and forward it to the Council.

Ms. Flynn-Harris recommended the BOE and Town use environmentally safe groups for computer pickup.

Under #3, the items under \$3,000 are available to non-profit groups before going to auction, and this excludes vehicles. Items over \$3,000 in value (excluding vehicles) will go to auction first and then to non-profit groups.

9. SUBDIVISION - HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION RESPONSIBILITIES

The Declaration of Easements, Reservations, Reservations and Covenants was submitted to the committee for review and discussion. The Declaration is a copy of the language submitted by Attorney Fazzone for subdivisions to be reviewed by the Planning and Zoning Commission.

Mr. Milone referred to item #16, page 4, and page 5, item #17 to the top of page 6, advising this is the language the PZC has suggested be clarified in a regulation.

Town Attorney Smith is taking this language as a backbone; it will be modified; and covers all of the concerns raised. Attorney Smith believes if a property has a lien by the Town, the Town can occupy top position...as is done with taxes.

Mr. Sima said storm water and detention ponds will become a big issue, and another issue is sidewalks which are unsafe for crossing. He believes #17 must be broader; a lien will apply to all related issues; and with applications before the PZC there will be specifics related to an HOA.

A statement regarding HOA's was read into the record by Mr. Schrumm. He will e-mail it to Mr. Milone for submission to Attorney Smith.

Mr. Sima commented on a letter from Dr. Giddings (Friends of Boulder Knoll) requesting a meeting with the Planning Committee for irrigation pipes in the ground at Boulder Knoll Farm rather than running hoses.

A request was made by Mr. Slocum for a copy of the Conservation Easement for the Farm to be submitted to the Planning Committee.

It was noted by Mr. Schrumm that the State Dept. of Agriculture is looking for towns in Connecticut for farming and agricultural production.

Regarding the house on Boulder Knoll Road, Mr. Milone advised that Attorney Smith and Town Planner Voelker are looking into The Cheshire Housing Authority taking over this house. They are also looking at restrictions on a sale stand at Boulder Knoll Farm.

10. ADJOURNMENT

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

MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 9:18 p.m.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

Attest:

Marilyn W. Milton, Clerk