

**COMBINED BOARD OF SELECTMAN AND BOARD OF FINANCE  
PUBLIC BUDGET HEARING  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
March 16, 2011**

Pursuant to the call and written notice, the Public Budget Hearing of the Board of Selectman and the Board of Finance was held on Wednesday, March 16, 2011 at 7:00 pm in the Board of Education Administrative Offices, Seminar Room 300, 501 Kings Highway East, Fairfield, Connecticut.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Chairman Thomas Flynn, Robert Bellitto, Jr., Ken Brachfeld, James Brown, Christopher DeWitt, Kevin Kiley, Mary LeClerc, Robert Stone, Michael Tetreau

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

None

**ALSO PRESENT**

Paul Hiller, Chief Fiscal Officer and Clerk of the Board of Finance  
Kenneth Flatto, First Selectman, Town of Fairfield  
Sherri Steeneck, Board of Selectmen  
James Walsh, Board of Selectmen  
Linda Gardiner, Budget Director, Town of Fairfield  
John Stafstrom, Jr., Bond Counsel, Town of Fairfield  
David Title, Superintendent of Schools, Board of Education, Town of Fairfield  
Margaret Mary Fitzgerald, Deputy Superintendent of Schools, Human Resources, Board of Education  
Bonnie McWain, Director of Finance, Board of Education, Town of Fairfield  
Anna Cutaia-Leonard, Director of Elementary Education, Board of Education, Town of Fairfield  
Andrea Leonardi, Director of Special Education, Board of Education, Town of Fairfield  
Thomas Cullen, Director of Operations, Board of Education, Town of Fairfield  
John Ficke, Manager Transportation Services, Board of Education, Town of Fairfield  
John Mitola, Chairman, Board of Education, Town of Fairfield  
Richard White, Director of Public Works, Town of Fairfield

Chairman Flynn called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m.

Chairman Flynn explained the agenda for tonight's meeting as follows:

- Capital Improvement Projects vote by the Board of Finance (BOF). The Board of Selectmen (BOS) voted on these at their meeting this afternoon.
- Dr. Title has a list of questions from the Boards from a previous meeting for which he will provide answers which will then be reviewed with the Boards.

Chairman Flynn reminded the public that there will be a Public Forum this Saturday, March 19, 2011, at the Senior Center on Mona Terrace at 9:30 am.

## CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

Mr. Hiller informed the Board that the BOS had finalized the CIP Bonding Resolution within the last hour. Mr. Hiller stated that the original Bonding Resolution for Capital Improvement Projects was for \$4,208,000 and included 17 projects. Mr. Hiller stated that the revised Bonding Resolution for Capital Improvement Projects is for \$3,245,000 and contains 15 projects. Mr. Hiller then distributed the original Bonding Resolution, the revised Bonding Resolution and a spreadsheet detailing the projects to the Boards and proceeded to review them with the Boards.

Chairman Flynn suggested that they review begin with items that were added to the original list.

First Selectman Flatto noted that the BOF has the ability to add back in any items not forwarded to them by the BOS. Mr. Flatto also noted that the BOS had agreed that a minimum 10 year useful life was required for a project to be considered as a Capital Improvement Project.

The new items that were added to the CIP list by the BOS are:

### 6-Wheel Dump Truck with asphalt hauling body - Town

Mr. Flatto reported that the added item of the 6-wheel dump truck with the asphalt hauling body was not in the budget because the First Selectman had originally denied the request from the DPW.

### LAN Network Switching Program - BOE

Mr. Flatto stated that the BOS felt this program was a large one-time technology project that they felt was appropriate to be considered as a CIP.

Dr. Title stated that he had deliberately not put any technology items in the CIP area this year due to bonding questions. Nancy Byrnes, in response to questions from the Boards, stated that this equipment is designed to last for the minimum ten year timeframe needed for a CIP.

Several members of the Boards questioned Dr. Title and Mr. Mitola on the details of the caveat that the BOS proposed when designating the LAN project as a CIP. The caveat concerned the \$450K cost for the project that would be left in the BOE budget if this project did get accepted as a CIP. The BOS asked the BOE, in the caveat, to assure the Town that the \$450K was applied to the BOE medical reserve in the Internal Service Fund (ISF). The BOF expressed concern that this project, being a technology project, did not meet the requirements for a CIP as stated in the draft BOF policy on the bonding of technology.

The BOF also expressed concern that the BOE might not agree to the caveat since it was noted that there was no legal standing for the BOE to agree to do what the BOS had requested. Dr. Title stated that he was not in the position to make a decision and he would need to go to the BOE with this request.

Mr. Bellitto, Jr. requested that, if the BOE agrees to abide by the caveat requested by the BOS in regards to the LAN project, the BOE put their assurance to agree with the caveat into writing and send the written agreement to the BOF in a timely fashion.

Selectman Walsh stated that it was his idea to move the LAN project into the CIP area. Mr. Walsh stated that he was trying to think outside of the box while trying to find a solution to the ISF problems without taxes going up by asking the BOE to put the \$450K towards the ISF.

### H. Smith Richardson Golf Course Bunker Renovation Project - Town

Mr. Lombardo and Mr. Curley reported that this project has been in the 10 year plan for the golf course. Mr. Curley further stated that there are 44 bunkers and 13 of them are to be done in this phase.

Bond Counsel Stafstrom informed the Boards that the Town Charter states varying things concerning items that are not moved forward by the BOS. Mr. Stafstrom reported that one option would be for the BOF to consult with the BOS and ask the BOS to send the item back to the BOF for consideration. Mr. Stafstrom stated that the BOF could not just move an item forward if the BOS had withdrawn the item before it came forward to the BOF. Mr. Stafstrom further explained that an item is considered withdrawn if the dollar amount for the item is reduced to zero.

On a motion from the Board of Finance, the votes on the Capital Improvement Projects were as follows:

### **BOARD OF EDUCATION CAPITAL PROJECTS**

1. Dwight Elementary School – Replace Two Boilers \$280,000  
**Motion passed unanimously.**
2. Jennings Elementary School – Replace Student Bathrooms \$250,000  
**Motion passed with a vote of 8 yeas, 1 nay (Bellitto, Jr.), 0 abstentions.**
3. Roger Ludlowe Middle School Roof and Coping Repairs \$ 50,000  
**Motion passed with a vote of 8 yeas, 1 nay (Bellitto, Jr.), 0 abstentions.**
4. Early Childhood Center  
New Traffic Learning Skills Playground  
and Resurfacing Existing Playground \$105,000  
**Motion passed with a vote of 5 yeas, 4 nays (Bellitto, Jr., DeWitt, LeClerc, Stone), 0 nays.**
5. Local Area Network (LAN) Switch Project for the Board of Education  
Including Installation \$450,000

After further discussion by the Boards, **Mr. Bellitto, Jr. moved and Mr. DeWitt seconded to call the question.**

**Motion failed with a vote 3 yeas, 6 nays, 0 abstentions.**

**Mr. Brachfeld moved and Mr. Stone seconded to move a decision on the LAN Switch Project for the BOE to a date certain of April 5, 2011 subject to action by the BOE on the agreement proposed by the Board of Selectmen to have the Board of Education take the \$450,000 originally planned for this project in their operating budget and apply that amount towards the ISF.**

**Motion passed with a vote of 5 yeas, 4 nays (Bellitto, Jr., DeWitt, Kiley, LeClerc), 0 abstentions.**

### **TOWN OF FAIRFIELD CAPITAL PROJECTS**

6. Fire Department –  
Purchase of New Fire Engine Pumper \$ 540,000

**Motion passed unanimously.**

7. Flood Control Project – Holland Hill Area  
Replacing Existing Pipes with Culvert and Replacement of Head Wall \$250,000

**Motion passed unanimously.**

8. Oldfield Senior Center –  
Installation of New Membrane Roof with Insulation, Flashing and Drainage  
Partial Roof Replacement \$500,000

**Motion passed unanimously.**

9. New Fire Training Center –  
Costs for Remediation of Site \$120,000  
**Mr. DeWitt moved and Mr. Bellitto, Jr. seconded to amend the amount of this request to \$105,000.**

**Motion passed unanimously.**

**Motion to approve \$105,000 for Costs for Remediation of the New Fire Training Center Site passed unanimously.**

10. Underground Storage Tanks –  
(a) Installation of Fuel Leak Monitoring System and New Fuel Lines at Fire Station 2  
(b) Installation of Fuel Leak Monitoring System for Two Tanks at H. Smith Richardson  
(c) Tank Removal and Remediation if Required at Burr Homestead and Tunxis Hill Garage  
(d) Installation of New Fuel Lines at Senior Center \$120,000

**Motion passed unanimously.**

11. Traffic Signal Upgrade at Fairfield Woods Road and Palm Drive  
Including Relocation of Pedestrian Signal

The First Selectman noted that some of this cost may be covered under a CDBG grant and he will research this further and report back to the BOF.

**Motion passed with a vote of 7 yeas, 2 nays (Brachfeld, Stone), 0 abstentions.**

12. Old Academy Building –  
Replace Wood Roof \$ 90,000

**Motion passed unanimously.**

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13. Purchase of John Deere 310 Backhoe \$100,000  
**Motion passed with a vote of 8 yeas, 1 nay (Bellitto, Jr.). 0 abstentions.**
14. Purchase of 6-Wheel Truck with Asphalt Hauling Body \$170,000  
**Motion failed with a vote of 0 yeas, 9 nays, 0 abstentions.**
15. H. Smith Richardson Golf Course  
Bunker Renovation \$100,000  
**Motion passed with a vote of 5 yeas, 4 nays (Bellitto, Jr., DeWitt, LeClerc, Stone), 0 abstentions.**

Mr. Kiley requested the BOE to follow up on the modified proposal for the Mill Hill Elementary School ceiling tile and lights project.

Mr. Walsh requested the BOE to revise their Facilities Plan before revisiting the Mill Hill Elementary School Project with the BOS.

Mr. Flatto noted that the funding for items #13 and #15 that was in the Operating Budget will be applied to the ISF balance.

Mr. Hiller reported that the revised bonding resolution is now at \$2,610,000 and contains items 1 – 13. Mr. Hiller also reported that the length of bonding is 10 years as stated in paragraph 6. Mr. Hiller also noted that significant wording changes have been made tonight due to the action taken by the BOF.

**Mr. Bellitto, Jr. moved and Mr. Stone seconded to approve the Bond Resolution as amended tonight to an amount of \$2,610,000 and containing items 1 – 13.  
Motion passed unanimously.**

Chairman Flynn suggested that the review of the Finance Departments be postponed until next week's meeting on Tuesday, March 22, 2011.

The following budgets were then heard by the Boards:

- 2531** Private School Bus Transportation  
Mr. John Ficke presented this budget to the Boards.  
**Public Comment**  
None
- 11030** Health and Welfare Services  
Ms. Andrea Leonardi presented this item to the Boards.  
**Public Comment**  
None
- 8010** Board of Education follow-up

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Dr. Title distributed his report containing the answers to questions that the Boards had pertaining to the Board of Education (BOE) budget at a previous meeting and he then proceeded to review the answers with the Boards. Dr. Title also distributed a schedule of education budgets for area towns and reviewed that schedule with the Boards.

Dr. Title distributed a pie chart report showing the division of costs within the BOE budget and reviewed the contents with the Boards.

Anna Cutaia-Leonard explained the new elementary school model to the Boards. Dr. Title noted that there has not been enough support in math and science at the elementary level so his staff tried to come up with a model that was fair and equitable. Ms. Cutaia-Leonard explained that staffing philosophy modifications need support in the following areas:

- direct services to students
- side-by-side coaching for reading and math instruction techniques
- professional development

Ms. Cutaia-Leonard reported that each elementary building now has a Language Arts Coordinator and an Early Literacy Tutor and that will be changed to just a Language Arts Specialist. The new model will be rolled out for the Pre-K – 5 students.

Dr. Title informed the Boards that the interns hired by the BOE will no longer be allowed to do their student teaching as part of their internship period.

Dr. Title, in response to a question from the Boards on how he might address any cuts to the BOE budget, stated that insurance is off the table; transportation is off the table; personnel will be effected by any budget cuts; he would like to minimize the impact on the instructional program; class sizes could be impacted but it is too early in this process to begin speculating.

**7010 Library:** Representing the Library was Karen Ronald, Librarian and Brian Kelahan, Chairman of the Library Board of Trustees.

Ms. Ronald asked the Boards to please restore the funding for part-time employees to the budget since this cut directly impacts the hours of operation for service to the public.

**Public Comment**

None

**7030 Penfield Pavilion Complex:** Representing Penfield Pavilion Complex was Gerry Lombardo, Director of Recreation.

Mr. Lombardo noted that he had projected an increase in the rental income from Penfield I from FY10-11 of \$10K to FY11-12 of \$100K but he cannot commit to the rental estimates until he gets a more definite completion date. He noted that the first rental opportunity will probably not happen until September because the project is taking longer than expected due to the severe weather that the Town experienced this year.

**Public Comment**

None

**7050 Parks and Recreation:** Representing Parks and Recreation was Gerry Lombardo, Director of Recreation.

**Public Comment**

None

**7070 Waterfront & Marina:** Representing Waterfront & Marina was Gerry Lombardo, Director of

Recreation.

**Public Comment**

None

- 7111 South Pine Creek Golf Course:** Representing the South Pine Creek Golf Course was Gerry Lombardo, Director of Recreation, Craig Curley, Chairman of the Golf Commission and Peter Grace, Superintendent, H. Smith Richardson Golf Course.  
Mr. Lombardo reported that he has not been able to locate a pick-up truck replacement for \$12K so he is asking for an additional \$12K in this budget to combine with the \$12K from last year's budget so that he can purchase a used pick-up truck.

**Public Comment**

None

- 7113 H. Smith Richardson Golf Course:** Representing the H. Smith Richardson Golf Course was Gerry Lombardo, Director of Recreation, Craig Curley, Chairman of the Golf Commission and Peter Grace, Superintendent, H. Smith Richardson Golf Course.

Chairman Flynn requested Mr. Lombardo to prepare a P&L Statement for the BOF, detailing curr YTD and next Year's budget, for both gold courses.

Mr. Grace reported that 44,000 paid rounds were played last year on the course.

**CAPITAL ITEMS**

The capital item requests were reduced by the First Selectman from \$247K to \$147K by placing the bunker project in the CIP with the caveat that the \$100K in the operating budget will go towards the ISF balance.

Chairman Flynn asked for a spreadsheet on the capital items for the March 22, 2011 meeting of the BOF.

**Public Comment**

None

**NOT FOR PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS**

Mr. DeWitt stated that the BOF sub-committee looking into the process for organizations to be included in the Town support of these organizations has a daunting task. He stated that non-funding affects people directly. Mr. DeWitt also reported that there are two categories:

- Federal and State mandated entities
- 501C3's

Mr. DeWitt informed everyone that all of the 501C3's will be reviewed in the coming year by the sub-committee.

**2073 RYASAP**

**Public Comment**

None

- 2130 Pequot Library:** Representing the Pequot Library was Dan Snyderacker, Executive Director and Peter Ventriglia, Treasurer, Board of Trustees

Mr. Snyderacker stated that health insurance costs are a major issue and if funding is cut, the library may need to cut some of their programming for the public.

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Mr. Ventriglia stated that the library effectively triples the funds that are given by the Town and the library is very innovative about their fundraising.

**Public Comment**

None

**2150 Fairfield Counseling Services:** Representing this organization was Dorothy Timmerman, Executive Director

Ms. Timmerman requested the restoration of the funding that was cut.

**Public Comment**

None

**2170 The Discovery Museum:** Representing this organization was Jeff Bishop, Executive Director.

**Public Comment**

None

**2190 Greater Bridgeport Regional Planning Agency:** Representing this organization was Brian Bidolli, Executive Director

Mr. Bidolli reported that the formula used to calculate the funding was developed in 1980 and it is based on population size, overall town land area and the Grand List.

**Public Comment**

None

**2210 Audubon Society:** Representing this organization was Nelson North.

Mr. North stated that any cut would need to come out of sanctuary maintenance as the Audubon will not cut services to the public.

**Public Comment**

None

**2230 Greater Bridgeport Transit Authority:** Representing this organization was Tom Gorman.

Mr. Gorman stated that this organization asks for this every year.

**Public Comment**

None

**2250 Fairfield Museum and History Center:** Representing this organization was Michael Jehle, Executive Director, William Vogel, President, Board of Trustees, and Peter Kunkel, Board of Trustees.

Mr. Jehle noted that they are asking for less than 3% of the total budget as an increase.

**Public Comment**

None

**2270 Fairfield Veterans Advisory and Info Services:** Representing this organization was Vanessa Marshall.

**Public Comment**

None

**2290 Southwestern Connecticut EMS Council**

**Public Comment**

None

**2310 Southwest Regional Mental Health Board:** Representing this organization was Kim O'Reilly, Executive Director

**Public Comment**

None

**2320 Southwest Regional Communications Center**

**Public Comment**

None

**2330 Greater Bridgeport Council of Churches**  
**Public Comment**

None

**2350 Grasmere by the Sea:** Representing this organization was Mike Hebert, President of the Board. Mr. Hebert stated that the original support from the Town was \$120K and this organization now has a different organizational set-up and location. Mr. Hebert informed the Boards that the new building rent is \$195K per year while it used to be \$35K so this cut will have a major impact on their service level. Mr. Flatto reported that he is working with the Jewish Home for the elderly on some internal issues and he indicated that he will probably ask for ½ of the cut he made to be restored.

**Public Comment**

None

**2370 Sullivan McKinney Elder Housing**  
**Public Comment**

None

**2390 Fairfield Arts Council:** Representing this organization was Kristin Fox, Executive Director. Ms. Fox thanked the Town for the \$10K but she stated that they would be eternally grateful for the full \$15K request.

**Public Comment**

None

**2430 The Kennedy Center:** Representing this organization was Dr. Marty Schwartz, President. Dr. Schwartz reported that this organization served over 1,800 individuals last year and the State has cut their support by \$500K so please consider an increase.

**Public Comment**

None

**2450 Mill River Wetland Committee:** Representing this organization was Charlene Brauns-Schindler, Vice President.

She thanked the Boards for their support and she reported that 3,800 students went through their program last year.

**Public Comment**

None

**2470 Pilot House:** Representing this organization was Doreen Caruso, Director and Co-Founder. Ms. Caruso informed the Boards that this program provides extracurricular activities for autistic children as well as other with severe disabilities of all kinds. She also noted that their budget has grown over a few years to over \$250K and they still need all the help they can get. She thanked the Boards for their past support.

**Public Comment**

None

**2480 The Center for Women and Families:** Representing this organization was Susan Schnitzer, Director. Ms. Schnitzer reported that 263 residents were seen last year and this organization presented programs on bullying prevention, teen dating violence, they also opened a satellite center this year and she would ask for the full request if at all possible since the need just keeps growing.

**Public Comment**

None

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Chairman Flynn informed everyone that the schedule at next week's Tuesday meeting will be as follows:

- Private Executive Session to discuss the Contingency Account
- setting of salaries for the Selectmen and the Town Clerk for the next 4 years
- finance area presentations
- deliberations on the budgets

The meeting was adjourned at 12:05 p.m.