

Special Board of Selectmen's meeting**May 27, 2008**

Present: First Selectman Woody Bliss; Selectman W. Glenn Major; Selectwoman Gayle Weinstein; Town Administrator Tom Landry; Administrative Assistant Judy DeVito. The Board of Finance and the Building Committee joined the meeting.

This meeting was recorded and video taped and the tapes are available in the Selectmen's office.

Mr. Bliss called the meeting to order at 7:32pm

Pledge of Allegiance-

Discussion/decision regarding Alternate Energy- Joe Fitzpatrick, Chairman of the Building Committee said they had formulated a sub-committee because this is a very intensive study that they want to undertake. They want to make sure that it is comprehensive and long term. Don Gary had brought the proposal to the table and has been very energetic about it. They want to look at it globally and take advantage of some of the grant money available.

Allen Swerdlowe said that Don Gary had come up with the idea to put solar panels on the roof of the High School. They formed the committee with qualified people to pursue the idea. As they got into it they realized that there were a host of different energy alternatives out there. They needed an expert to help them so they have retained Jennifer Genil from the legal firm of Shipman and Goodwin and have learned that this is a complicated subject with no easy solution. They are on target now to issue an RFP so that they can hire an energy consultant.

Jennifer Genil said that she has been meeting with the sub-committee and have been discussing some of the pros and cons of the different programs that are available. Because of our campus setting we have limitless possibilities as to the types of things that we can do. Jennifer said her expertise lies in the statutes, regulatory requirements and the funding and financing of projects. She said at this point they need an engineering expert.

The RFP is meant to do a wholesale review of all the municipal buildings on the campus. That is the four schools and the buildings located in the Town Hall complex and Public Works. The first step is for the engineer to come in and identify efficiency opportunities. They have asked that it be broken down by initial capital cost, potential funding and overall long term operating savings. Secondly, they would like the consultant to give them a schematic design of potential distributed generation opportunities.

Jennifer said on the funding side there are a host of things that are available from the Clean Energy Fund, grants from the DPUC, tax credits, renewable energy credits, etc. She said the chances are good that the money that we would use for the consultant is going to end up getting funded through the back end when we do a project and the grant money comes in. To get the consultant on board we would likely have to front some of the funds. She said if for some reason you are not going to do any projects there will not be any funding to fund the consultant.

Jennifer said one of the most recent projects that she has done was an alternative energy project in Middletown for the new high school that they are building. She said that if the entire grid of electricity is down the school is completely operable. The economics of that project, the fuel cell was \$1,895,000. Middletown's out of pocket capital cost was \$14,096. They are going to realize \$240,000 in electricity cost savings in year one, \$85,000 in heating cost savings. They are going to sell renewable energy credits for about \$70,000 and their overall fuel cost to run the fuel cell is about \$107,000.

Glastonbury High School is also pursuing distributive generation right now mainly because they had an issue about 8 months ago when a transformer failed at the school. Jennifer said they did a photovoltaic project for a school, which was a retrofit. The total out of pocket cost to the school ended up being about \$12,000. She said the payback will be about 2.2 years.

Jennifer did a micro turban project which was a retro fit for a building which was an ice skating rink. They put in a micro turban to generate electricity, took the waste heat and used it to run their dehumidification in the rink. The capital cost of the project was \$306,000. Out of pocket was \$69,000. All of the cost that Jennifer has been talking about includes the soft costs.

Jennifer said when we pick a project that we like she will run the economics for us, both on the capital side and operating side. She will let us know where our opportunities are, what our grantee grant money is, what our payback is, what credits we can sell, what you can do with your tax credits, etc. Before you sign up, you will have a complete picture of the funding opportunities that are available.

Energy improvement districts (EID) allow you special bonding capability which you do not necessarily need, but also allows you the ability to serve entities within your district that are not municipal buildings. An EID is necessary to our project to help us if we are not crossing a public right of way. She said if you have some business or residents within the district that are connected, but are not municipal entities then by ordinance the town can designate them in the EID, and that automatically affords us those rights. Intergraded projects always get greater funding than stand alone projects.

Ms. Weinstein said she wants to be sure that we are not putting the cart before the horse. We need to deal with the Kaestle Boos infrastructure repair project. She said that that should be done in conjunction with that so we can prioritize all of the Towns needs and see where we should go to best maximize our energy efficient usage. Joe Fitzpatrick said

that he thought that they were mutually exclusive. There were items in there that we do not have to touch for ten years. Allen Swerdlowe said that this was coming at the right time to mediate the cost that they would need to spend for those individual projects. Ms. Weinstein said she did not want to pay an energy consultant to come in and say the same thing that was in the Kaestle Boos report. Mr. Fitzpatrick said that this was totally different from the Kaestle Boos study, which was about maintenance, not energy savings.

Mr. Bliss asked what they were asking for now. Mr. Fitzpatrick said nothing now. They just wanted to make the Board aware and issue the RFP.

Discussion/decision regarding the disposition of the General Fund Balance- Mr. Landry said we can spend \$1,715,000 of the fund balance. The Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance have appropriated funds out of next year's general funds surplus for the Town Hall roof \$262,000 which was retained to get to the \$1,715,000. We have been waiting for a final report from Milliman. The number should be reduced slightly from 12.1 million to approximately 11 million and something.

Joe Fitzpatrick explained how the cost figures for the High School Auditorium Renovation had evolved. He said that they have contacted Arthur DeCeasare about managing the job, since he is doing the Cartbridge project. The soft costs are okay, but he did not figure any acoustical treatment or additional duck work. There are some handicap issues we have to do, some ADA compliance and also sprinklers under the stage.

Mr. Bliss asked the people from the school if they were happy with this. They said yes. Mr. Major asked if anyone had perceived, if there was anything left out, once they got to the bottom line number. Allen Swerdlowe said that he thought this had been handled very well by Joe.

Mr. Mueller asked if we go ahead with the project, is every interest group involved happy with this project as currently specified to address and achieve what they looking for. Mr. Fitzpatrick said yes. The purchase order for the seats has to be done by May 30th and WestonArts has already raised the money for it.

OPEB: Mr. Landry said that for everyone that has been employed by the Town, we have some sort of liability for them, once they leave us. This process is about figuring out how much that liability is. About a year ago, Milliman said that was about 12.1 million and currently they are saying we are at 11 million. They are saying we need to put away next year \$609,100 and we have budgeted \$304,000 for next year so we are short \$305,100.

Jerry Sargent said a \$1,100,000 was a reasonable compromise. We have the advantage of having built the general fund up over the last five years. If we spend it down by \$1.1 million, we will minimize the impact on the taxpayers for the reasonable, foreseeable future.

Mr. O'Brien asked when we would get the \$325,000 back from FEMA for the Cartbridge project. Mr. Landry said we do not get it all back we will get 75% back, and it should be before June 30, 2009. It would go back into the fund balance and be available next year.

Mr. Major made a motion that they recommend to the Board of Finance to appropriate the sum of \$1, 686,585 to be spend from the General Fund to cover the OPEB Liabilities at \$1,100,000 and the High School Auditorium at \$586,585 subject to going to Town Meeting for approval. Ms. Weinstein seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

On the Board of Finance side, Mr. Sargent moved the motion made by the Selectmen. Ms. Kopas seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Discussion/decision regarding calling a Special Town Meeting on June 11, 2008.-

Mr. Major made a motion to call a Special Town Meeting on June 11, 2008 at 7:30pm at the Middle School Cafeteria. Ms. Weinstein seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Discussion/decision regarding the appointment of Steve Ezzes as the Moderator for the Special Town Meeting.- Ms. Weinstein made a motion to appoint Steve Ezzes as the Moderator for the Special Town Meeting on June 11, 2008. Mr. Major seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Adjournment: At 9:14pm Ms. Weinstein made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Major seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted
Judy M. DeVito
Administrative Assistant
Approved 9/04/08