

TOWN OF CROMWELL
BOARD OF FINANCE
REGULAR MEETING
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2009
CROMWELL TOWN HALL 7:30 P.M.
ROOM 224/5

MINUTES AND RECORD OF VOTE

PRESENT: Michael Gengler, John Flanders, Jack Henehan, Ed Maley, Loraine Caruso, Joe Corlis, alternate Julius Neto and alternate Dan Kelly.

Also present: Finance Director Marianne Sylvester, Director of Public Works Eric Hood, Director of Developmental Services Joe Mazurek, WPCA Supervisor Richard Peck and Parks and Recreation Director Sue Schein.

ABSENT: Alternate Jaime Kiefer.

A. CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Michael Gengler called the meeting to order at 7:34 p.m.

B. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Chairman Gengler recommended adding the following item:

Add under New Business: 1. b. Appropriate \$30,000 within the CNR Fund for Parks and Recreation-Improvements to Watrous Park.

A **motion** was made by Loraine Caruso, **seconded** by Jack Henehan and it was **unanimously approved** to approve the amended agenda. *Motion passed.*

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS:

1. Regular Meeting, September 24, 2009

A **motion** was made by Loraine Caruso, **seconded** by Jack Henehan and it was **unanimously approved** to approve the minutes, as amended, with the following correction: under New Business 3) Discussion and Action on Capital and Non-Recurring requests: Item 7. Change "Mason Dump Truck with Plow" to "Toro 16' Mower". *Motion passed.*

D. CITIZENS COMMENTS:

Allan Spotts of 62 Black Haw Drive asked the Board of Finance members to table Item 1 under New Business until after the November election. Let the new administration decide how they will proceed with downtown redevelopment. All spending should be curtailed until the new board members are in office.

Al Waters of 86 South Street said the \$200,000 from the state is not set in stone. The State does not have the money to finish highway construction, let alone STEAP grants to towns. This may put a burden on the new people who take office in November.

Richie Waters of 84 South Street asked that Item 1 under New Business be tabled until next month. The grant money is not guaranteed.

E. REPORT OF THE FIRST SELECTMAN:

Mr. Shingleton was not in attendance and no report was submitted.

F. BUDGET REPORT:

Director of Finance Marianne Sylvester handed out a summary of recent activity. She said the expenditures look reasonable at this point and there are no immediate areas of concern. Tax Collection is solid and strong.

The State of Connecticut Educational Cost Sharing (ECS) grant has been reduced by over \$600,000, due to an equivalent grant issued by the federal government through stimulus funds. She has met with the Superintendent about this issue and is working on the issue with Town Attorney Jack Bradley. Many towns have opted to reduce the BOE budget by the amount of the stimulus funds, because the stimulus funds are deposited directly into the BOE account, instead of the Town's general fund.

The Board members agreed that they would like more information from Attorney Bradley before acting.

G REPORT OF THE TAX COLLECTOR:

Mr. Gengler said the report was in the packet.

H. OLD BUSINESS:

1) Discussion and Action on CNR Requests.

a) Appropriate \$33,000 within the CNR Fund for GIS/Website Update.

Joe Mazurek said when he notified town staff that the GIS request had been denied there was an outcry from several departments, including the Assessor's Office, Planning and WPCA. The First Selectman brought the issue forward at the Board of Selectmen meeting and the Board recommended the GIS updates be funded in the amount of \$33,000.

Mr. Flanders said software maintenance and licensing is not a capital and non-recurring expense and should be in the department's operating budget.

Mr. Mazurek said a previous administration had taken it out of the operating budget and it has been funded through CNR for several years.

Mr. Maley said the documentation for the request was incorrect and the figures do not add up. The Board members have agreed not to approve expenditures if there is inadequate documentation.

A **motion** was made by Ed Maley, **seconded** by Loraine Caruso and it was **unanimously approved** to **table** funding for GIS/Website Update in the amount of \$33,000. *Motion passed.*

Ms. Sylvester said there is \$33,528 unencumbered in the CNR Fund. There is \$98,000 available in the Town Improvement Fund, which can be used for the Watrous Park project if the Board is so inclined.

b) Appropriate \$30,000 within the CNR Fund for Park and Recreation-Improvements to Watrous Park.

A **motion** was made by John Flanders, **seconded** by Ed Maley and it was **unanimously approved** to take item H.1) b). off the table. *Motion passed.*

Sue Schein said there have been no major improvements to Watrous Park in eight years. She would like to re-mulch the playground and replace the playground equipment. The pieces need to be upgraded to avoid liability issues and to be in line with the Consumer Protection Agency recommendations.

Ms. Sylvester said the Town Improvement Fund had lain dormant for several years, but recently the fund had been used to pay for sidewalks, the Skateboard Park and back stops at several fields in town.

A **motion** was made by John Flanders, **seconded** by Jack Henehan and it was **unanimously approved** to appropriate \$30,000 from the Town Improvement Fund for Park and Recreation- Improvements to Watrous Park. *Motion passed.*

I. NEW BUSINESS:

1) Recommend to Town Meeting supplemental appropriations from General Fund fund balance, as follows:

a) \$200,000 to pre-fund the 2010 STEAP grant for the Downtown Historic Revitalization project.

b) \$303,150 to pre-fund the Federal American Recovery and Investment Act (ARRA) grant for road improvements.

A **motion** was made by Loraine Caruso, **seconded** by Jack Henehan to recommend to Town Meeting \$200,000 to pre-fund the 2010 STEAP grant for the Downtown Historic Revitalization project.

Discussion followed.

Ms. Sylvester said the Board of Selectmen approved the application process and this action would allow the Town to move forward with the paperwork.

Mr. Mazurek described the scope of the project; including streetscape improvements, continuation of sidewalk along Main Street and Wall Street and façade improvement grants.

A **motion** was made by Ed Maley, **seconded** by John Flanders and it was **unanimously approved** to temporarily pass on the motion and discuss and act upon 1) b). *Motion passed.*

A **motion** was made by Ed Maley, **seconded** by Loraine Caruso to recommend to Town Meeting \$303,150 to pre-fund the Federal American Recovery and Investment Act (ARRA) grant for road improvements. *Discussion followed.*

Eric Hood said this is a shovel-ready project, which consists of milling and paving Geer Street. The application cannot move forward until there is proof that the Town has appropriated the money.

Ms. Sylvester said the Federal Government wants proof that the Town will approve and fund the project and they must be notified by December 1st.

Mr. Maley asked to see the request from the Federal Government in writing.

Mr. Gengler called for a ten-minute recess at 8:59 p.m. so Mr. Hood could locate the document.

Mr. Gengler reconvened the meeting at 9:10 p.m.

Mr. Hood said he could not find any documentation that specifically addressed the issue. He said he would get the documentation to the board members as soon as possible. The funding could be in jeopardy if the December 1 deadline is not met.

The **motion** to recommend to Town Meeting \$303,150 to pre-fund the Federal American Recovery and Investment Act (ARRA) grant for road improvements was **unanimously approved**. *Motion passed.*

A **motion** was made by Ed Maley, **seconded** by Loraine Caruso and it was **unanimously approved to table** the recommendation to Town Meeting \$200,000 to pre-fund the 2010 STEAP grant for the Downtown Historic Revitalization project. *Motion passed.*

2) Appropriate \$278,716 within the Sewer CNR Fund for Phase II of the Trenchless Pipeline Rehabilitation Sewer project.

Richard Peck discussed the scope of the project and referred to the detailed report in the packet. A brief discussion followed.

A **motion** was made by John Flanders, **seconded** by Loraine Caruso and it was **unanimously approved** to appropriate \$278,716 within the Sewer CNR Fund for Phase II of the Trenchless Pipeline Rehabilitation Sewer project. *Motion passed.*

J. BOARD OF EDUCATION-LIASON REPORT:

Mr. Corlis gave a brief report regarding the CMT and CAPT results. Cromwell has once again achieved Adequate Yearly Progress.

K. CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS:

Mr. Gengler said action would need to be taken on the Board of Education budget at the next meeting. He thanked Ms. Sylvester for all the work she's done on this issue.

L. VICE CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS:

None.

M. GOOD AND WELFARE:

None.

N. ADJOURNMENT:

A **motion** was made by John Flanders, **seconded** by Loraine Caruso and it was **unanimously approved** to adjourn at 9:30 p.m. *Motion passed.*

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberly Larson
Recording Secretary
10/26/09