MINUTES OF THE CHESHIRE TOWN COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING AND BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 11, 2010 AT 7:00 P.M. IN ROOM 207, TOWN HALL, 84 SOUTH MAIN STREET CHESHIRE CT 06410

Present
Budget Committee Members David Schrumm, Chairman, Michael Ecke and James Sima.
Council members Timothy Slocum, Andrew Falvey, Timothy White. Absent: Anne Giddings and Thomas Ruocco
Staff: Michael A. Milone, Town Manager; Patti Lynn Ryan, Finance Director; James Jaskot, Deputy Finance Director; Dr. Greg Florio, Superintendent of Schools; Vincent Masciano, Business Manager, Cheshire Public Schools.
Jerry Brittingham, Chairman, BOE; Dan Marsaglia, BOE Building Supervisor

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. DISCUSSION RE: PROPOSED FISCAL YEAR 2010-2011 FIVE YEAR CAPITAL EXPENDITURE PLAN AND ANNUAL CAPITAL EXPENDITURE BUDGET – BOARD OF EDUCATION

BOARD OF EDUCATION – Section 9
9-1 – Mr. Milone stated that year #1 is significantly less than what was originally in the CEP; $4 million for heating retrofit of Cheshire High School is moved into year #3 of the budget. The $825,000 for the turf field is also in year #1.

For year #2 things are on the mark, with some projects moved into year #3 because of the treatment plant upgrade, and this takes some pressure off the capital budget.

Year #3 is different than what was originally in the plan at $6,398,000. This is due to the retrofitting moved into FY 12-13; there is $1 million more in additional renovations which were not in the previous plan.

Year #4 is about $1.8 more than in the previous plan, and the big change is in the renovations area.

In comparing the four years Mr. Milone said the overall change is $4 million more than what in the plan last year.
Mr. Masciano explained that part of the explanation for the $4 million increase is $2.7 million related to the civil rights compliance which was not in the prior year’s budget.

Mr. Masciano distributed a summary of the BOE requested five year capital expenditure plan of $19,480,100. (copy attached). 31% is building maintenance and repairs; 25% is compliance; energy is 21%; window replacement is 10%; technology is 6%; turf field and track is 5%; all other costs are 3%. In the 2010-11 FY request the total is $3,905,350 for maintenance and repairs, compliance, technology, turf field and track, and other expenses.

9-2 and 9-3 – Mr. Schrumm asked about the Humiston School Building code compliance and how many classes are in the west part of the building.

Dr. Florio advised that the high school H.E.L.P. program is held on the 1st floor using 4 rooms; the lower level is offices; the 3rd floor is a gym and 2 classrooms for the talented and gifted program. The elementary school special ed children have been moved back into the schools.

Dr. Florio explained that when a building is renovated it must be brought into full code compliance. The Humiston building is not ADA compliant; there is a fire system; but the issues go back to the late 1990’s to bring the school buildings into code compliance.

Mr. Sima commented on the cafeteria in the Humiston building which is over the entrance way, noting this makes it difficult to put an elevator in the building. He asked about elimination of this room to assist in bringing the building to code compliance, and using the cafeteria in the back of the building.

According to Dr. Florio, code compliance requires two elevators so there is first floor access with an area in the middle. The Town Attorney is looking into the Julia Humiston will on the possibility of changing the use of the building.

9-4, 5, 6 and 7 – Mr. Masciano reviewed the civil rights compliance list, highlighting some of the issues (elevator for access to the press box and observation platform above, relocation of existing outdoor sports locker rooms, toilets, etc., renovate locker rooms on the north side of the West Gym, provide accessible routes to playing fields, construct accessible dugouts). The total of these expenses is $1.2 million. In addressing some of these expenses at $1.2 million, plus the $500,000 in place for the field house and locker room renovation, he said there should be a look at a master plan approach on what should be done at the high school for sports facilities inside and outside the school and code compliance. The funds should be put together and look at solving the civil rights compliance issues and locker room renovation issues all at once.
For ADA compliance, Dr. Florio said a person must be able to transverse all of the fields at the high school, and must be able to get onto the field, not to just watch a game. For the track there must be accessibility directly from the walk. Dr. Florio commented on this being a very frustrating report.

The Council was advised by Mr. Masciano that BL Companies has put together an estimate for the cost of the civil rights compliance. He said that all issues must be looked at, not just those related to code compliance.

Mr. Schrumm stated that constructing another building on the site is not a top priority and there should be a process to put everything into place.

The sports locker rooms must be accessible and Mr. Masciano said this compliance is an unfunded State mandate. The question is whether we must deal with it right away.

Mr. Slocum asked about the “voluntary” compliance and the penalties involved.

In response, Dr. Florio said there must be voluntary compliance with the State’s action plan. He is not sure of the penalties involved.

Mr. Slocum commented on this entire thing being insane and said he would revolt against it.

A question was raised by Mr. Schrumm about whether there is agreement to find some way to get the locker room issue, field house or no field house issue, resolved, since this has been around for a long time.

The suggestion from Mr. Masciano was to look at this a little broader, and he said the $500,000 will not build what is needed and do the compliance. The waste lines out of the locker rooms cannot handle what is coming out, and the locker rooms could have a band-aid for a few years rather than spend $500,000 to renovate them.

Mr. Schrumm stated that things should be kept in perspective since this is high school sports, and adding a field house is a problem for him. He also stated that these civil rights compliance requirements are nonsense when we are laying off teachers.

Regarding the enforcement of this compliance, Mr. White asked about the reaction of other school districts and the consequences for non-compliance.

According to Dr. Florio some districts have developed plans for compliance. Glastonbury CT built bleachers into a field with slopes to walk to the press box and it is handicapped accessible.
Stating he has been on the Council 9 years, Mr. Ecke said a field house has never been discussed, but it could have been a topic before he came on the Council. He commented on the elevator to the press box as being stupid, even though some towns have one.

Mr. Schrumm stated that the Council and Board of Education must meet and discuss options, get an architect to look at everything, and present good numbers.

Dr. Florio informed the Council that the BOE hired an architect in order to respond to the State on the civil rights compliance.

With the civil rights compliance issue, Mr. Slocum asked how much is related to the outside of the physical structure of the high school building and how much is campus related.

Mr. Masciano said that about one half is related to outside costs.

Dr. Florio stated that the compliance looks at Title IX. We are talking about unfunded mandates, with some State reimbursement of about 38% to 40%. Athletic fields have reduced reimbursement.

On page 9-18, Mr. Falvey noted that in 2011-12 there is $150,000 for the West Gym locker room renovation, and irrigation system improvements.

This is for one side of the fields and Mr. Masciano said most of the fields are irrigated.

9-8 Roof Replacement – Mr. Masciano said this schedule was done based on the survey from a few years ago. FY 10-11 is $1,150,000 for roof replacement projects. The CHS roof over the old main office, home ec, and kitchen was installed in 1991, and out of warranty in 2006, and we have been having problems with part of the roof section over the East Gym.

Mr. Masciano displayed photographs of the roof, patch work (done over 30 times), and noted that the roof and wall area is leaking. $35,000 is the estimated cost to repair this section of the roof. The replacement cost is $900,000; the metal deck should have no issues; and it could be about $700,000.

9-9 – Many of the school roofs are out of warranty in the next 10 years, and the BOE is trying to get a few more years of life out of them, with stripping and seam process.

Mr. Schrumm asked about State reimbursement for roof work.
Mr. Masciano wants to put the money in for the roof jobs in order to be reactive on the roof projects and for emergency jobs. There was some money to replace the roof in the Norton School trailers this summer at $75,000. The maintenance building roof was replaced for $75,000.

In the 1990’s and 1980’s Dr. Florio said a lot of re-roofing was done, and projects were coupled together.

Humiston School’s slate roof is leaking, and there is an opening in the attic. The slate roof and gutter system must be repaired for $15,000.

9-10 - HVAC replacement and repairs includes $125,000 to replace the system unit over the Highland School Library; Chapman School replace rooftop unit over Library area is $10,000; total $135,000.

District wide repaving – there are parking lots and sidewalks across the district in disrepair, and they must be done in stages over time.

Flooring – Throughout the district the flooring is rated as good, fair or poor, and this is from an assessment done a few years ago. $580,000 is requested for flooring in the next fiscal year to take care of the worst carpeted areas in the district. In 2010-11, flooring must be replaced at Norton School at $175,000; Darcey Kindergarten Center, $100,000; Highland School $75,000; Humiston/Central Office, $30,000; Cheshire High School, $50,000.

Mr. Masciano displayed photographs of the very poor carpeted areas in the schools which must be replaced with tile flooring. He advised that the tile flooring is cleaner, requires less maintenance, and lasts longer than the carpeting.

9-17 Cafeteria Improvements – In FY 10-11 there is $100,000 for the next phase at Dodd Middle School; in FY 2011-12 there is $100,000 requested to renovate the food preparation and serving areas. $375,000 is to start work at Highland School. At Highland School there is a freezer and cooler not in service, and staff goes to the basement to get food from the government freezer. This situation has been going on for several years.

The Dodd Middle School project is moving along; outside work is going well after a slow start; there are forms for the new loading dock; curbing is in; pavers are being installed to slow down the rain water; and the contractor promised that buses will be able to turn in this area on August 30th. On the inside the asbestos abatement is completed; plumbing work is just completed but did not pass inspection due a drain pipe not having the correct pitch; and there is a meeting to discuss and solve this issue. The contingencies are in place in case things run late, but the contractor insures the BOE everything will be in place when school
starts. The funding is in place with another $49,000 allocated from C.N.R. so the budget is tight. The biggest contingency is the fact that the freezer may not be ready to go when school starts, but the basement freezer is still on line. The total cost of this phase will be $350,000.

Mr. Schrumm noted that another $150,000 is being requested to do the serving area at Dodd which was part of the original plan.

Mr. Masciano said estimates included phase 1 and phase 2, but the bids came in high, and the project was re-bid. The 3rd phase at Dodd is to renovate the food prep area in FY 11-12 (kitchen area and equipment replacement).

It was stated by Mr. Sima that $350,000 has been spent on the Dodd kitchen, and there is another request for $150,000 and $100,000. Instead of breaking it up, he said this is a referendum item at this time, and the project should go out as one number.

It can be done that way, but Mr. Milone said he did not do that because in keeping with the way the request came in, he aggregated it with the other amount and moved it out. If this is going to referendum it is best to aggregate it rather than wait a few years and go out on the balance of the project.

Instead of breaking it up into two pieces Mr. Sima said it is a referendum item. He asked about the broken freezer at Highland and if it could be just a compressor at about $40,000.

Mr. Masciano is not sure of the costs involved for the freezer and cooler units. The food service director would cover equipment service out of the food service budget. He will follow up and report to the Council on the cost of the two units.

Section 2-8 C.N.R. Mr. Milone said that utilization of the C.N.R. is predicated on the type of project and its size. The idea of avoiding a referendum or not never comes into the analysis. At this point there is an appropriation of $150,000 for Dodd Middle School, it would put the project at $350,000. The balance comes out of C.N.R. and Mr. Milone does not think this has to go to referendum unless another portion of the project is added in.

The Science Lab was removed from the CEP since it was not a high priority item.

Mr. Schrumm commented on the fact that there are many improvements in the BOE capital expenditure plan. $9.1 million was spent on the high school, and the former superintendent said that $500,000 was needed annually to keep the high school in shape.
Dr. Florio has developed a five year plan, and when you looked at the high school $20 million was needed to build an addition and renovate significant portions of the older parts of the building. There was no funding for renovations other than the chemistry lab and physics lab. Some of the renovation items are left over from the first initiative. The idea was to tackle $500,000 in renovations each year over a period of time, i.e. renovation of bathrooms, stairwells, and other projects.

The concept of putting a set amount of money each year into the BOE for work to be done in the school district was raised by Mr. Schrumm.

There was discussion about this a few years ago and Dr. Florio said there was consideration of having someone do a thorough evaluation of the Town and BOE buildings. Some items have been on the list since 2000-01 due to other issues which came up, but this was not done. He welcomes the opportunity to put everything out there.

Mr. Milone said the Council stopped the $500,000 annual appropriation to the BOE budget last year, and there is no money allocated beyond FY 10-11.

According to Mr. Masciano the $136,000 in year #2 is $130,000 for the running track, 2nd half appropriation, and $6,000 is code compliance and improvements to the civil rights issues.

Mr. Masciano reviewed the five year CEP summary for the BOE (9-20 and 21). He noted there are many things which must be attended to, including chimney restoration work at the schools. The list is general maintenance programs across the district, and there are not enough funds in the operating budget to handle these items. With the $500,000 allocation some of the items could be taken off the list.

With regard to going back to $500,000 annually to the BOE, Mr. White said he would want to take some things out of the operating budget. A project with less than a 10 year life cycle should not be bonded, and should be in the operating budget, and the best place is C.N.R.

Mr. Sima questioned the $40,000 for the Darcey interior security system, and if this brings the school into code compliance.

The Council was informed by Dr. Florio that if an intruder entered the building there could not be a lock down of classrooms inside the school. There is no locking mechanism, and part of Darcey was never brought to code compliance. This funding will be used for interior lockdown mechanism.
Mr. Sima asked about the sound proof door openings at Darcey and if this means the entire opening is changed in these rooms.

Stating he did not know, Mr. Masciano said he will check this out and inform the Council.

9-11 CHS Energy Improvements, FY 12-13 $4.1 million. Dr. Florio said the initial evaluation of the high school was done in the 1990’s on the high school heating system. The Energy Commission wants this moved forward, but the design was re-evaluated and it was determined that a separate facility is needed to house the boiler. The appropriation was in the $2.5 million range, and this number would have to be increased. It was pulled off the table to be re-evaluated by a consulting firm.

Mr. Schrumm said there must be a decision on whether or not to do these energy improvement projects in year #3 of the CEP. It was noted by Dr. Florio that if the electric units had been replaced in 1995 there would have been great savings over this period of time. We are spending money to keep these systems operating.

Mr. Masciano said that part of Highland School is electric heat and there is a similar situation at the high school.

Dr. Florio noted that the high school is using more gas heat and costs are being monitored.

Mr. Milone informed the Council and BOE that there is a locked in price for gas out to 2013.

The BOE is looking to having dual heating at Norton and Doolittle Schools with the new gas lines in place. Mr. Masciano said that Yankee Gas is exploring more gas lines in the Cornwall area and North Brooksvale area. Norton School has dual fuel boilers.

Mr. Schrumm commented on the importance of a list of every school with every bit of work done in each school over a long period of time. This list would provide information on the money spent on the school buildings. At one time in the past there was such a list in place.

9-20 – Mr. Sima asked about the energy system upgrades.

There is an energy management system at the high school and Mr. Masciano said this would be replacement to the units which control the system.
Mr. Sima asked if the BOE is locking itself into one vendor for this project, and asked that the BOE not box itself in. He also asked about the $8,000 for the boiler energy management system at Norton.

It was explained by Mr. Masciano that this is software monitoring usage, is basically web based. If there is an issue with a boiler there is maintenance staff 24 hours a day, and the status of the boiler can be checked on the computer without staff going to the site. If an alarm goes off with the alarm company, staff can log in, see what is going on, switch to a different boiler. It gives control and reporting capabilities.

Regarding the emergency generator at the high school, Mr. Sima noted that this is a repeated item in the CEP.

Mr. Milone informed the Council that he removed this item from the CEP.

This generator is a $300,000 item and Mr. Sima said this is just for the front half of the high school, and requires significant wiring.

There is a new generator from a grant and Mr. Schrumm said extra wiring will be added to the Town Hall, Police and Fire Station, Senior Center. The high school will have an additional generator in order to do more than can be done with the existing generator in case of an emergency.

Mr. Masciano advised that there is no generator at the high school. There is a hook-up with the police department coming with a portable generator. The generator was in the CEP because he talked with emergency staff, and the issue came up that the back half of the high school cannot be taken care of in an emergency and a second generator should be in place.

There is a turf meeting next week to look at what is being proposed by the vendor, and after this meeting there will be more firm numbers. Mr. Masciano said the committee is aware of the scope of the project; decisions must be made; and a number must be secured. There are many things which impact the cost. A type of turf will be chosen, along with a cost for the turf and the track, and there has to be a schematic design.

Mr. White commented on the replacement costs for the turf over 8 to 10 years out, and whether this information has come to the Council. There is a long term liability involved with a turf field, and he is not in favor of supporting this project.

Chairman Slocum advised there will be a public hearing on the Capital Expenditure Plan on August 18th.

PUBLIC
Mike O'Donnell, 216 North Brooksvale Road, asked about the capital improvements for window replacement and Norton School.
Mr. Masciano replied that the windows at Norton School are being replaced now, and will be completed in a few weeks. He also advised that the consultant from Keltic Energy will be visiting the schools for the initial review.

Mr. Milone will e-mail any additional information to the Council.

4. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Mr. Sima; seconded by Mr. Ecke.

MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 p.m.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

Attest:

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Marilyn W. Milton, Clerk