

**FEBRUARY 26, 2004
SPECIAL MEETING
BOARD OF SELECTMEN and
BOARD OF FINANCE
TOWN HALL
MARLBOROUGH, CONNECTICUT**

First Selectwoman Nancy Bader called this special meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. She introduced the Second Selectwoman, Sharon Reiner, and the Third Selectman, Bill Black. Chairman of the Board of Finance, Mike Gut introduced the Board which consisted of members present Cathi Gaudinski, Bill Secord, Brian Breeden, and alternate Carl Cavaliere. Members Pasquale Amodeo, and Joseph LaBella, and alternate Donna Mosher entered the meeting shortly after the introductions. Also present was Town Treasurer Bob Hannon, Tom Giola, Director of Public Works and Peter Hughes, Town Planner.

Mr. Gut asked if there were public comments and there were none, therefore the Discussion of Planning part of the Agenda began with Mr. Hughes speaking about the Capital Improvement Plan, staffing and organization issues. He also spoke about the status of expenses in the areas of the school, sewers and golf course projects and how they will impact the budget for the coming year.

Concerning sewers, Mr. Hughes informed the group that a contract is expected to be signed within the next two weeks. The price is in the 6-1/2 to 7% range – the budgeted figure is 8%. There will be an attempt to give this contract to the State Bond Commission by the end of April. There will be no short-term borrowing. Clean Water Fund money will be received and an account set up and the engineer will be paid out of that Fund.

Some electrical panels that exist within the homes of residents may need to be upgraded for the pumps that are going to be put in their yards. The upgrade of the panel is a project-eligible cost. There is a dilemma however, as the design engineer does not want to go into houses to tell them what to do with their electrical boxes. The Town, on the other hand, could hire a contractor in the construction phase of the project to do this job. Consideration is being made of having the Town pay for a proposed minimum amount per household (project-eligible cost) and have the homeowner hire their own electrician. Beyond a certain cap that would be decided by the Town, the homeowner would have to pay additional charges.

Money would need to be borrowed by the Town for this and reimbursements would take place to the homeowners. This way would be most cost effective for all and would also allow the homeowner to hire their own person. The approximate cost of the panels should be around \$1,500. There are 330 panels to be considered. Many of the homeowners however already have 220 amp service. Data gathering is necessary as it is

not known how many houses have this service already and surveys will be sent to each house.

Mr. Hughes discussed borrowing money from the State for the sewers. There are two sets – design money which is a 10% grant and 90% loan. When approximately 85% of the design is completed, submission to the State is made for the construction money set. The design money is added to the construction money. Construction money is a 25% grant and 75% loan.

Mr. Hannon asked about repayment and Mr. Hughes answered when the last person is connected, repayment will begin. Construction will be started in Spring 2005 and should be complete in the Fall of 2006. It will be a 20-year repayment plan.

Discussion followed about the amount of the cap, the decision as to a contractor, and the variety of panels to be upgraded in the homes.

Regarding the proposed golf course, public hearings will be held by the Planning Commission, the Wetlands Commission and the Zoning Commission. Legitimate concerns are being expressed by the residents however there does not seem to be opposition and the hope is that the developer is making efforts to address concerns. The Tax Assessor has done a check of the revenues and her total is \$1.5M prior to deducting expenses – perhaps \$500,000 to \$800,000 net revenue. No home sales will be started until the golf course is ready. The Town should start obtaining revenue in 2009. A commitment was made by the developers to donate, per every home closing, a certain amount of land of open space which will be deeded to the Town's Land Acquisition Fund.

Regarding planning, conservation and development, a resource study is being done on open space. The Board of Selectmen approved the contract and the money will be expended before the end of the fiscal year.

Discussion followed about the Town Engineer Fund, Professional Services, 1175-4329. There is a budget of \$65,000 of which approximately \$8,000 has been spent to date. There was discussion of what the impact for next year might be as most of the budgeted money will be spent this year.

Mr. Hughes left the meeting at this time.

Mr. Tom Giola presented his thoughts on reorganization for Public Works, specifically what has been done in the past and what needs to be done, and his thoughts as to the best method of accomplishment. Ms. Bader felt it important to have this discussion with the Board of Finance and Board of Selectmen together before decisions are made as to how to proceed with the initial budget submission.

Mr. Giola said his goal is to establish what has not been done, what needs to be done and how to put a plan together to solve the issue of reorganization for an effective future.

He further said that Public Works is in charge of all facilities and infrastructure of the Town including engineering, construction and maintenance of all town buildings, roads and grounds as well as the Transfer Station operation and maintenance of such.

Many changes have occurred since 1992. Mr. Giola explained in detail the changes since 1992 regarding those done with subcontractors and superintendents regarding subdivision review and inspection, right of way inspection, regulation revisions for highway design, multiple permits for Public Works, bid documentation created by the Town, and project management for buildings, road reconstruction and recreation areas.

Since 1994, grounds maintenance has been done in-house. This includes irrigation system maintenance, fertilization, mowing and management of other outside services if needed.

Now all roadside maintenance including mowing, catch basin cleaning - that since 1997, two road sweepers, and snow removal, using six trucks, are done by Public Works.

The Town also does refuse hauling. The landfill station was closed in 1992. The Transfer Station, was operated by the Town, but had hauling done by a subcontractor until 1999. Now all trash is hauled by the Public Works.

Road reconstruction is another area in which Public Works plays a large part. Resurfacing and maintenance resurfacing was discussed and explained by Mr. Giola with attention given to 2.7 miles of complete reconstruction.

The Town has built its own salt shed, enlarged the Public Works office and a built a breakroom, with storage and added a vehicle wash bay.

Construction projects include recreation areas that have been built since 1992 and they are Farley Field, Moose Field for soccer and West Road Memorial Field. Some environmental improvements include Public Works discharge/storm water clean-up by removing tanks and contaminated soil, building above-ground storage tanks with state-of-the-art management systems, and a landfill/transfer station. Work is being done on an ecosystem near the lake for educational and other purposes such as improving a biological community of interacting organisms and their physical environment.

Town buildings now include the Senior Center, the Transfer Station, Salt Storage Shed, D.P.W. Office, Vehicle Wash Bay, Willinger Drive house, Elmer Thienes Mary Hall School with an additional 10,000 sq. feet to this building.

New roads include 19 since 1992 and not much Public Works staff or budget increases have been added to support this. Those roads do not add up to many additional road miles – most are cul de sacs, but require much maintenance said Mr. Giola.

Use of subcontractors has changed since 1992. At that time catch basin cleaning, roadside mowing and roadway snowplowing, and parking lot snowplowing as well as grounds maintenance was done by outside contractors. Now limited snowplowing and engineering are the only use the Town makes of subcontractors.

Mr. Giola said that there is a need to do better project planning and delivery and in a more timely manner. Mr. Giola had been spending many hours each week with problems incurred with the school project. Now that most of those problems are resolved he spends approximately ten to fifteen hours a week. At times though it has averaged 30 hours per week. He would like to develop some proactive maintenance plans.

Mr. Giola emphasized the need for a liaison to the Public Building Commission and the establishment of a new long-range community planning group to follow a building in creation and continue with it through its maintenance. He would like this group to be proactive in developing standardization for budgets and for architecture. He also emphasized a need for someone to drive the Town forward with a global view towards services being obtained proactively rather than reactively.

The BOE would like to have their new building maintained impeccably and a good working relationship has been developed between the Town staff side and the BOE side. Public Works will oversee the janitorial staff at the school on a day-to-day basis. It is important he said to put an emphasis on problem solving before problems develop.

In addition, Ms. Bader added that there is frustration in the Public Works area because of lack of clarification. The heavy workload is another source of discontentment.

Mr. Giola discussed the unfunded mandates such as GASB 34. This is a federal accounting mandate that requires all assets and depreciation to be tracked. All roads and buildings must be inventoried. It involves a huge amount of work. In order to estimate the value of the roads it is necessary to use the life cycle, age, etc. Expansion of Storm Water, Phase II is another unfunded mandate. Mapping and monitoring of all outflow is needed throughout an urbanized area. The Federal government and the Department of Environmental Protection's goal is to know what is happening with all storm water discharges in order to satisfactorily eliminate pollution. An education component is also involved and Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, civic organizations might be needed to accomplish this.

In addition sewage pump stations will be built, water pump stations will be built. A feasibility study may be started for an expansion and/or renovations at the Library and Town Hall. The reason these two buildings are mentioned together is that renovations/additions may take place in both buildings therefore a joint building might be considered. Planning twenty years ahead for additional space is necessary and pulling together these two large projects should reduce costs said Mr. Giola. At this point in time however said Ms. Bader, these are concepts only. The \$30,000 already budgeted for improvements at Town Hall may be put into a feasibility study to provide clarity and quantitative results of savings. The study should be done in a manner to split apart

numbers if needed so that if the number(s) are too high, each building can be improved or space acquired separately.

Future demands that will be put upon Public Works as well as those mentioned above are additional roadways, such as High Meadow, Ruby Road, Fox Meadow, roads in and on the golf course, the business park roads. There is uncertainty as to the demands that will be put on Public Works for the sewer system and the water system in regard to roads.

Public Works is on a different “travel plan”. In order to illustrate the change said Ms. Bader, the name will be changed from Public Works to Physical Services. “Physical Services” encompasses more than just roads construction and repair and the trend is to cross train so that many skills can be utilized in many different operations. The focus for the Director of Physical Services will be to plan and be a liaison to other commissions, have a greater emphasis on personnel management, foster public relations and scrutinize intensely projects and risk management. An additional foreman will improve and provide new services and share 60/40 with the BOE. A reallocation of present responsibilities of existing staff will take place.

The new Physical Services Organizational Chart will consist of a maintenance side which includes routine maintenance, physical plant and grounds. The construction side will include some form of design, a contractor and there will be an inspection side of this component.

Mr. Gut said he was not in favor of splitting budgets between BOE and Public Works. A solution can be sought said Ms. Bader after consulting with the BOE and Ms. Oguschewitz. Ms. Gaudinski cautioned the members to think about possible reimbursements for programs that may appear in the future under a proposed split.

Mr. Giola referred to a chart he had drawn showing how activities such as maintenance, construction and project management have changed since 1992. Maintenance has been reduced while construction has jumped significantly as well as project management.

At present and for the short-term, said Mr. Giola the goal is to fill some of the jobs with subcontractor services, figure out what direction to take and then hire more employees if needed, or hire more subcontractors. If Mr. Giola will not be available to manage, hiring more employees will not be the answer. Defining the roles of Mr. Giola and his responsibilities, the two foreman’s roles and development of those roles will be the focus said Ms. Bader. A list of maintenance services to subcontract was presented. This budget number is \$87,100.00 for maintenance only. This is in addition to other numbers presently being worked on by the Selectmen. This list includes a subcontractor to do cleaning of one-half of the catch basins, the remainder to be cleaned by the Town. (A seasonal employee may also be used for this cleaning.) Grounds maintenance has grown and additional help is needed especially for the cemeteries and contracting out is desired. Trash removal once a week in the two firehouses, Town Hall, Senior Center and Library and the Town’s Public Works office is another area which may need to be subcontracted. (This also includes recycling.) Snowplowing takes the entire staff of Public Works

including Mr. Giola and this is not good management, therefore one route should be subcontracted. Road reconstruction will also need to be subcontracted.

Mr. Giola pointed out that the Public Works budget has only grown by \$40,000 since 1992.

Projects need to be prioritized agreed Ms. Bader and Mr. Giola. Money cannot be borrowed unless it can be spent on the necessary work and the necessary staff available to manage and accomplish it.

Mr. Gut questioned how many years of the road project would be bonded. Ms. Bader answered that the final school bonding is to be considered, and the business park, - therefore short-term borrowing can be accomplished and then bonding done all at once. Once certainty as to what can actually be done, and then meeting with the financial consultant will help strategically. Two million is the number she thought would make it worth bonding. Incremental pieces such as the fire engine for \$200,000, and it is unknown how much the business park will entail, and therefore projections will be worked on during the next week with the BOS.

Mr. Gut said if we agree to do a lot of the items on this presentation by Mr. Giola, this may be the biggest year and prioritizing is critical. "Take care of what we own first before we look at spending money on something else," said Mr. Giola.

The items discussed tonight said Ms. Bader will be kept in the budget but separated in the budget as well. The BOS will make their recommendations in terms of priorities. Mr. Gut suggested also showing the BOE's priorities as separate from the Town's.

A MOTION was made to adjourn at 9:55 p.m. All agreed.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Preissner
Board Clerk

