

Amended minutes

The **Board of Finance** held a special meeting on Thursday, February 18, 2010 in the Council Chambers, 3 Primrose Street, Newtown, CT. John Kortze called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

PRESENT: John Kortze, James Gaston, Marty Gersten, Joseph Kearney, Harry Waterbury and Michael Portnoy

ALSO PRESENT: First Selectman E. Patricia Llodra (7:40pm), Finance Director Robert Tait, Superintendent Dr. Janet Robinson, Board of Education members Lillian Bittman, Kathy Fetchick, Bill Hart, fourteen members of the public and one member of the press.

VOTER COMMENTS: none noted.

COMMUNICATIONS: Mr. Kortze said that Beth Agen from Newtown Youth and Family Services asked to present at the budget. Barbara Peterson sent an email stating she wants taxes flat and Mr. Kortze submitted a document relative to pay to play (Att. A).

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES: Mr. Gaston moved to approve the minutes of February 8, 2010. Mr. Gersten seconded. All in favor.

FIRST SELECTMAN REPORT: none noted.

FINANCE DIRECTOR REPORT: none noted.

OLD BUSINESS:

Discussion and possible action:

1. Town of Newtown CIP: Mr. Kortze introduced the modified CIP (Att. B), a collaboration with First Selectman Llodra, Superintendent Dr. Robinson, Board of Education Chair Lillian Bittman and Business Manager Ed Arum. Mrs. Bittman stated she is grateful that the First Selectman reached out to the Board of Education. Mr. Tait explained that year two has \$11,000,000 that can be bonded but the high school expansion is already being bonded. The first year is \$15,000,000, the second \$11,000,000, the third \$5,500,000, the fourth \$7,000,000 and last \$7,000,000; those amounts fit under the 10% budget cap. First Selectman Llodra explained that the modified CIP is not a recommendation but a proposal and stated that neither the Board of Selectman or the Board of Education has had the opportunity to discuss with their boards. Hook & Ladder is moving forward and has hired a traffic consultant; it is unknown how quickly the project will proceed. Mr. Gersten complimented Mrs. Llodra and the school board on the process. He noted that if Hawley School was to be closed it would save \$7,000,000 over the five year CIP. He is concerned with the town side safety issues. Mr. Kortze said the town needs to collectively have an in depth discussion on public municipal space, whether it is the senior center, community center or a school. Dr. Robinson spoke of the Hawley School boiler issue, saying she has been assured that a like boiler would be put in should there be an emergency. The Hawley project doesn't fit below the 10%. Mr. Hart explained the phases of the Hawley project saying that the ceiling has to be opened up to rerun the piping; doing the ducting at the same time would minimize costs. Air conditioning can be broken into pieces and put in room by room. Engineering will cover the heat and ventilation. Mrs. Fetchick said the idea

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was to design it once to make sure all the pieces fit together no mater when the project is done. Mr. Kearney questioned if there was a cheaper alternative to addressing temperature issues. There would be additional costs if phase II was not done. Mrs. Fetchick said that the probable construction cost to replace current boilers with comparable ones is estimated to be in excess of \$300,000 and that would not provide redundancy. Mr. Gersten suggested providing an emergency boiler prior to the start of the school year in 2010 and have the school board entertain the idea of mothballing Hawley School. Mr. Portnoy asked why the boiler wasn't part of the repairs and maintenance budget and thinks if needs to be replaced we shouldn't wait until it breaks down. Mr. Gaston thinks closing a school is a colossal issue and the costs of mothballing and reopening in later years need to be considered. He believes the boilers should be part of the CIP. Mr. Portnoy stated all the facilities in town need to be looked at. Mr. Kortze spoke of the Planimetrics report and national and local trends. He thanked Mrs. Llodra for taking the initiative. Mrs. Bittman said that the Board of Education supports the Hawley project and are satisfied that there is not an air quality issue at the Middle School that should supersede the Hawley project. Mrs. Bittman supports the modified CIP; Mr. Hart supports the collaboration and understands the reality of the numbers. Mrs. Fetchick wishes the Board of Education had the opportunity to discuss it; it is a reasonable compromise and agrees the collaboration is the right thing to do.

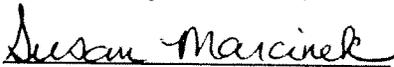
Mr. Gaston moved to approve the CIP based on the plan as presented by First Selectman Llodra, Superintendent Dr. Robinson, Ed Arum and Lillian Bittman. Mr. Waterbury seconded. All in favor.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Mr. Kortze reminded everybody to refer people to the home page of the Town website to view the budget deliberation schedule saying it is updated and current.

ADJOURNMENT:

Having no further business, the Board of Finance adjourned their regular meeting at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Susan Marcinek, Clerk

Att. A: Sports Budget

Att. B: Modified CIP