

**Board of Finance Special Meeting**  
**Wednesday, February 16, 2022**  
**7:30 pm**  
**Via Webex**

A Special Meeting of the Board of Finance was held via Webex on Wednesday, February 16, 2022 at 7:30 pm in Fairfield, Connecticut.

A recording of this meeting can be found here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7gpjXSvs4rs>

FINAL MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT: Lori Charlton-Chair, John Mitola-Vice Chair, Sheila Marmion-Secretary, Craig Curley, Christopher DeWitt, Mary LeClerc, Kevin Starke, Jack Testani, James Walsh

OTHERS PRESENT: Michelle Miller, Silver, Petrucelli & Associates, Bill Silver, Silver, Petrucelli & Associates, CFO Jared Schmitt, Buildings Maintenance Manager James Ryan, First Selectwoman Brenda Kupchick, DPW Director John Marsilio, Attorney John Stafstrom, Parks & Recreation Director Anthony Calabrese, Engineering Manager Bill Hurley, Operations Manager Fairfield Public Schools Angelus Papageorge, Superintendent of Fairfield Public Schools Mike Cummings, Conservation Director Tim Bishop, FairTV and members of the public.

1. Call to Order

Chair Lori Charlton called the meeting to order at 7:31pm.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Charlton led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. TOWN FACILITIES CAPITAL NEEDS

To hear and discuss a presentation of the report and plan to address life safety and other capital improvements in Town-owned buildings.

There were funds previously appropriated for this report to better understand the condition and needs of Town buildings. Michelle Miller of Silver Petrucelli & Associates shared the presentation with the Board which is on the recorded meeting as well as in the backup materials for this meeting on the website. When Ms. Miller finished her presentation, Chair Lori Charlton opened up the item for discussion.

Sheila Marmion addressed her question to the administration and asked how the projects in this report line up on the Waterfall report. Chief Financial Officer Jared Schmitt said the needs assessment includes funding based on a draft report prior to this report as additional work has been done on some buildings. They will continue to modify and put together a more concise Capital Plan. Some items are separate issues, Neither Penfield nor the Senior Center will be included in this report and Firehouse repairs and improvements that are in progress will not be included either. The administration will take a closer look and take out items that are being done separately. First Selectwoman Kupchick said they will put together a capital workshop and five-year plan. The town planning group seems to be defunct as they have not been active in a while. The First Selectwoman would like to form a working group. Ms. Marmion asked the administration if they could put in writing the group objectives and how it will work.

Craig Curley said there is a potential ten year spend with escalation plan on the report that's missing a total and asked to have the escalation total with inflation. Ms. Miller said it was

\$33,092,673.00. Mr. Curley also asked about prioritizing and why one of the boilers in the library determined to be at the end of its useful life wouldn't be replaced for seven years. Ms. Miller replied that the engineer thought it would have more life left and could therefore be replaced later. Building Maintenance Manager James Ryan explained that that boiler is one of two boilers and doesn't run all the time. Mr. Ryan agrees with where it is on the list. Christopher DeWitt wanted to acknowledge James Ryan and his team. Mr. DeWitt feels the numbers are low for Old Town Hall as he sees the condition firsthand. Ms. Miller said she agreed and said it would be more if other categories had been included. Mr. DeWitt also commented that the Town Facilities Commission and has been defunct for years. First Selectwoman Kupchick said they had talented people in-house and the group she envisioned would get things done more efficiently than an outside group.

James Walsh commented that a Town Facilities Commission should have been involved in Penfield the first time and the second time as perhaps some of the problems would not been avoided. The Town Facilities Commission was to be an oversight to the Building Committees. He then asked Ms. Miller if Silver, Petrucelli & Associates compared the estimates to actual costs with other towns where they've worked. Ms. Miller said the costs have gone up, but they believe their numbers are accurate and a full renovation of Old Town hall would be \$4 million. The reason why it is 1.46 million is because it was analyzed on how it is currently being used and not how it could be used if they did a full renovation. It brings the building up to date but does not modernize it.

John Mitola urged First Selectwoman Kupchick to think about bringing back the Town Facilities Commission. He also asked if there had been thoughts to move offices or tear down walls in Old Town Hall. First Selectwoman Kupchick said the structural integrity at the Old Town Hall is an issue. There is a dirt floor and doors are sinking and James Ryan can't do some repairs because of the way the building is situated. They can apply for historical grants to renovate the building, but she would like to have all the departments at Sullivan Independence Hall. The Old Town Hall is a beautiful building that can be used in many other ways.

Chair Lori Charlton wondered if the items qualified for bonding and if there was any other type of financing that could be obtained and possibly put some items in the Operating Budget. The First Selectwoman thought it would be a discussion for the working group to make a list of non-recurring items and then have a presentation for the town bodies to work with her to determine what can be done by Mr. Ryan and his team. Ms. Charlton wanted to put the schools on that list and suggested a study for them as well.

4. **NON-RECURRING CAPITAL – 10 YEARS (*requires RTM approval*)**

To hear, consider and adopt a bond resolution entitled, “A resolution appropriating \$508,445 for the costs of certain nonrecurring capital projects and authorizing the issuance of bonds to finance such appropriation”.

John Mitola made a motion to put Item 4 before the Board of Finance. Jack Testani seconded the motion.

- \$150,000-Oldfield Road Bridge Special Inspection  
Engineering manager Bill Hurley said the bridge was built in 1935 and because so much of it is underwater it will require scuba divers to do the inspection. In 2016 the bridge was rated to being in fair to poor condition. Engineering will look into any and all grants that could be eligible.

Mr. Testani asked why repairs weren't addressed at the time of the last inspection. Mr. Hurley said they try to go by the condition. The condition is worse now and needs to be addressed. He will discuss the repairs after the inspection.

John Mitola asked about the locations of the other culverts. Mr. Hurley told him the culverts were in Greenfield Hill. Mr. Hurley will email the information and the inspection will include the other culverts in the town.

Mary LeClerc asked why the bond was over 10 years. Mr. Hurley replied that smaller bridges are inspected every 10 to 20 years and depending on the recommendation, they could make repairs to last another 10 years.

- \$358,445 for Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus – Fairfield Fire Department

Fire Chief Denis McCarthy said in 2018, 28 Self Contained Breathing Apparatus units were replaced in the Operating Budget. Four years later they need to replace the remaining 38 units because there are three code cycles out of date and approaching the end of their life. If approved for the grant, FEMA will cover \$7000 for each unit but because of the expense it is out of range for their operational budget. They are asking to put it in the Capital Plan. The Chief and Deputy Chief made adjustments in the grant application to FEMA and hope it will be approved.

Sheila Marmion wanted to know if they were confident that FEMA would give the grant. Deputy Chief Kyran Dunn said it was difficult to say but they wrote the grant application from the ground up and had many discussions with a FEMA liaison. Deputy Dunn said he thinks there's a good chance of them getting the grant and Chief McCarthy added that they modeled the grant application after a neighboring community's successful grant application. The older units can be used for training and in other controlled environments. The life expectancy of a SCBA unit is 15 years. James Walsh asked how old the units were. Deputy Dunn said the old units are 12 years old but since 28 of the units were replaced previously the new 38 apparatus will be compatible with those 28. Mr. Walsh also asked if the FD Capital request will be less since these items were usually in the Capital Plan. Chief McCarthy replied that it wouldn't be less because they also need to replace the portable radios and a vehicle. They have looked at FEMA grants to fund the purchases.

James Walsh stated he would like to note for the record that he will vote for this item with the expectation of getting the FEMA grant. He will support it this time but thinks it should have been in the Operating Budget.

Mr. Walsh made a motion to waive the reading of the full bond resolutions. Craig Curley seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Chair Lori Charlton opened the vote for adopting the 10-year bond resolution. The motion passed unanimously.

5. **NON-RECURRING CAPITAL – 20 YEARS (*requires RTM approval*)**

To hear, consider and adopt a bond resolution entitled, "A resolution appropriating \$3,717,899 for the costs of certain nonrecurring capital projects and authorizing the issuance of bonds to finance such appropriation".

Christopher DeWitt made a motion to put Item 5 before the Board of Finance. James Walsh seconded the motion.

The information for this item is located on page 467 of the backup materials.

There are multiple items on this resolution:

- Conservation: Pine Creek-McCleary Tidegate Repair, Riverside Creek Tidegate Repair.

Jack Testani asked if any grants were investigated for the tidegate repairs. CFO Jared Schmitt said he didn't find any appropriate grants for these projects. There are various reasons why they didn't meet threshold. The Grant Coordinator looked through the Capital Projects and she couldn't find a grant for this project.

James Walsh wondered if the tidegates were manual or self-regulating. Conservation Director Tim Bishop said the Riverside Creek tidegate was self-regulating, but the McCleary is a flap gate which is not self-regulating and swings. It is not swinging the way it should.

Mary LeClerc said there were the tidegates installed in 1997 and 2001 and they've exceeded 20 years. She wondered what the estimated life was for the tidegate. Mr. Bishop replied it was 20 to 30 years and that it was site and condition specific. Metal in brackish water will corrode overtime and begin to fail, so the life expectancy can vary. Mr. Bishop also said that cost estimates were in the previous Waterfall lists and might be higher now depending on increases and engineering determination of the integrity of the dyke. Unforeseen issues could increase overall cost.

Sheila Marmion wondered if the Flood and Erosion Control Board was looking into the recommendations. Mr. Bishop said these specific items have been on the Waterfall in prior years and have been moved around. They need to be replaced. The intent was to involve the FECB when the engineer investigates the gates and they will prioritize. Bill Hurley confirmed that these items are on a list from the FECB now considered the Flood and Erosion Resiliency Board (FERB). Mr. Hurley said they will apply for a CIRCA grant and possibly a FEMA grant, but the cost analysis and design have to be done prior to FEMA approving a grant.

- Engineering: Increase Resiliency Ash Creek Open Space-Jennings Beach design

Kevin Starke asked how long the study will take for the Increased Resiliency from Ash Creek open space to Jennings Beach. Bill Hurley said the Army Core of Engineers did a study already and this is for the design. It will take approximately 15 months and they must get permits. A FEMA grant would be for the construction. The design will take about two years so they wouldn't be going out to bid for construction for probably three to four years. Mr. Starke also asked how the town will fund the difference between the cost and what FEMA covers to which Jared Schmidt replied they will address that when the time comes.

- Parks & Recreation: Lake Mohegan-Restoration from Storm Ida Damage, Tennis Center Light Replacement, Post-Tension Tennis Courts at Dwight, Jacky Durrell Pavilion Upgrades

Parks and Recreation director Anthony Calabrese said the beach damage from Storm Ida at Lake Mohegan is eligible for 75% FEMA reimbursement.

John Mitola wanted to know if the 75% from FEMA was confirmed. Mr. Calabrese said they were deemed eligible, but they still have to go through the process. He is optimistic. They are putting out an RFP add alternate for a design to guide the water out so it doesn't run down to the beach, should there be a situation like this again.

James Walsh ask about the tennis court lights and wanted to know if the town could get contributions from the tenants at the tennis center. Mr. Calabrese will speak with Finance and see if the lease can be amended. Mr. Walsh suggested that if the lessee would not contribute the town should not give them lights for the 6th tennis court.

Kevin Starke wondered if this item should be removed from the bond resolution until it is figured out. Mr. Calabrese added that the lease states the Town is responsible for whatever falls outside courts and this falls in that category.

Mr. Walsh suggested consulting Bond Counsel Attorney John Stafstrom regarding replacing the lights on the five tennis courts and having a conversation with the tenant to do the 6th. Attorney Stafstrom said any amendment that would take place tonight would then have to go through the boards again. Mr. Calabrese will speak to the tenants. Christopher DeWitt said he was in favor of leaving the bond resolution the way it is.

Mr. Calabrese also addressed the Dwight tennis courts saying he wanted to rebuild them using post tension concrete which has a 20-year warranty versus asphalt that only has a 10 to 12-year period. Fairfield Ludlowe High School uses the courts for their JV tennis program.

James Walsh wondered what would happen if the Board of Ed decided to do something else with the Dwight property. Jeff Peterson, Board of Ed liaison to the Board of Finance said they have had no further discussion regarding the long-term fate of Dwight. It is in a highly theoretical phase.

Christopher DeWitt wanted to know what kind of downtime would be involved in upgrading the Jacky Durrell Pavilion. Mr. Calabrese said they usually close the pavilion in October and the upgrades would be done between October and May.

- BOE-Boiler Burner Replacement-Burr, Elevator Modernization-FLHS

Sheila Marmion asked Operation Director for Fairfield Public Schools Angelus Papageorge if there were issues with supplies and were they at risk to not have the items needed so the project would be done this summer. Mr. Papageorge said it will take 14 weeks for delivery once the resolution is approved.

Mr. Mitola and Mr. Curley both asked about replacing the boiler burner and would they have to cut holes in the wall since the burner was placed in an odd spot on the 2nd floor of Burr Elementary School. Mr. Papageorge said the design is being looked into. They are looking at a high efficiency and smaller unit that will be easier to install and they're looking at ways to remove the old boiler without making a hole in the wall.

Mr. Papageorge also said that the elevator at Fairfield Ludlowe High School services the lower area and without the elevator people who could not take stairs would have to exit the building and go around the building to get back in. The elevator was not working at the beginning of the school year. It is safe right now as it has been inspected but needs to be modernized so it doesn't break down again.

The motion to adopt this 20-year bond resolution carried unanimous

## 6. Adjourn

Craig Curley made a motion to adjourn. Jack Testani seconded the motion.

The meeting adjourned at 10:36pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Pru O'Brien  
Recording Secretary