

**MINUTES OF THE CHESHIRE TOWN COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING AND BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY, AUGUST 20, 2019 AT 6:00 P.M. IN ROOM 207 TOWN HALL, 84 SOUTH MAIN STREET, CHESHIRE CT 06410**

Present

Robert J. Oris, Jr. Chairman; Budget Committee Chairman Tim Slocum;  
Council Members: Jeff Falk, Patti Flynn-Harris, Sylvia Nichols, Peter Talbot, David Veleber. Absent: Paul Bowman and Tom Ruocco.  
Staff: Town Manager Sean M. Kimball; Finance Director James Jaskot; John Gawlak, Recreation Director.  
Dept. of Education: COO Vincent Masciana and BOE Chair Kathy Hallen.

Budget Committee Chairman Slocum opened the meeting at 6:02 p.m.

**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. RECAP AND DISCUSSIONS RE: FISCAL YEAR 2019-2020 FIVE-YEAR CAPITAL EXPENDITURE PLAN AND ANNUAL CAPITAL EXPENDITURE BUDGET**

Town Manager Kimball distributed the information packet to be reviewed and discussed at the meeting.

Page 1 – Summary of Capital Projects Town Manager Recommended July 15, 2019 FY 2020-2024 Capital Expenditure Plan.

Land Acquisition \$400,000 – the Council discussed zeroing out this item, and reallocating the funds to parks projects. The total is \$840,000 (inclusive of the approved \$150,000 projects allocation). The high priority items total is \$320,000. Town Manager Kimball approved \$150,000 of the \$180,000 department request.

Mr. Slocum pointed out that another \$70,000 was allocated for the three (3) basketball courts.

The Council was informed by Mr. Gawlak that things have changed. A representative from Classic Turf visited the basketball court locations, and advised that the funding would only take care of one (1) rather than two (2) courts with post tension material. This is due to the high cost of materials, concrete and labor. By using bituminous concrete, it is less costly, with a 20 year life span. Mr. Gawlak advised that a Segur Insurance representative visited all the parks, courts, fencing, and facilities at the parks. Many of the items have been in priority #1, #2 or #3. The total for parks priority items is \$320,000. At the present time, Mr. Gawlak is working with a resident for funding of some projects through the John G. Martin Foundation. There are some people

interested in the Bartlem Park playground/equipment project with a cost of about \$30,000.

With the additional \$70,000 added to the FY16-17 allocation of \$135,000 Mr. Kimball said there would be enough funding to do three (3) courts.

Without land acquisition funding, Mr. Oris said the money can be used for other purposes, including maintenance and improvements of ball fields. He supports investing money in land improvements rather than land acquisition.

Cheshire Park Lighting – Mr. Gawlak noted these lights were installed in 1975. He has a meeting on Wednesday with a lighting consultant to determine if there is enough illumination at the park for the athletic activities that take place at the park. The report could indicate that night time activity must cease until there is improved lighting...and this project could become a priority #1. Mr. Gawlak will get three quotes and estimates for the lighting requirements. He said 4 foot poles at 70 feet will provide greater efficiency, no spill or glare, better lighting for football and cheerleading, without impact on the neighbors. The current lumens are at unsafe levels, and if someone were hurt due to poor lighting there could be legal issues. Cheshire Park is the only field with lighting. Mr. Gawlak talked about the risers and scaffolding used for parades and events and lack of safety and security with people standing or sitting on them. Other options should be pursued.

Showmobile \$140,000 (\$210,000 w/interest/bonding over 20 years) – Ms. Flynn-Harris commented on removing this item from the project list; not taking the full \$400,000 from land acquisition; putting \$100,000 in the land acquisition account; and said she would not support purchase of the Showmobile in the capital budget this year. Mr. Slocum stated his agreement with Ms. Flynn-Harris.

Open Space Capital Funding Needs \$140,000 total – Mr. Kimball briefly reviewed the list with the Council, and pointed out the priority of constructing a parking lot at the Yankee Expressway property for \$5,000. Tree removal and property access are also items for open space needs.

Bartlem Park Playground \$105,000, #3 priority – this playground is about 15 years old. The surface may require a new spray applied surface at a cost of about \$9,000. Mr. Gawlak has shared the playground report with the people involved with the original playground construction, and they may open more funding efforts and replace some of the apparatus.

Mr. Slocum talked about looking at the \$400,000 from land acquisition and \$320,000 funding needed for #1 priority items on the parks list. He recommends \$75,000 towards open space.

Open Space/Pulchowski Property - #2 priority on the list. The tree removal is right on Mountain Road, and the area is 25 to 50 feet wide.

Town Manager Kimball stated that he “zeroed” maintenance in the operating budget this year, and determined it to be a capital budget item.

Regarding the Yankee Expressway open space property, Mr. Slocum said this is a priority for a parking lot, and the project is going through the Wolcott CT PZC, with discussions about the number of Cheshire parking spaces. He mentioned \$50,000 for open space needs, and identifying one parking lot.

Ms. Flynn-Harris restated her preference to keep \$100,000 for the land acquisition account, and removal of the Showmobile \$140,000 from the CEP.

Parks Department CEP Request – Mr. Oris agrees with moving the Showmobile out to the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the CEP. With the \$150,000 Parks Department funding, plus the money from the Showmobile (including interest), there would be about \$350,000. He supports zeroing out the Land Acquisition item, putting some money in the Land Acquisition account, and this would almost do the #1 and #2 priority items on the Parks need list.

The importance of letting the community know about the town providing maintenance to town facilities was emphasized by Mr. Oris. He said this should be a focus in the capital budget with funding allocated...\$400,000 of new money for facility improvements, and public access to open space.

Cheshire Park Lights - Mr. Gawlak cited the lights at Cheshire Park as a #1 priority. He told the Council he can get specs ready and go out to bid this week. With the light rating on the park lights, Mr. Oris said this project will require additional thought. This would be a priority and Mr. Kimball said funding will be found for this project. Mr. Talbot does not want one-half of the Parks allocation going to lights at Cheshire Park, and the projects may have to be re-prioritized.

The discussion on land acquisition funding and reallocation of funds was clarified by Mr. Kimball. Take \$400,000 out of land acquisition; put \$100,000 into the land acquisition account for a balance of \$500,100; and take \$300,000 to reallocate to park improvements.

\$150,000 requested for Park Improvements; \$300,000 additional funding allocated; Showmobile \$140,000 used for Park Improvements; \$600,000 funding for Parks capital needs.

The Council talked about the open space projects, and the need to determine what the priorities are for specific parking lot projects.

The playground improvements at Bartlem Park and McNamara Park could be one project. All three basketball courts can be done with the asphalt material, with new goals, and the \$135,000 appropriation. Tennis Courts project is \$290,000 including the multi-purpose rink at Quinnipiac Park. Grouping of all the projects will be done by Mr. Gawlak and staff.

Video Camera Summary - \$310,000 requested in year #1 (Finance Dept. I.T.) Ms. Flynn-Harris said the Technology Study Group discussed whether there is a need for cameras on Main Street, West Main Street, Lock 12. The top section of the summary report lists some of the completed projects; the bottom section lists what needs to be done. The priority is based on meetings between Cheshire Police Department and Apex Technology staff. The question is whether all these cameras are needed. This is why there is the average cost per camera cited, and reducing the number of cameras the appropriation is reduced.

Mr. Kimball said the list can be revisited and reduced. Mr. Oris said staff should revisit the list, cover what is necessary, and noted the Council does not have the ability to cut these locations.

School Door Access \$169,250 – Mr. Masciana said this number came from Apex, and the new door access system will be the same as the town system. Ms. Talbot explained that part of the project is done, and there was hope for grant money to offset the door access project, which did not materialize.

Pages 4 and 5 – Cheshire Police Department (CPD) Lower Level Improvements -

Mr. Kimball stated that until there is a design the exact numbers will not be known. Money can be appropriated for the design, with meaningful improvements to the HVAC system. After the tour of the police station, Mr. Kimball said we want to pinpoint what is needed to be done and associated costs.

Mr. Oris cited his dissatisfaction and disappointment with the architectural firm (Silver Petrucelli) and the \$1.5M number being too high. He supports taking care of our police officers and taking care of the issues at CPD. Other alternatives must be looked at to fast track the project and better use of the dollars to provide CPD what it needs.

\$75,000 for phase #1 lower level CPD design in year #1, and \$400,000 total request for year #1. According to information from PW Director Noewatne there is no need to replace the duct work, but Ms. Flynn-Harris noted the duct work is included in the options. The design plan is needed first, and there is no official number for the project at this time. Mr. Kimball said the redesign of the locker rooms was not included in the cost estimate from the architect. The additional design, bidding/contract for the total project (in the e-mail from Mr. Noewatne) is estimated at \$75,000. Until the project is designed the \$1.5M possibility is still out there.

It was stated by Mr. Oris that the square footage is small for \$1.5M, and he wants to have the police facility get what it needs. These are bad numbers from the architectural firm, and he is frustrated with this firm. He said another firm could have a walk through, and re-evaluate how to move this project forward. There needs to be another way of doing business with the town's construction projects.

The Council discussed getting the design done by the next budget process, having another firm look at the CPD project, the need for planning numbers, not trusting the numbers from Silver Petrucelli, focusing on the issues at CPD, selecting a number for the project which could be up to \$400,000 in year #1 and up to \$800,000 to \$1M in year #2. Mr. Kimball stated he is comfortable with the \$400,000, and there could be an RFP for a new design firm, get solid numbers, and start this process right away.

Pages 6, 7, 8 and 9 BOE Capital Budget - Mr. Masciana reviewed the changes in the BOE requests with the Council.

#9 Flooring Replacement \$200,000 – the request will stay at \$200,000 but is limited to Cheshire High School followed by Chapman School (instead of “Districtwide Projects”).

#11 Repaving \$225,000 – The request will be \$225,000 and is limited to Cheshire High School and Chapman School (instead of “Districtwide Projects”).

#1 CHS Switchgear replacement \$110,000 – this item is removed from the CEP following inspection, testing and repair of the equipment.

\$150,000 Master Plan Study – this is a new funding request that is added to the BOE list.

#7 CHS Unit Ventilator Replacement \$100,000 – Update to new units.

#14 Bus Depot \$125,000 – There are concerns about this leased facility which could be taken away from the Dept. of Education at any time. Mr. Masciana said the project would include lot expansion, improvement of traffic flow, increased vehicle parking, reduction of the number of buses on Sandbank Road.

#15 Stadium Lighting Upgrade CHS Main Field \$150,000 – this project would move to LED fixtures with 30 foot candles which is the recommendation for all high school fields. Mr. Oris supports this lighting project, and said the town and BOE must think about safety and legal issues for the field.

CHS Turf Field – Mr. Masciana updated the Council on the condition of the 12 year old turf field. The field has an 8 year warranty; the field has been tested, inspected every year, is in good condition, well maintained and groomed, and there is more life left in this turf field. Some of the carpeting has been replaced at a cost of \$300,000.

Mr. Oris commented on the two patches of the turf field, and his disappointment in the work. He asked Mr. Masciana to look into the work that was done.

Town Manager Kimball cited #13 Millwork at \$150,000 as a project that could be cut from the list.

Council Chairman Oris said he is not willing to cut the BOE capital budget, and long term repairs should be looked at. This is an austere BOE capital budget and he will support it as presented to the Council.

Mr. Slocum agreed, and will support the BOE capital budget requests as submitted.

With regard to project #13, Millwork Replacement, Mr. Masciana said the worst needs will be done first.

Ms. Nichols stated her support of the BOE budget as presented to the Council.

Ms. Flynn-Harris supports the BOE requests, with elimination of the Bus Depot project.

The Council discussed the Bus Depot Project, whether it should be done or not, and the risk of doing the improvements and the State taking the land back. Mr. Oris recommended leaving the project in the CEP due to the traffic congestion at the site, and the need for improvements to alleviate this issue.

Town Manager Kimball recently signed a five-year lease extension for \$1.00, and said it is unlikely the State will terminate the lease.

With adding the Millwork project back into the BOE capital budget the total budget request is \$3,560,000.

FY19-20 Annual Capital Budget-Council Approvals - The Council reviewed and discussed the list of approvals and changes.

Add "Millwork Replacement" \$150,000 to the CEP.

#8 – Lower Level CPD Improvements – increase the appropriation to \$400,000 (+\$325,000).

#32 – District Driveway & Parking Lot Paving – reduce to \$225,000.

#7 – Improvements to Youth Center \$130,000, remove from year #1; move to year #2; this project and the long term plans for the building will have further discussion by the Council.

#16 – Road Improvement Program \$2,000,000; reduced to \$1.7M.

#14 – PW Vehicles & Equipment \$200,000; replace one truck every year; \$213,000.

The Council discussed CPD police car rentals which generated about \$90,000 in revenue. CPD vehicles will include two (2) new Tahoe cars; revenue from the rentals should be used to purchase CPD vehicles.

Public Works truck/vehicle auction revenue is not reflected in the purchase of new trucks, and the Council talked about use of these funds for truck purchases. Mr. Jaskot stated these funds are being used for maintenance.

Chairman Oris commented on this money being in the operating budget in some account form. He said Council should discuss use this money to offset purchase of PW trucks. He supports CPD using Tahoe vehicles for their fleet, as they are larger and safer, and cost is less than other cars for a better vehicle.

Mr. Jaskot explained the money is budgeted in the General Fund. This could be changed going forward.

#3 – Vehicle/Equipment Replacement Fund \$393,000. This is the original number and Town Manager Kimball will adjust it.

#4 – Capital Project Management Services \$148,000 – In approved projects some funding to be included; going forward with new projects the management services will be included in the project costs.

Page 10 (handout) – there are three BOE projects with the 8% fee; there will be some PBC projects with the management fee for oversight.  
Total \$232,030...reduced to \$106,000 in first year of CEP.

CEP Book, page 43 – PW Grounds Equipment, \$98,200; this money is included in the \$393,000 (#3).

With regard to the PW Department fleet, Mr. Kimball will have Director Noewatne update the fleet list (equipment, mileage or hours, etc.) and submit to the Council.

#15 – PW Vehicles and Equipment \$220,000. Pages 79-80 CEP book identifies the equipment replacement.

With regard to reimbursements for some of the project costs, Mr. Jaskot explained that it reduces the amount to be borrowed. The appropriation is the full amount, but the projection amounts used include reimbursements.

Page 16 CEP Book – shows \$35,000 for LED upgrade; \$900,000 West Johnson Bridge repair.

Mr. Oris pointed out the importance of taxpayers knowing the town is going out for a capital budget of “x” but the net cost is less than that amount based on reimbursements.

Road Improvement Program \$1.7M (new #); average cost over the last five years is \$1.67M in adopted budgets.

Mr. Kimball noted page 27 CEP book which shows the referendum votes over the last few years...last year \$1.5M approved; prior year \$1.7M.

The road rating increased to 87 this year; the town does 10-11 miles of road work per year. Following discussion, the Council came to a firm agreement of \$1.7M for the road program.

#19 – West Johnson Bridge Repair \$1,800,000; this project has 50% reimbursement.

#22- Various Improvements to Parks and Open Spaces – \$590,000 (new #); the funding will be broken out for specific park improvement projects.

Tennis Court renovations (Cheshire Park) are included in #25.

#24 – Showmobile \$140,000 – removed from first year of the CEP.

#8 - CPD Lower Level Project – moved to year #2.

#7 – Youth Center Project – moved to year #2 at \$130,000.

Mr. Talbot calculated the total for year #1 CEP at \$11,512,000.

Page 12 (handout) – Mr. Jaskot updated the information for the first year of the bond sale; years 4 to 10 there are higher costs before adjustments to FY 19-20 CEP.

Mr. Jaskot stated he did not take into consideration any of the projects completed in the last six (6) months, and will be coming back to Council for another round of de-authorizations. He reported that the West Johnson Pump Station project came in \$1M under budget. South Brooksvale road project came in \$900,000 under budget. Doolittle School Cafeteria project came in \$15,000 under budget.

On behalf of the Council, Chairman Oris commended staff for understanding the Council’s priorities, and bringing in a budget in line with where the Council wants to be.

**4. PENDING LITIGATION (executive session; move to Room 115).  
Town Council remained in Room 207.**

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

MOVED that the Town Council enter Executive Session at 8:26 p.m. to include Town Manager Kimball, Asst. Town Manager Talbot.

VOTE           The motion passed unanimously by those present.

MOTION by Mr. Talbot; seconded by Mr. Veleber

MOVED that the Town Council exit Executive Session at 8:44 p.m.

VOTE           The motion passed unanimously by those present.

**5.     ADJOURNMENT**

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

MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 8:44 p.m.

VOTE           The motion passed unanimously by those present.

Attest:

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Marilyn W. Milton, Clerk