

TOWN OF CROMWELL
SPECIAL TOWN MEETING
March 31, 2010
(See Preceding Legal Notices)
(Resolutions follow the minutes)

A special town meeting of the electors and citizens qualified to vote in town meetings of the Town of Cromwell, Connecticut, was held in the Woodside Intermediate School cafeteria, 30 Woodside Road, in the Town of Cromwell, Connecticut, on Wednesday, March 31, 2010 at 7:00 p.m.

A motion was made by Al Waters to nominate Alice Kelly as Moderator, seconded by Tony Varricchio; a motion to close nominations was made by Bob Jahn, seconded by Tony Varricchio. Alice Kelly was chosen as moderator of the meeting and Darlene DiProto, Town Clerk, acted as clerk.

A motion was made to waive the reading of the notice by Julius Neto, seconded by Loraine Caruso, and unanimously approved. The notice was published in the Hartford Courant on March 19, 2010, and is recorded in these records immediately preceding these minutes.

The moderator explained how the meeting was to proceed. First Selectman John Flanders gave an overview of the projects proposed including those from the Long Range Capital Planning. A power point presentation was made with all projects being done with an estimated impact of .24 to the mill rate.

Chief Anthony Salvatore spoke about the Communications Project, and said that there is an overview of this project on both the Town of Cromwell and the Cromwell Police Department websites. He explained that the console was renovated in 1985 and in 2000 moved to the new part of the building, and the radio system was there since 1987. Both the console and the radio system have lived past the 15 years of the manufacturer's expectancy. In 2000 when they expanded the police station they added brand new monitors. These monitors are analog and have been on 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and 365 days a year. He said that we still have service, but we don't have the parts according to the manufacturer, and that their technology is no longer current.

Tom Arcari of Quisenberry Arcari Architects, LLC, gave the presentation for the Senior/Community Center. He explained how they did a feasibility study, cost estimates, demographic study and program assessment for the town's needs. The net goal is 14,500 square feet and that currently they have 8,500 square feet. \$4.8 million is both the hard cost and soft cost. The presentation showed the plans, as it would look if built in Watrous Park, which was the architect's recommendation, of a gym, meeting rooms, computer room, and office space.

Eileen Branciforte, the library director gave a power point presentation of the proposed library expansion. She explained that the library was built 25 years ago and now has new uses. Right now it is 13,692 square feet, and it would be 21,221 square feet after the expansion into the courtyard. She said that the library is not ADA compliant, space is needed for technology, and that the children's section is undersized. The State Library Grant that she is expecting to receive will be \$1,000,000. This project should be sufficient room for the library for the next 20 years.

Item 1. The Moderator stated that since the Selectmen of the Town on their own initiative, pursuant to Section 7-7 of the General Statutes of Connecticut, Revision of 1958, as amended, had designated this item for submission to the voters in the manner provided by said Section, it will be necessary to order a referendum on the resolution and adjourn this meeting after a reasonable discussion.

The Moderator called for the presentation of the resolution warned under item 1 of the notice appropriating \$3,046,000 for the road, drainage system improvements project, and authorizing borrowings to finance the appropriation. Upon a motion duly made, seconded and adopted, the reading of the full text of the resolution into the minutes was waived, copies of the resolution having been made available to those in attendance.

Michael Gengler moved the resolution for adoption, which motion was seconded by Loraine Caruso. A copy of the full text of the resolution is recorded following these minutes.

The reports of the following Town boards were presented recommending the project appropriation and borrowing authorization: the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Finance. The action of the Planning and Zoning Commission was reported with respect to the referral of the project to the Commission

pursuant to Section 8-24 of the Connecticut General Statutes. The Moderator then stated that the meeting was open for discussion of the foregoing resolution. The following comments were made: Dave Murphy – 3 Freestone Avenue – Talked about bonding with no moneys involved. When bonding a certain amount of money for 20 years we should have the actual numbers that we can see. People need to know what the actual cost is. Also, we need to pay for the bonding attorney, is that included? Mr. Flanders that the bonding attorney fees are already included, which total approximately \$75,000. Marianne Sylvester, Finance Director, said that bonding of \$4,000,000 over 20 years is approximately \$2,000,000 in interest.

Bonnie Anderson - 25 Chestnut Court – Asked if this would be a fixed rate for the bonding. Mr. Flanders replied that it is a fixed rate.

Phil Gagnon – 13 Harrison Drive – Why not pay on a cash basis, is there money to do that? Mr. Flanders said no. Ms. Sylvester said that the Annual Budget would have to be complete in 12 months. Mr. Gagnon asked if the mil rate increases each year for this. Mr. Flanders said no it is a constant amount. Mr. Gagnon asked if the 4 million and the 2 million interests are included, and Mr. Flanders said yes. Mr. Gagnon asked in what Grand List the 1.25% increase is in. Mr. Flanders said it would be the October 2009 for 2010/2011 Budget. Mr. Gagnon said that this Grand List does not have the downturn of the housing market. Mr. Flanders explained that we need to move forward with projects the best we can.

Frank Czech – 25 Oakwood Manor – Can we look for other funds for resources. There is a 9% unemployment rate, and houses on streets that are abandoned. There is also a failure of Commercial Real Estate. We need different sources of funding. People still need to taxes and I need to pay taxes. The town needs to give back to the taxpayers this year. Mr. Flanders said they cannot tell the impact on the tax base. That the town does not collect on revenue but on the value of a person's property. He believes that a number of these projects are a benefit to the town. That the mil increase is .24 in the upcoming year, and that we need to address our infrastructure.

Jay Leblanc – 3 Cedar Drive – People are looking for a little more transparency to make a decision. This information doesn't show a total number. He feels there are missing numbers and facts. Mr. Flanders explained that the .24 mil is based on the current Grand List. That this is the projection for the current year, and they cannot tell what the rate will be in 2013. We can tell you the total amount but not each mil rate which needs to be calculated each year. Estimate is based on a 1% increase year over year. Mr. Leblanc asked when the bonding would start. Mr. Flanders said the infrastructure bonding would start in the spring. That would be for the roads and the communication system which would be issued in 2010. Mr. Leblanc asked if these numbers represent a case of best cast/worst case scenario. Ms. Sylvester said this is a conservative view based on history not extravagance.

Steve Bayley – 22 Chestnut Court – Is concerned with the court ruling of \$82,000 decrease and that TPC is looking for a decrease in their assessment, and he heard there is a lengthy list of appeals. He supports the road project, and asked about the \$123,000 from state stimulus money and \$920,000 on other projects to accelerate other road projects. Mr. Flanders explained that the state money of \$123,000 is a town road grant that is given every year for the town roads, and the \$946,000 is for our town road reconstruction project and that there a lot of roads that need serious work done to them.

Eric Rennie – 9 Wexford Lane – Said that with an out of pocket expense of .24 mils that equals \$40.00, it is what we pay to fill up a car with a tank of gas. We need to invest in order to keep up the value of our property. We need to attract businesses to our community and they want to see a town who keeps up with their infrastructure. He hopes all voters will carefully consider all these projects.

Michael Gengler – 5 Forest Road – Member of the Board of Finance – He explained that the Board of Finance voted to unanimously support all 4 projects. We do have a AA+ rating in the town and the timing is good to do these projects.

Item 2. Following the conclusion of the discussion of the resolution presented under item 1 of the notice, the Moderator stated that since the Selectmen of the Town on their own initiative, pursuant to Section 7-7 of the General Statutes of Connecticut, Revision of 1958, as amended, had designated this item for submission to the voters in the manner provided by said Section, it will be necessary to order a referendum on the resolution and adjourn this meeting after a reasonable discussion.

The Moderator called for the presentation of the resolution warned under item 2 of the notice appropriating \$1,224,000 for police communications system improvements, and authorizing borrowings to finance the appropriation. A motion was duly made, seconded and adopted, the reading of the full

text of the resolution into the minutes was waived, copies of the resolution having been made available to those in attendance.

There were numerous people who moved the resolution for adoption, which motion was seconded by numerous people. A copy of the full text of the resolution is recorded following these minutes.

The reports of the following Town Boards were presented recommending the project appropriation and borrowing authorization: the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Finance. The action of the Planning and Zoning Commission was reported with respect to the referral of the project to the Commission pursuant to Section 8-24 of the Connecticut General statutes. The Moderator then stated that the meeting was open for discussion of the foregoing resolution. The following comments were made:

Helen Zalewski – 26 Geer Street – Can't understand because we are paying for a new one for the Fire Department. When you call 911 you get the Police Department then they transfer you to the Fire Department. It should be in one place for all of it. One center for dispatchers. Chief Salvatore explained that this is about the infrastructure of the Police Department. That she needs to speak with the Board of Selectmen and the Fire Commissioners regarding one dispatch center. This is for the communication equipment at 5 West Street.

Frank Czech – 25 Oakwood Manor – Said his wife had to call 911 because he thought he was having a heart attack. He feels we should have one dispatch center, and wants to know why we can't go to one system. Have we looked for alternative funding for this? Chief Salvatore explained that we are here for the communications center. That the equipment ranges from 23 to 25 years old that needs to be replaced. That to combine dispatch centers he would need to speak with the Board of Selectmen and the Fire Commissioners. Capt. Nelson said that he has been looking into grant money from Homeland Security but right now there is no money available. They had recently received \$30,000 that the department used, but right now there is none. They have also asked for Congressional earmarked money and my end up with approximately \$400,000 to offset if it comes through. Mr. Flanders said the town had approached the Fire Commissioners to combine dispatch centers by his 3 predecessors and that it had failed. Looking at the components we still need to upgrade. He doesn't know when it would be resolved, and if it takes a year or more before anything happens, it would put us in a tenuous situation. At this time he has no commitments from them.

Peter Keithan – 24 Iron Gate Lane – Member of the Planning and Zoning Commission – Feels that the Police Department needs this for safety reasons and needs this upgrade. He knows it is costly but we need this for the safety of everybody. He had an incident where he had to call 911 and there were four officers who responded when he had someone in his yard at 5:00 a.m.

Helen Zalewski – 26 Geer Street – Thinks we are already paying for the Fire Department and we are paying taxes on that and now for the Police Department. We need to cut back.

Glen Macko – 16 Arrowwood Drive – Tried to take action on this communications and worked with John Flanders and Chief Salvatore. He also spoke with Don Swanson and Fire Chief Pendl. He sent a letter for an integration plan. He said that he discussed this with the Fire District and they are prepared to have a Feasibility Study done. He thinks that a regional communication center (RECC) should be looked into like Monroe, Easton, and Trumbull. Feels there is no better time than now to look into this. Mr. Flanders commented that it could not be done at this time. There is no guarantee that it will happen. We are doing a balancing act and he is in the process of talking to neighboring towns regarding regionalization. Chief Salvatore said that the infrastructure needs to be replaced at this time because we cannot rely on the equipment.

Alan Rutner – 10 Iron Gate Lane – Asked about the replacement of the equipment on the verge of failing. What percentage was for expansion and what for equipment? Maybe at this time we should seek funds to modernize the equipment. If this fails where would money come from? Chief Salvatore said what the department is looking for is \$900,000 for the console, lighting, satellite received, antennae, software and hardware. Funding to replace what we have today. If this fails we cannot absorb the cost and then we would have to go to the Board of Finance and the Board of Selectmen for an appropriation.

Marie Roberto – 28 Watchhill Circle – Cannot believe that we are still on an analog system and not on broadband. How could we even think about going regional when we don't even have the right capacity now? She supports us and hopes that we get to the level of other towns communications.

Steve Bayley – 22 Chestnut Court – Asked if the system goes down what happens, and if it does go down can we move to the Fire Department? Chief Salvatore explained that the Fire Department is not on PSAP and that we would have to go to Middletown. We can switch for some other communications to other departments. We are on an above ground system that is analog and hope to go to a digital system.

Item 3. Following conclusion of the discussion of the resolution presented under item 1 of the notice, the Moderator stated that since the Selectmen of the Town of their own initiative, pursuant to Section 7-7 of the General Statutes of Connecticut, Revision of 1958, as amended, had designated this item for submission to the voters in the manner provided by said Section, it will be necessary to order a referendum on the resolution and adjourn this meeting after a reasonable discussion.

The Moderator called for the presentation of the resolution warned under item 2 of the notice appropriating \$4,650,000 for the new senior and/or community center construction project, and authorizing borrowings to finance the appropriation. Upon a motion duly made, seconded and adopted, the reading of the full text of the resolution into the minutes was waived, copies of the resolution having been made available to those in attendance.

Steve Bayley moved the resolution for adoption, which motion was seconded by Christie Carpino. A copy of the full text of the resolution is recorded following these minutes.

The reports of the following Town boards were presented recommending the project appropriation and borrowing authorization: the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Finance. The action of the Planning and Zoning Commission was reported with respect to the referral of the project to the Commission pursuant to Section 8-24 of the Connecticut General Statutes. The Moderator then stated that the meeting was open for discussion of the foregoing resolution. The following comments were made:

Bob Jahn – 3 Woodside Road – Commented that the presentation showed the site in Watrous Park, and asked if there were any limitations as to what could be built there. The architect said that he has spoken with the Town Planner who told him he saw no restrictions. Mr. Flanders said this is conceptual and not in stone that it is going to be in Watrous Park. He is unaware of any restrictions. Mr. Jahn has a copy of a Dedication Agreement between the town and the state signed in 1991 by then First Selectman Mary Amenta stating that the park could only be used for recreational purposes.

Steve Bayley – 22 Chestnut Court – Asked if the building was designed with any sustainability, such as solar roof, etc., and if there is a deadline for any grant money. The architect explained that the building is as environmentally friendly as possible. That it would be as efficient as possible, and the grant does have a time frame that you must use it as soon as you receive it.

Helen Zalewski – 26 Geer Street – This thing is about recreation. The town has a garage up there, and the Boy Scout have a clubhouse there, so seniors should have the right to have something. The architect said a team of people decided that could support recreation on its site and was a good place for a senior center.

Martha Rennie – 9 Wexford Lane – Thought that this was going to be a Senior Center, and now became aware that it is going to be a Senior/Community Center, and wanted to know what the Community Center meant. Mr. Flanders said that the Community Center would be dedicated to the seniors and community at large, and that it would be available to each group at segments of time and space. The architect said that many communities are building Senior/Community Centers to offer communities more space.

Curt Anderson – 22R Hicksville Road – Inquired as to the maintenance, staffing, etc., and asked if these would be in this mil rate. Mr. Flanders said no because the project would not be immediate, but in the next 3 years and does not effect this budget year. They are looking for one additional staff person who would be a maintenance person whose duties would be incorporated.

John Croasdale – 4 Bellevue Terrace – With these two building projects, the Library and the Senior Center, which gets done first? Mr. Flanders said that the Library expansion does not involve too much building because the majority is just building in the courtyard.

Jim Rude – 25 Highridge Road – He is a resident in town and a user of Watrous Park, and he is distressed that we would use the only wooded lot. Mr. Flanders said that there is no hard and firm decision for that space. Mr. Rude asked what if they look somewhere else and it was a \$1,000,000 for that space. Mr. Flanders said that we would have to go to bonding again. Mr. Rude asked if the cost of heating and

lighting was factored in. Mr. Flanders said no it had not been. Mr. Rude asked what would happen to the existing Senior Center. Mr. Flanders said that they might move the Recreation Department and the Youth Services into that area. Mr. Rude asked what the proponents were and do we have enough green space in town. The architect answered in his professional opinion that the park space is beneficial to have joint space for a full time center in the park. It would bring security to the park and the building could be used for different functions. It seems like a good fit.

Dave Murphy – 3 Freestone Avenue – If the park was built from a federal grant then anyone in the state could use it. Theresa Strong, Senior Services Director said that they actually had an attorney search this and they were told that there were not any deed restrictions. For example there is already built on park property a Boy Scout Hut and a Skateboard Park.

Peter Keithan – 24 Iron Gate Lane – Sees that there is only one way in and out of the park. There are ball fields there with kids running all around and worries about their safety. He also said that the road is not very wide. He thinks we need to look for another place to build this. The architect said that the entrance way would be upgraded and that the road will have to be widened to support emergency vehicles.

Phil Gagnon -13 Harrison Drive – Asked if there is water and sewer lines there. The architect said that the water and sewer lines would have to be taken out to building from the Boy Scout Hut. Mr. Gagnon asked if it could be handled. The architect said that it had not been scoped yet. Mr. Gagnon asked about the Plan of Development, and that the North and West of town were to be developed as commercial. Wanted to know if the town could do an overlay zone. He said that Rocky Hill is doing that. Why not as we develop try to bring in one master plan. Mr. Flanders said that he had no idea but it is an interesting concept, and that we are exploring and have hopefully will have an opportunity to do so. Mr. Gagnon asked if this was in line with the Plan of Development, and Mr. Flanders said that it was.

Item 4. Following the conclusion of the discussion of the resolution presented under item 2 of the notice, the Moderator stated that since the Selectmen of the Town on their own initiative, pursuant to Section 7-7 of the General Statutes of Connecticut, Revision of 1958, as amended, had designated this item for submission to the voters in the manner provided by said Section, it will be necessary to order a referendum on the resolution and adjourn this meeting after a reasonable discussion.

The Moderator called for the presentation of the resolution warned under item 2 of the notice appropriating \$3,850,000 for the library expansion project, and authorizing borrowings to finance the appropriation. Upon a motion duly made, seconded and adopted, the reading of the full text of the resolution into the minutes was waived, copies of the resolution having been made available to those in attendance.

Peter Keithan moved the resolution for adoption, which motion was seconded by Joanne Golden. A copy of the full text of the resolution is recorded following these minutes.

The reports of the following Town boards were presented recommending the project appropriation and borrowing authorization: The Board of Selectmen and the Board of Finance. The action of the Planning and Zoning Commission was reported with respect to the referral of the project to the Commission pursuant to Section 8-24 of the Connecticut General Statutes. The Moderator then stated that the meeting was open for discussion of the foregoing resolution. The following comments were made:

Jim Rude – 25 Highridge Road – Are these figures the construction cost for 2010 or 2013. Mr. Flanders said 2010. Mr. Rude asked if were possible that it could be more, and Mr. Flanders responded that it could also be less. Mr. Rude asked about electronic library technology space planning. Ms Branciforte said that in order to get the state grant we had to do a 3 year plan and that we could change things as technology is made. We are not locked into a plan where it won't work. Mr. Rude said that this might be too much space.

Martha Rennie – 9 Wexford Lane – Said that one of the things identified is insufficient space for certain programs, and also reducing the number of children in programs because we do not have the space for them. The present library was designed in 1981, and 25 years later we have no space for books. Space is definitely an major issue.

Jay Leblanc – 3 Cedar Drive – If they are using the court yard to expand will there be a basement in the addition. Ms. Branciforte said that they would like a basement, but the underground wiring might be a

problem, and that with the weight of the books a slab would be better. She also explained that the cost had to be \$3,000,000 in order to get the \$1,000,000 grant.

Following the conclusion of the discussion of the resolution presented under item 4 of the notice, Peter Keithan presented the following resolution which was seconded and adopted:

RESOLVED, that this town meeting be adjourned to referendum votes on the resolutions considered pursuant to items 1 through 4, inclusive, of the notice to be held on Thursday, April 8, 2010 between the hours of 12:00 noon and 8:00 p.m. in accordance with the Notice of this meeting.

The Moderator declared that the town meeting was adjourned to referendum votes on Thursday, April 8, 2010 between the hours of 12:00 noon and 8:00 p.m., and that the resolutions would be placed upon the ballots under the following headings, respectively:

“SHALL THE TOWN OF CROMWELL APPROPRIATE \$3,046,000 FOR VARIOUS ROAD AND DRAINAGE SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS, AND AUTHORIZE THE ISSUE OF BONDS AND NOTES IN THE SAME AMOUNT TO FINANCE THE APPROPRIATION?”

“SHALL THE TOWN OF CROMWELL APPROPRIATE \$1,224,000 FOR POLICE COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS, AND AUTHORIZE THE ISSUE OF BONDS AND NOTES IN THE SAME AMOUNT TO FINANCE THE APPROPRIATION?”

“SHALL THE TOWN OF CROMWELL APPROPRIATE \$4,650,000 FOR THE NEW SENIOR AND/OR COMMUNITY CENTER CONSTRUCTION PROJECT, AND AUTHORIZE THE ISSUE OF BONDS AND NOTES IN THE SAME AMOUNT TO FINANCE THE APPROPRIATION?”

“SHALL THE TOWN OF CROMWELL APPROPRIATE \$3,850,000 FOR THE LIBRARY EXPANSION PROJECT, AND AUTHORIZE THE ISSUE OF BONDS AND NOTES IN THE SAME AMOUNT TO FINANCE THE APPROPRIATION?”

Voters approving a resolution will vote “Yes” and those opposing said resolution will vote “No”. Voters will vote in the Cromwell High School gymnasium on Donald Harris Drive, in Cromwell, Connecticut. Absentee ballots will be available from the Town Clerk’s Office.

The town meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m. for a referendum vote on the resolutions considered pursuant to items 1 through 4 inclusive, of the notice. Said resolutions were placed upon the voting machines under the above headings.

Respectfully submitted,

Darlene A. DiProto
Town Clerk

Dated at Cromwell, Connecticut this 5th day of April 2010.