

**Board of Finance Capital Plan Workshop**  
**Tuesday, January 31, 2023**  
**7:30 pm**  
**Via Webex**  
**And In Person at the**  
**BOE Offices, Room 295 A/B**  
**501 Kings Highway East, Fairfield, CT**

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

**FINAL MINUTES**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairwoman Lori Charlton, Vice-Chairman John Mitola, Craig Curley, Christopher DeWitt, Mary LeClerc, Kevin Starke, Jack Testani, James Walsh

MEMBERS ABSENT: Secretary Sheila Marmion

OTHERS PRESENT: First Selectwoman Brenda Kupchick, Selectman Thomas Flynn, Selectwoman Nancy Lefkowitz, RTM Moderator Mark McDermott, RTM D-10 Ken Astarita, RTM D-1 Ed Bateson, RTM D-3 Sharon Pistilli, Superintendent of Schools Michael Testani, CFO-FPS Courtney Leborious, BOE Chairwoman Jennifer Jacobsen, BOE/BOF Liaison Jeff Peterson, CFO Jared Schmitt, Budget Director Frank Magneri, Controller Caitlin Bosse, Internal Auditor Connie Saxl, DPW Interim Director John Marsilio, Assistant DPW Director John Cottell, Engineering Manager Bill Hurley, Fire Chief Denis McCarthy, Deputy Fire Chief Kyran Dunn, Police Chief Robert Kalamaras, Deputy Police Chief Keith Broderick, Parks and Recreation Director Anthony Calabrese, Conservation Director Tim Bishop, WPCA Vice-Chair Joe D'Avanzo

1) Call to Order

Chairwoman Lori Charlton called the meeting to order at 7:40 pm.

2) Pledge of Allegiance

Christopher DeWitt led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3) Public Comment

Chairwoman Charlton explained that this meeting was in a workshop format to discuss Capital Projects and planning. She said public comment would be taken for Items 4 & 5 only. She said no votes will be taken at this meeting as the focus is on the process, the overall plan and how it affects spending.

- David Krasnoff, 155 Burr Street - He said school renovations have been pushed off and he wanted to remind everyone that the school projects need to be done and to please take them into consideration.

4) To Review and Discuss Town and BOE Non-Recurring Capital and Capital Projects Planning Document, Their Timing and Related Subsequent Bonding Requirements and Estimated Impact on Debt Service Levels Over the Next Several Years with members of the BOS and RTM.

First Selectwoman Kupchick talked about the Capital Planning Working Group that she had organized that was made up members from the BOF, RTM and BOE as well as town and BOE leadership including herself. She said this group developed a five-year plan for the Town.

She said each year this group will meet for updates on projects. She said links to the meeting recordings are on the Town website. First Selectwoman Kupchick said a new project was added to the plan - an upgrade to the Police Department.

CEO Jared Schmitt reviewed his presentation regarding outstanding debt and bonding capacity for the Town. He said the level of debt service to the budget ratio is the base. He said Phoenix Advisors performed the analysis (see page 1 in the backup) and added a WPCA project to the total. There was a discussion about the WPCA project. Ms. Charlton said she would like the Financial Advisor to attend the next meeting to talk about capacity, how much debt the Town is willing to take on and to discuss whether the WPCA should fund all of its debt service.

Police Chief Robert Kalamaras and Deputy Police Chief Keith Broderick presented their proposed three year plan. They said the Police Station was built in 1976. They said since then, there have been minor adjustments and adaptations, but work areas haven't changed much. They said year one's cost is \$350,000 for the lobby, shift commander office and front desk. They said the bulk of the cost is due to needing bulletproof walls. They said year two's costs would be for the men's/women's locker rooms, bathroom, and booking room. They said year three's costs include the former ECC location in the basement for a gym for the officers. They said funding for the first year is through ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) with funds from the Fiber Optic project that was canceled.

Fire Chief Denis McCarthy answered questions about the Shift Command Vehicle purchased through ARPA for \$150,000. He said the upgrade is in accordance with the apparatus replacement program. He said the replacement program calls for replacement of one Shift Commander Vehicle every five years and once replaced, the older vehicles are put in a reserve capacity to be used for weather emergencies.

BOE Chairwoman Jennifer Jacobsen went through the BOE proposed projects for the schools including AC upgrades and upgrades of equipment and facilities at other schools. There was a discussion about Dwight as plans for building a new Dwight School is in the proposal and is based on making it a 504 school. Ms. Jacobsen said it is a placeholder and could go down to 378. There was a discussion about the plan stretched over the years and whether some of the buildings would need work sooner. Funding was also part of the discussion. As the information comes in from consultants, the BOE said it will keep the Boards updated.

The WPCA projects were discussed as well as funding. Discussion included funding the debt service for larger projects and use of the WPCA fund balance for smaller projects and continued use of WPCA fund balance for smaller projects and design. The discussion continued about how to fund the projects. WPCA Vice-Chair Joe D'Avanzo said the WPCA fund is also used for emergencies and small items. Ms. Charlton suggested developing a fund balance policy for the WPCA. Given there are many projects to be done, there was a discussion about the expense and that the Town would need to be involved due to the high cost of certain jobs. Mr. D'Avanzo said the WPCA is looking for grants for all the projects. For the full discussion on all the projects in the Capital plan, click on the link here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OCbDYzGncTY>.

- 5) Review of Financial Plan and Use of Fund Balance for WPCA  
Christopher DeWitt made a motion to bring Item 5 before the board. Craig Curley seconded the motion.

Budget Director Frank Magneri reviewed revenue. He said WPCA rates are renewed each year and some rates are increased. WPCA Vice-Chair Joe D'Avanzo said residential user rates are reviewed in June/July. He said there is a possible 8% increase this year and last year, it was 5%. He said there are two issues, one being the use of low flush toilets and that use driving rate increases. Mr. D'Avanzo said a survey of rates in surrounding towns has been performed and Fairfield's rates are a little lower. He said in coming years, the schedule shows only 3% increases. Mr. Magneri said the schedule is just an assumption and a model and not a confirmed schedule. There was a discussion about WPCA funding and budgeted revenue expectation through 2028. It was noted that it is possible that the WPCA could use grant funding as well. Ms. Charlton would like to follow up on this item.

- 6) To hear, consider and act upon the draft minutes of January 10, 2023  
Vice-Chair John Mitola made a motion to approve the draft minutes of 1/10/23. Christopher DeWitt seconded the motion.

Mr. DeWitt had some suggested changes for the last paragraph in Item 7 under "*Follow up items requested by Chairwoman Charlton*":

Keep: *All bid waivers from the last year (Jared Schmitt)*

Change wording to:

- *Data regarding the decrease in Waste Collection (WPCA)*
- *Data regarding internal audit findings regarding the Transfer Station (DPW)*

Add: *Resolution on audit finding regarding Registrars of Voters office.*

Mr. DeWitt made a motion to amend the minutes of 1/10/23 with the above changes. Mr. Mitola seconded the motion which carried 4-0-3 (Starke, Testani, Walsh abstained). Mary LeClerc left the meeting earlier.

The motion to approve the amended minutes carried 4-0-3 (Starke, Testani, Walsh abstained).

- 7) To hear, consider and act upon any communications  
Ms. Charlton announced the Audit Subcommittee Officers for 2023:

Chairman-John Mitola  
Vice-Chairwoman-Mary LeClerc  
Secretary-Lori Charlton

- 8) Adjourn  
James Walsh made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:07 pm. Jack Testani seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Pru O'Brien  
Recording Secretary