

TOWN OF CROMWELL
SPECIAL JOINT MEETING
BOARD OF EDUCATION
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
BOARD OF FINANCE
THURSDAY, JANUARY 4, 2007
CROMWELL MIDDLE SCHOOL
7:00 P.M. CAFETERIA

MINUTES

PRESENT: Board of Education Chairman Shirley, J. Banic, Kimberly A. Spurlin, Frank Emanuele Jr., James L. Gere, Jay V. Fletcher, Kate F. Kane, First Selectman Paul C. Beaulieu, Richard R. Newton, Al Waters, Sharon A. Salvatore, Myron P. Johnson, Stanley Stachura Jr., Francis X. Monnes, Board of Finance Chairman Michael Gengler, John Flanders, Loraine Caruso, Edwin Maley Jr. Julius Neto, and Jack Henehan.

ABSENT: James L. Gere, Mary Konopka, and Ann M. Jordan.

1. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL: Chairman Shirley Banic called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Kim Spurlin made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Jay Fletcher. All were in favor. **Motion Passed.**
3. NEW BUSINESS:
 - a. Discussion regarding long range needs for Cromwell School System.

The Superintendent of Schools went over the phases of the school projects and discussed that we are looking at Phase III of the ECS long range plan and short term facility needs. Three Student Enrollment plans were done in the past 10 years which was off only by a few students. The Superintendent of Schools thanked the Town, the Town Clerk and the Town Planner for their time and efforts that went into this project. He also, discussed that we should see a steady increase in the next 10 year plan. There has been an increase of about 6% per year for the project progression of 1996 and the reimbursement rate is currently at 53%. The Director of Business and Operations went over the Project Progression and Responsibilities of each board. The Superintendent went over the school facilities master plan that was originally commissioned by the consulting firm of Jeter, Cook, and Jepson Architects back in 1996. They requested \$35,000,000 from the State for all four schools they put that money aside and held it for up to three years. Finally, in 2001 through the BOE they sent a letter to the state saying they are rescinding that money for the elementary and middle school and they were taken off that list. The concepts of this master plan were updated in 2000 by Turner Construction.

The Director of Business and Operations went over a brief listing of facility improvements during the past 10 years and discussed the Capital Building Projects and went over the State Requirements which are as follows:

- 06-07 school construction reimbursement for Cromwell 53.21% (may be different for 07-08)
- Town must have funding (referendum) for entire project in place before application is submitted to State.
- Cost controls
 - ❖ Placing a dollar cap on change orders & cost revisions due to changes in the project
 - ❖ Limiting legislative revisions in scope and cost to 2.
- No Reimbursement for project renovations for 20 years.
- Use of State developed standard AIA & construction contracts.
- Reimbursement of legal fees only if case is won.

And Specific Time Frames are met:

- Adequate timing must be considered particularly for State mandates.
- 2008 funding must be received by the State BOE prior to June 30, 2007.

The Director of Business and Operation Services went over a brief history of facility improvements that were done within the past 10 years and discussed that the Connecticut Education Network operated by the state provides free internet access to the schools. Also CL&P provided about 46% almost \$120,000 for a retrofit of lighting at the 3 schools that cost about a quarter of a million dollars and with the reduction of energy consumed it assisted in paying off that much faster.

Board of Selectman Al Waters asked how old the roof was?

The Director of Business and Operation Services explained that there are 5 sections done in 1979, 1982, 1983, 1986, and 1989.

Board of Selectman Al Waters asked about the furnaces?

Director of Business and Operation Services answered that at ECS last year they replaced three and one at the middle school which is steam. Steam is a little difficult to heat.

Edna C. Stevens Principal Lucille DiTunno mentioned that with the direction of full day kindergarten that they are looking for more space and the preschool has doubled.

Board of Finance Michael Gengler explained that the Board of Education has a short term list of 3.5 million and we need time to absorb to see exactly what those needs are.

First Selectman Paul Beaulieu mentioned that he is happy that the BOE could gather us together to give us some ideas of short term and long term needs for the facilities. With 3.5 million dollars needed over the next four years and we still need to look at ECS long term renovations.

Finance Director Marianne Sylvester put together a list showing where we are financially so we can see what we can afford. She put together a Debt by

Service, Debt by Town and the debt escalated financially and a Debt per Capita.

Mr. Gengler explained that we are looking at 3.5 million which is subject to the budget process. He suggested some school renovation fund where we put some money aside in anticipation of these projects and he hopes that we could be aggressive for grant funding, rather than taking a hit in 2011. Let's take a year at a time.

The Finance Director went over debt service short term notes payable paying off CMS roof repair and the 1st half and Coles Brook Commerce Park, also paying off the asbestos phase 1 project and the Geer Street improvements. Within the next four years through 2010 we are looking to payoff these short term notes.

Board of Selectman Al Waters discussed the road study program done and capital income, we are not losing the senior citizens, everything is changing where are we going? Are we looking at the good for the whole town?

Board of Finance Chairman Michael Gengler asked that we avoid taking a big dip in any given year may have to work for grant funding.

Board of Selectman Myron Johnson would like a comprehensive plan to bring more revenue to the town for economic development for an increased amount of income. He would like us to plan where we are going to increase the revenue so this will be easier to implement. Board of Selectman Al Waters stated that there is not much room in this town for commercial most is residential.

Board of Selectman Myron Johnson discussed that 3.5 million for renovations if we invested this in the river front we would make 3 times the amount of money down the road and we would be able to afford what is needed. The money invested will pay dividends down the road like economic development.

Mr. Flanders asked about the 3.5 million dollars. He would like to have some sense of what is coming out of our wallets this year and then again next year. He feels that we need to sit down and figure out what is needed over a period of time.

Board of Finance Julius Neto mentioned that this is the first great step in the process and thinks that we should challenge ourselves to long term solutions. We have the opportunity to strategize and look at year 1, 3, and 5. Every year we should upgrade the plan and intermingle amongst the boards. We have limited resources to shift and share the burden. The infrastructure needs are always put aside and the children always suffer. It is very important for security, education, and long term resources.

Board of Education Myron Johnson discussed the importance of education and having to come up with solutions to cut back on our spending.

Board of Selectman Stan Stachura asks that we look at long term needs and look at plans down the road to see where we are going to be at and said that we need to prioritize.

Board of Selectman Mr. Monnes mentioned that he liked the idea of spreading over a length of time and stated that we need money for the roads and parks.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Rich Waters of 84 South Street discussed his concerns and asked that we consider taking preventative maintenance in this project. About 3 years ago Mr. Waters complained about the ivy growing up on the fences that are going to deteriorate the roof and discussed cracks in asphalt that needed to be taken care of. The highway dept cleared trees and the money that was put aside should go back to highway dept. The roads need rebuilding not just re-patching. Also, there were 26 pallets of block left over from the high school pre construction that was just left out. He has concerns with the lights because they are left on and not shut down. Rich Waters is a life-long resident, retired and lives on a fixed income.

Mr. Newton discussed that we new what was coming and that it should not come as a surprise to anyone The finances are a little surprising and we need to realize what we can do. The highway facility was built back in 1940 and is in need of updating. We can not overburden the taxpayers. Some how we need to find money to do these things in a long term affordable program that makes sense. The consultant paid good money for a phased program for road improvements it has to work with what is affordable.

First Selectman Paul Beaulieu mentioned that we need time to study the numbers and the reality is that we can not wait. The state grant reimbursement rate is for when you build new or renovate and there is no reimbursement for repairs. We need to take a closer look at and see what we can support because we have a limited ability in short term.

Chairman Shirley Banic thanks each and everyone for coming. We did this back in 2001 so we could get a realization and this helped in the referendum process. The meeting tonight was so the Board of Education could present a long range plan of what is needed. Chairman Shirley Banic thanks Director of Business and Operations Rick Mandeville and Superintendent of Schools Matthew Bisceglia, and Finance Director Marianne Sylvester for getting the materials out. Everyone worked very hard on this project and it is just for you to look at digest and think about and maybe we can work on and move forward.

4. TOPICS OF FUTURE AGENDAS: None.
5. ADJOURNMENT: Mr. Monnes made a motion to adjourn at 8:35, seconded by Al Waters. All were in favor. **Motion Passed.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Michelle Milardo
Clerk