

CALL TO ORDER

The Special Meeting of the Board of Selectmen was called to order at 5:00p.m. on ZOOM due to COVID-19. Present were: First Selectman Eric Wellman; Deputy First Selectman Sean Askham; board members Jackie Battos, Mike Paine, Wendy Mackstutis and Chris Peterson. Staff in attendance included Town Manager Maria E. Capriola; Deputy Town Manager Melissa Appleby; Finance Director Amy Meriwether; Superintendent of Schools Matt Curtis; Assistant Superintendent for Administration Neil Sullivan; Director of Infrastructure & Technology Jason Casey. Also in attendance were Board of Education members Susan Salina and Jeff Tindall and Jeff Wyszynski from Tecton Architects.

PUBLIC AUDIENCE

Mr. Wellman read a submitted comment from Joan Coe who spoke about her concerns with the proposed Meadowood Acquisition

OVERVIEW OF BUDGET

a) Board of Education Capital and Debt Service

Mr. Curtis started by thanking the Board of Selectmen for the opportunity to present and discuss the proposed Board of Education capital items for this upcoming budget. Mr. Sullivan gave a detailed overview of the proposed Latimer Lane School renovation project. The presentation included an overview of how the Board of Education and Tecton worked to get the present value of the renovation, and how the long range plan of the project accounts for repurposing the existing space dedicated to 6th grade students for preschool use once the 6th grade moves to the Middle School. Mr. Sullivan stated that during neighborhood discussions the Board of Education had, preschool was a key point they kept hearing.

Mr. Wyszynski stated that the project was presented as a renovate as new plan rather than build a new school due to the State providing more favorable reimbursement rates for renovate as new projects. The total cost of the project was anticipated to be \$36,792,406 with the cost to the Town being \$25,703,175.

Ms. Mackstutis asked about the line titled “Ineligibles” and what that means. Mr. Wyszynski clarified that those are costs that are not reimbursable. Board of Selectmen members expressed interest in a more detailed list of those costs to better understand what is included.

Mr. Sullivan explained that the Board of Education has a long range plan that includes renovations to multiple schools but they chose Latimer Lane as the first school to renovate because of the more urgent capacity issues. The renovation will account for projected enrollment and addresses not only the current needs for a school but also the future needs as well.

Mr. Askham asked if there is a way costs can be reduced. Mr. Wyszynski answered that cost savings could potentially be achieved as refinements are made during the grant application process.

Mr. Peterson made remarks about the project and his desire to see a concise, one page document made available to the public about what is in the project and what the project cost provides to the Town and students.

Ms. Meriwether reviewed a debt service model with the current draft capital plan. The model showed different potential debt limits, and depending on potential guidance from the Board of Finance, the future debt will

**TOWN OF SIMSBURY – BOARD OF SELECTMEN
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES – March 2, 2021
“ D r a f t ”**

Page | 2

exceed the limit. Following discussion on the amortization schedule of the bonds, Ms. Meriwether clarified that the presented model assumed 10 year bonds for routine capital and 15 year bonds for the school projects. A small discussion ensued about comfort levels on different amortization schedules for bonding.

Mr. Curtis introduced the bleacher project and how the scope was reduced from the previous year's project to find savings. Mr. Casey gave a detailed history on the project and how the project was originally presented last year with a cost of \$850,000 but this year they are asking for \$600,000 due mainly to reducing the capacity of the bleachers. Mr. Casey said a recent safety inspection indicated that the bleachers should be replaced soon. A discussion between the Board of Selectmen and Board of Education ensued about the level of priority for this project. Ms. Salina said it is a high priority due to safety issues and with how much use the bleachers get. There was a quick discussion on other items for the stadium in the 6 year capital plan.

Ms. Mackstutis requested additional detail on all Board of Education projects in the 6 year capital plan.

Mr. Casey reviewed the continuation of security improvements project for the district at an amount of \$250,000

Ms. Capriola mentioned that the Town should think about the length of bonds and consider generational equity. Ms. Capriola reiterated the need to continue to build up our cash capacity as it is an important way to reduce the need to take on debt for smaller valued items in the capital improvement plan.

b) Other Discussion on Board of Education Fiscal 21/22 Budgets (if needed)

No discussion needed.

c) General Discussion on Manager's Proposed Fiscal Budgets (if needed)

Mr. Paine expressed an interest in the Board of Selectmen sending a letter of support for the proposed budget of the Farmington Valley Health District. Mr. Askham stated the Board should see the proposed budget before sending a letter.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. Askham made a motion to adjourn to Executive Session pursuant to CGS §1-200(6)(D) Purchase of Real Estate, at 6:13 p.m. and to include Attorney Robert DeCrescenzo, Town Manager Maria E. Capriola, Deputy Town Manager Melissa Appleby, Finance Director Amy Meriwether, Director of Planning Mike Glidden, Town Engineer Jeff Shea, and Director of Culture, Parks and Recreation Tom Tyburski. Ms. Mackstutis seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Mr. Askham made a motion to adjourn from executive session at 7:26 p.m. Mr. Paine seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Mr. Askham mad a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:26 p.m. Mr. Paine seconded. All were in favor and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas Fitzgerald
Management Specialist