

**MINUTES OF THE CHESHIRE TOWN COUNCIL PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING  
HELD ON THURSDAY, JUNE 2, 2016, AT 7:00 P.M. IN ROOM 207, TOWN HALL, 84  
SOUTH MAIN STREET, CHESHIRE CT 06410**

Present

Paul Bowman, Chairman; Patti Flynn-Harris, Timothy Slocum.

Staff: Michael A. Milone, Town Manager; PW Director George Noewatne

**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. DOT LAND TRANSFER NEAR CHESHIRE HIGH SCHOOL**

Mr. Milone explained that the configuration of the signaling at the high school location will be changed, along with the crosswalk improvements, timing of the lights, etc. The State DOT needs a small portion of Town owned land (3737 +/- sq. ft.) on each side of the street, and has offered \$1,700 for this land. If the Town does not accept this offer, there would be a lengthy and complex process to go through for the land. Also, the State will accept the land, without any cost, should the Council choose to go this route. The goal is to get this project moving forward, with Town approval in June 2016, and work beginning June, 2017.

With legal fees and other costs, Mr. Bowman said it is not worthwhile looking for a better offer.

Mr. Milone noted this work will improve the signal, synchronization of the walk lights, bring everything to current standards, but will not affect the Town's sign already in place.

This is a large easement and Mr. Bowman does not want future issues with costs and problems. Without these issues, he would support the DOT request.

Mr. Noewatne advised the light will be built and installed under new State standards. There will be some movement of poles, but existing wiring will not be touched.

The committee was informed by Mr. Milone that the new signal will have hand signals, how long to get to the other side of the street, lights will be ADA standard, and will have a beep for handicapped accessibility. Regarding the \$1,700 Mr. Milone said this is an acquisition fee for State ownership of the land.

Ms. Flynn-Harris pointed out that the State will want title to the land because of their crosswalk and signaling system.

In looking at the map from the State DOT, Mr. Bowman said it shows a different system.

The State is taking title to this property, and Mr. Bowman noted the Town must be protected and whatever it owns within this system. He commented on the need for clarification on this being an "easement" or "acquisition" fee being paid.

In that regard, Mr. Milone said he would check this out and inform the Council in time for the June 14th meeting.

#### **4. ENERGY REBATE FUNDS**

Mr. Milone referred to the memo from PW Director Noewatne and the Performance Contracting Review Committee dated January 11, 2016. The memo outlines the additional scope items for consideration, totaling \$762,233. There is a total of \$840,957 available from the total rebate funds of \$1.252 million. There was \$127,000 allowed for a project at the Youth Center, but this project was absorbed into the original projects and the appropriation never utilized.

In his memo of December 4, 2015 Mr. Milone shows how the rebate was distributed and current account status.

Rebate of \$1,252,506; \$381,000 applied to loan repayment; \$127,486 never spent; balance of funds is \$743,472, less an additional \$30,000 to Ameresco; final balance of \$840,958.

Mr. Slocum asked about the community pool project, potential use of rebate funds for any future systems, and preservation of funding for that purpose.

According to Ms. Flynn-Harris, the committee decided to not make a decision on that at the time, with a priority of getting controls in specific buildings such as the Library. There was a look at geothermal for the pool but a decision was never made.

There was a high level of concern about the existing appropriation and Mr. Milone explained that Mr. Noewatne and Mr. Gancarz identified \$250,000 to \$300,000 energy related projects at the pool for which there was eligible funding. This would have freed up money in the pool project budget.

It was pointed out by Ms. Flynn-Harris that the rebate funds do not have to be used for energy projects. Former Councilor Sima had concerns about equipment out of warrant and having money available.

There was a brief discussion about the Energy Commission involvement on the project, and Mr. Noewatne said the commission had nothing to do with the project. The Performance Review Committee met several times and listed the projects for consideration. Mr. Milone noted that Councilors Flynn-Harris and Sima were on the committee with staff, and the matter went to the Planning Committee. He reiterated the fact that the rebate funds do not have to be used for energy related projects.

Given the precarious nature of financial things happening, Mr. Milone stated he would be uncomfortable using the rebate funds for all the projects listed. Any extra money

could be used to utilize to fill a gap and should be preserved and protected. All of the \$840,958 may not be necessary, and Council decides which projects are important.

There are 12 projects listed, and Mr. Noewatne does not think its in the best interests of the Town to spend all the rebate money. He commented on the importance of a building maintenance system, learning about legacy controls in many Town buildings, and adjustments and maintenance required. Mr. Noewatne pointed out the Library projects (1-3a-2) as critical, and they would provide health, efficiency and safety benefits. With the existing Library units there is no humidity control, facility is damp, adjustments cannot be made internally and are done from the rooftop. With a building maintenance system the controls are monitored, problems and issues indicated, and adjustments made.

Regarding the Town Hall building, Mr. Bowman asked when it went through an energy management program.

Mr. Noewatne said last year controls were installed. The building needs boilers chillers working together, turning on and off at proper times. The number cited for Town Hall (\$121,061) reflects the cost to get the work done and will be an energy efficiency measure. With a variety of temperatures the controls would be adjusted accordingly.

Cheshire High School - Mr. Noewatne advised there was a building management system before the project started; it should be upgrade; there is more to do at the high school to back up their legacy system.

There is a spreadsheet listing all of the projects/payback/return on investment, and Ms. Flynn-Harris noted the majority were specific projects. The committee reviewed the list and made decisions on the project to be undertaken. At this time, the question is whether the Council is willing to release some of the funds and do some of the additional projects recommended.

In looking at the projects listed, Mr. Noewatne stated that items 1 through 3a #2, were important and must be undertaken.

The total cost of these projects is \$327,159, leaving a balance of \$513,799 in the energy rebate account.

Mr. Bowman stated his need to know more about these projects on the work list.

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

MOVED that the Planning Committee approve submission of the projects on the work list, 1 through 3a #2, and forward the matter to the full Town Council for approval.

VOTE           The motion passed 2-01; Mr. Bowman abstained.

Mr. Milone will show the \$513,799 as available resources, un-appropriated, which can be used per decision of the Council.

The committee was told by Mr. Noewatne that Ameresco is willing to do these projects; there is a fee within the numbers; and it will be same as in the past.

Mr. Milone explained that the land transfer at the high school requires a public hearing before the transfer can be done.

#### **5. GRANGE PARKING LOT LEASE AGREEMENT EXTENSION**

The lease for the parking lot between the Town and Grange must be reviewed, with notification to the Grange one year before lease expiration on whether the Town wishes to renew the lease. Mr. Milone informed the Grange of the Town's interest and is requesting the Planning Committee for a decision on how to proceed.

The Grange representative, Mr. Miller, has informed the Town the organization is comfortable with the existing lease. There is agreement for a 15-year lease; first 5 years at a specific amount; each additional year rental is based on the CPI. First year is \$4,305 and 2017 is \$4,354. The Library parking lease is \$3,500 annually; the Arisco lease is \$5,000 a year,

Mr. Bowman supports renewing the lease with the Grange. He raised the issue of the Grange being willing to sell the site to the Town with a \$1 year sell back.

This possibility can be approached with Mr. Miller, and Mr. Milone said the only alternative is for Cheshire to have first right of refusal should the property come to market. In the current lease there is no reference to "ownership" of the parking lot.

At the present time, 8 to 10 Town staff park in the Grange lot, which has 61 spaces. Public Works truck use the lot, and when there is overflow in the Town Hall lot, people park at the Grange. Mr. Milone will have the exact amounts for parking lot leases, number of spaces, and how long the lease is in place for the Council meeting. He noted that the Town provides maintenance of these parking lots.

#### **6. ADJOURNMENT**

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

MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 p.m.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

Attest:

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Marilyn W. Milton, Clerk