

**COMBINED BOARD OF SELECTMAN AND BOARD OF FINANCE
PUBLIC BUDGET HEARING
MINUTES OF MEETING
MARCH 14, 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 Monday, March 14, 2011 at 7:00 p.m. 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

Kenneth Flatto, Sherri Steeneck, James Walsh, Board of Selectmen, Town of Fairfield
Paul Hiller, Chief Fiscal Officer and Clerk of the Board of Finance
Linda Gardiner, Budget Director, Town of Fairfield
Richard Saxl, Town Attorney, Town of Fairfield
Richard White, Director of Public Works, Town of Fairfield
David Title, Superintendent of Schools, Board of Education, Town of Fairfield
Bonnie McWain, Director of Finance, Board of Education, Town of Fairfield
Thomas Cullen, Director of Operations, Board of Education, Town of Fairfield
Dave Fryer, Manager of Facilities, Board of Education, Town of Fairfield
Sal Morabito, Manager Const/Sec/Safety, Board of Education, Town of Fairfield
Bonnie McWain, Director of Finance, Board of Education, Town of Fairfield
Al Kelly, Jim Gallagher, Bill Sappone, Town Facilities Commission (TFC)

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

Chairman Flynn informed everyone that there is an updated agenda for tonight's meeting which includes a report from the TFC on the Capital Improvement Projects submitted in this year's budget.

Mr. Kelly thanked the members of the TFC for their work on this report. Mr. Kelly then distributed the report to the Boards and reviewed it with all present.

Town – Senior Center Roof \$1,000,000

Mr. Kelly reported that, after further research, found that one roof was 30 years old and the other roof will just be monitored for the present time so the request will be \$478K instead of the original \$1M requested.

Mr. White reported that the original estimate was prepared in late November. Mr. White further stated that his intent was to take core samples, etc, but winter arrived with a vengeance so that

work could not be completed. Mr. White added that further research found that part of the roof was from 1991 so it can be monitored instead of being replaced.

Mr. Kelly stated that a per square foot cost of \$24.50 should allow for unknowns such as probable asbestos contamination.

Town – Underground Storage Tanks \$106,000

Mr. Kelly reported that the TFC recommended price of \$120K includes a 10% contingency. The Boards noted that Item A was from last year and therefore there was a question whether it could be submitted again this year since it was bonded last year. Mr. Hiller stated that Bond Counsel should answer those questions.

The BOF asked if an Appropriations Resolution could be created to accompany the Bond Resolution to detail what money is being spent on.

Mr. White reported that if this work is not done this year fines could be imposed if an inspector deems it appropriate.

Town – Old Academy Roof Replacement \$85,000

Mr. Kelly reported that the TFC recommended that a minimum estimate of \$90,000 should be appropriated for this project. Mr. Kelly stated that the increase in the estimate is for the cost of repairs to the cupola.

Mr. White informed the Boards that the estimate for the work on this project came from the contractor who just finished the roof on Old Town Hall.

BOE – Dwight Elementary School boiler replacement \$315,000

Mr. Kelly reported that the TFC recommended an appropriation of \$280,000 for this project.

Mr. Kelly reported that the TFC took money out of the recommended contingency amount to arrive at the \$280,000 and the TFC could not reconcile costs based on the work that was already done on the boilers at the Senior Center by the DPW for \$146,000.

Mr. White, in response to questions from the Boards, stated that the Senior Center estimate included asbestos abatement which was not all needed. Mr. White stated that comparing the two boiler projects was like comparing a Cadillac type boiler for the BOE project to a Chevrolet boiler at the Senior Center. Mr. White further explained that the boiler at the Senior Center could be taken apart in the future and used in a different building if deemed necessary.

Mr. Brachfeld asked Mr. Cullen to provide the BOF with a cost savings analysis on fuel usage for the more expensive boiler furnace that the BOE wants to install.

BOE – Holland Hill Elementary School Oil Tank Replacement \$125,000

Mr. Kelly reported that the TFC recommended that \$125,000 should be appropriated for the removal of the tank and providing a sufficient sum for a replacement tank.

Mr. Kelly stated that the discussion at the TFC meeting centered on a debate over installing another 10,000 gallon tank or a smaller 3,000 gallon tank since the schools have been using only natural gas for the last several years for their dual fuel systems. Mr. Kelly also reported that the current tank is at the end of its useful life and the DEP will require that tank to be replaced. Mr. Kelly also stated that the TFC agreed with the original request because documentation was provided by the BOE to support the cost estimates.

BOE – Jennings Elementary School Boys, Girls and ADA bathrooms \$250,000

Mr. Kelly reported that the TFC agreed with the cost estimate because documentation was provided to support the estimate.

BOE – Mill Hill Elementary School ceilings and lighting \$250,000

Mr. Kelly reported that the TFC recommended that the work be postponed and the BOE pad replacement program, on an as needed basis, stay in effect until the major HVAC project is done in about 3 years according to the BOE Capital Plan.

Mr. Kelly reported that Mr. Cullen had informed the TFC that any future projects at Mill Hill would not be done for 8-9 years and the ceilings need to be replaced. Mr. Kelly noted that a partial project to replace just the ceiling tiles would last about 7-8 years. Mr. Kelly noted that surface mount lights are the only ones requiring replacement and it could cost \$140,000 for replacing ceilings.

BOE - RLMS roof repairs \$50,000

Mr. Kelly reported that the TFC recommended that \$45,000 should be appropriated for this project. Mr. Kelly explained that the documentation estimates showed costs totaling ½ the actual costs and no labor costs were made available in an offer from the manufacturer and distributor.

Chairman Flynn asked the BOE to provide the BOF with a report of the cost benefits of warranties over the past several years.

BOE – McKinley Elementary School Coping stone coating repair & maintenance \$100,000

Mr. Kelly reported that the TFC recommended appropriating \$72,000 for immediate repairs only and the TFC recommended that further investigation into permanent repairs and accountability for the faulty design or installation should be undertaken. Mr. Kelly further stated that the condition needs to be repaired as soon as possible. Mr. Cullen suggested that the parapets could be water sealed as an immediate repair. Mr. Cullen also noted that the school was built in 2003 and the problem was discovered just last year.

In response to a question from the Boards regarding the possibility of taking action against the architect, contractor and/or installation company for this problem, Mr. Saxl stated that the Town could have a cause of action but further research needs to be done before a final opinion is given.

BOE – Roger Ludlowe Middle School siding replacement \$250,000

Mr. Kelly reported that the TFC recommended that this project be removed from the Capital Improvement Program and be addressed under normal maintenance. Mr. Kelly further stated that this is cedar siding and, since there are no leaks present, the Town should get as much time as they can out if the siding.

BOE – Tomlinson Middle School front façade and cornice work \$250,000

Mr. Kelly reported that the TFC recommended that further investigation, documentation and additional estimates be procured prior to any decision on this project; complete documentation related to cost needs to be reviewed; the condition needs to be repaired as soon as possible to

stop the decay. Mr. Kelly further noted that an estimate of \$127,425 has been obtained for this work and basic work should be done to stop the decay but, more information is needed before better estimates are available.

BOE – Early Childhood Center FWHS \$105,000

Mr. Kelly reported that the TFC recommended that the full \$105,000 should be appropriated for this project. Mr. Kelly stated that the TFC agreed with the numbers presented since documentation was provided to substantiate the costs.

First Selectman Flatto and Chairman Flynn both thanked the TFC for their excellent work, done on very short notice. Mr. Walsh suggested that this be done every year just earlier if possible and he thanked Ms. Steeneck for the great idea.

The budgets were reviewed as follows

- 1010 First Selectman:** Representing First Selectman was Kenneth Flatto, First Selectman. Mr. Hiller stated that the first 4 year term is 1/2 over and raises for the Town Clerk and Selectmen need to be addressed at this budget process. Chairman Flynn and Mr. Hiller will research the proper method to be used to accomplish this and get a resolution created.
Public Comment
None
- 1070 Registrar of Voters:** Representing the Registrar of Voters was Matthew Waggner and Roger Autuori, Registrars of Voters
Mr. Autuori reported that they had budgeted for 100% of ballots and a republican primary for President in 2012
Public Comment
None
- 1090 Zoning Board of Appeals**
Public Comment
None
- 1110 Town Plan & Zoning**
Public Comment
None
- 1130 Probate Court:** Representing Probate Court was Kate Maxham.
Public Comment
None
- 1210 Historic District Commission**
Public Comment
None
- 1230 Conservation:** Representing Conservation was Thomas Steinke, Director of Conservation
Mr. Steinke stated that he had requested an additional person in this department but the First Selectman did not recommend that addition. Mr. Flatto stated that the staff appears

to be handling the workload so he chose not to support an extra person. Mr. Steinke reported that the bulk of the expense in line item 54310 is for tide gate maintenance.

Public Comment

None

- 1250 Shellfish:** Representing Shellfish was Thomas Steinke, Director of Conservation. Mr. Steinke reported that the request in line 52200 is needed to locate sources of contamination of the shellfish beds.

Public Comment

None

- 1270 Legal Services:** Representing Legal Services was Town Attorney Richard Saxl. Mr. Saxl reported that line 53200 has an increase this year due to labor arbitrations and revaluation cases to take place this year. Mr., Saxl also reported that line 58100 has a fee for an on-line service used by the attorneys on staff.

Mr. Kiley asked Mr. Saxl and Mr. Hiller to provide the BOF with a schedule of legal services spending for the year.

Public Comment

None

- 1290 Misc. Contingencies:** Representing Miscellaneous Contingencies was Kenneth Flatto. Mr. Flatto reported that the requested increase is for pending contract arbitrator fees and/or appraisals for property or land. Mr. Flatto also noted that expenditures are usually limited to a \$5K maximum per case.

Public Comment

None

- 1350 Community and Economic Development:** Representing Community and Economic Development was Mark Barnhart, Director of Community and Economic Development.

Public Comment

None

- 1370 Harbor Management Commission:** Representing the Harbor Management Commission was Mary von Conta, Chairman.

Mrs. von Conta informed the Boards that the increase in line 53200 is due to increased workload on projects concerning Southport Harbor.

Public Comment

None

- 1390 Land Acquisition**

Public Comment

None

- 1330 Human Resources:** Representing Human Resources was Mary Carroll-Mirylees, Director of Human Resources.

Mrs. Carroll-Mirylees reviewed some of the line items in this budget as follows:

- 53200 – 55% increase is due to additional programs for the police and fire departments like the program currently being used for random drug testing in DPW.
- 55240 – Decrease is due to better rates in the market this year.

- 58920, 58930, 58940 – AON provides medical insurance recommendations for budgeting purposes. Mr. Flatto added that the Town is budgeting what AON said should be budgeted. Chairman Flynn noted that the Town is slowly eating away at the deficit in the Fund Balance. Mrs. Carroll-Mirytees informed the Boards that the Town is using 32 month average for projected expenditures and it is her expectation that the same claim levels will apply for the Town next year for General Liability and Town Property claims along with a lower Worker's Compensation claims than last year. Mrs. Gardiner stated that the average general liability and property claims over the last 5 years are \$405,241.

Chairman Flynn stated that the Ratings Board made comments last year with concerns about the Town only having a balance of \$5.3M in the Insurance Fund. Chairman Flynn also noted that this June that same fund will only have a balance of \$2.1M when the BOE uses \$1.9M for their budgeting so that could have a negative impact on the Town's AAA Bond Rating status. First Selectman Flatto said that it is difficult to address this issue especially since Worker's Compensation had such a large impact this year. Mr. Flatto stated that one possible way to deal with this is to figure out how to push some money into the Insurance Fund. Mr. Flatto suggested another method might be to take Worker's Compensation out of the Insurance Fund and place it in the General Fund for accounting purposes. Mr. Flatto also stated that Worker's Compensation is not an issue with the Ratings Agencies. Chairman Flynn made note that other towns bought Worker's Compensation insurance and then placed Worker's Compensation in their General Fund so their exposure was limited due to the Worker's Compensation insurance. Chairman Flynn also noted that this proposed budget does not address the deficit coming in unless the Town gets some concessions.

In response to questions from the Boards concerning the number of claims outstanding in General Liability, Mr. Hiller stated that those issues need to be addressed in a Private Executive Session.

Chairman Flynn stated that Risk Management has an issue with Worker's Compensation but the Town medical is okay and they followed the Risk Management recommendations. Chairman Flynn also reported that the Town Attorney is reviewing the MOU between the Town and the BOE.

Mrs. Carroll-Mirytees stated that \$652,186 is the revised estimate for Heart and Hypertension and most of that goes to widows after further discussions with the Town administration. Mrs. Carroll-Mirytees said that this figure is staying consistent with the 32 month estimate.

Chairman Flynn suggested that the Boards hold a Private Executive Session as the first item at the Tuesday, March 22, 2011 meeting.

Mr. Hiller distributed the Bond Resolution.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:15 p.m.