

TOWN OF STONINGTON

BOARD OF FINANCE MEETING

Virtual Meeting

Wednesday, January 6, 2021

7:15 PM

The Stonington Board of Finance held a virtual meeting on this date at 7:15 p.m. The meeting was also streamed on Facebook live and was available via audio on a conference line. Chairman Tim O'Brien, Mr. Glen Frishman, Ms. Lynn Young, Ms. Deb Norman, Mr. Bob Statchen, Mr. Michael Fauerbach, and Mr. David Motherway Jr. were remotely in attendance. Finance Director Jim Sullivan was present. Chairman O'Brien called the meeting to order at 7:20 p.m.

Chairman O'Brien sadly informed members of the passing of former Stonington Director of Planning Jason Vincent. Noting Jason's unending enthusiasm and his ability to listen and appreciate different opinions and encourage discussion, Chairman O'Brien asked members for a moment of silence to honor a friend of the Town and the members.

Comments from the Public: The Board acknowledged an email received from Mr. Rick Newton. Mr. Newton's letter suggested the Town should consider green infrastructure options while discussing the replacement of outdated HVAC systems and roof repair. Mr. Newton also brought attention to sea level rise and the possible impact on the Town and the benefit of hiring a climate crisis specialist. Mr. Newton's full email can be read as an attachment to the minutes.

Previous Minutes:

A motion was made by Mr. Fauerbach and seconded by Mr. Frishman to approve the minutes dated December 2, 2020. All were in favor, **motion carried.**

New Business:

Additional appropriations: Year to date additional appropriations show no change from last meeting

Line-Item Transfers:

Request from First Selectman to transfer \$11,794 from WPCA Treatment Facility CIP account #4022021-88326 to Ledge Light Health District line a/c#10124- 80198 to help defray burden of COVID 19 costs on the Agency. Ms. Young motioned to approve, Ms. Norman second. First Selectman Chesebrough introduced Mr. Steven Mansfield, Director of Health, and Ms. Jennifer Muggeo, Deputy Director of Health for Ledge Light Health District who were joining remotely. Mr. Mansfield informed the Board members that on December 16th the OPM sent a letter to all municipalities indicating the money associated with the current Coronavirus Relied Fund would be changed from a reimbursement to an allocation and it had been expanded to include public health and safety personnel. Mr. Mansfield stated he

had reached out to the 10 municipalities within the Ledge Light Health District to discuss this allocation and what it meant for the Towns and Ledge Light and what Ledge Light determined was an appropriate allocation to receive from each municipality. Each Town felt that 10% was a reasonable amount, with the amount to Ledge Light totaling \$155,652. The cost to Stonington would be \$11,794. Mr. Mansfield conveyed how much the funds will benefit Ledge Light as they move into the next phase of COVID response, vaccinations, and thanked the Town for their support throughout this pandemic. All members were in favor. **Motion carried.**

Request from First Selectman to transfer \$130,000.00 from WPCA Treatment Facility CIP account #4022021-88326 to Pawcatuck Streetscape CIP account #4022021-88278 to fund completion of sidewalk engineering and design work. Mr. Michael Fauerbach motioned to approve, Ms. Norman second. First Selectman Chesebrough stated the project has been previously discussed in detail, the engineering nearly complete, and this transfer is to allocate the funds to complete the engineering and design work. Ms. Young inquired to the status of contacting property owners regarding easements on their property. Selectman Chesebrough stated letters had been sent out at the end of the year and a February 11th virtual committee conversation and presentation is being planned. All members were in favor. **Motion carried.**

Request from First Selectman to transfer \$5,000.00 from various Emergency Management line items to "Development of Emergency Plan" a/c#10107-80148 for completion of Emergency Ambulance Dispatch Plan. Mr. Bob Statchen motioned to approve, Ms. Young second. First Selectman Chesebrough notes this is a state mandate to have a dispatch plan in place and this transfer creates a line item for hiring a consultant to work on areas outside of the Town's expertise regarding fire, ambulance and emergency response. All members were in favor. **Motion carried.**

Request from First Selectman to transfer \$1,000 from Counseling line-item a/c#10171-80065 to Safe Futures outside agency, line-item a/c#10176-80636 to help defray burden of COVID 19 costs on the Agency. Chairman O'Brien acknowledged an email he had received from First Selectman Chesebrough and Director of Human Services Leanne Theodore, asking that the request be removed from the agenda. Request removed, no action was taken.

Request from First Selectman to transfer \$6,984.00 from CCM Dues account #10102-80122 to Town Wide account #10101-80100 to cover Community Garden supplies expense. Ms. Norman motioned to approve, Ms. Young second. Finance Director Jim Sullivan stated the reason for the surplus in the CCM dues account was a result of a discount provided to the Town because of COVID-19. All were in favor. **Motion carried.**

Request from Public Works Director to transfer \$185,780 from WPCA Treatment Facility CIP account #4022021-88326 to Town Hall Roof Repair CIP account #4022021-xxxxx. Ms. Young motioned to approve, Mr. Frishman second. Director of Public Works Barbara McKrell virtually shared a presentation with the Board members outlining the details of the funding request. Director McKrell noted that discussions have taken place with regards to the current condition of the roofing of the Town Hall and Human Services building. The Town Hall slate roof is 93 years old and is leaking and in disrepair. Another portion of the roof was replaced in 2014.

Director McKrell proposes to replace approximately 5000 square feet of slate with a 20-year asphalt shingle, replace the gutter system with a copper gutter with aluminum downspouts, restoration of some of the chimney masonry and the facias for \$185,780. This figure also allows for \$5,000 in case asbestos is found, although initial testing inside the building has not shown this to be an issue. Director McKrell stated she had researched the use of imitation slate but it didn't provide the warranty that the asphalt shingle would and increased the price to \$210,720. The Director commented that the Board could wait and approve the project as part of CIP for the upcoming budget year, but this would delay the construction until September. Noting by combining the Human Services and Town Hall building, Director McKrell felt she would be able to secure a good contract and get an early start on the construction.

Finance Director Jim Sullivan conveyed to the Board that he had first hand experience of the loose tiles on the building and the Board should support the immediate replacement of the shingles just from a risk management point of view.

Ms. Young inquired about solar panels and if during these discussions of roof replacement did the possibility of solar panels or a design that would allow solar panels in the future ever come up. Director McKrell indicated that there was not enough area on the Town Hall roof for a project such as that.

Mr. Motherway asked if the slate roof itself had any value and whether it could be reclaimed. Director McKrell stated that is something they will look into but the slate is crumbling and not structurally sound. Mr. Motherway added he felt it could have a value in the art market and Chairman O'Brien agreed. Director McKrell will look into salvaging options.

Ms. Norman questioned if the \$4,000 allotted for the Industrial Hygienist Fee was sufficient. Director McKrell stated that it was her opinion that the contractor would not find materials on site that would warrant a full-time industrial hygienist on site and therefore felt comfortable with the estimate.

Mr. Frishman remarked that he considered the request sensible and the projects should be put out to bid together and completed as soon as possible.

Mr. Fauerbach asked if there would be a request for bid or a bid waiver. Director McKrell stated it was her intention to get a list of at least three reliable experienced contractors and provide them with plans and specs and ask for their quote. After reviewing their submitted proposals Director McKrell will return to the Board and request a bid waiver.

Mr. Statchen asked for confirmation that the contractors would be local and Director McKrell assured Mr. Statchen they would be.

All members were in favor to transfer \$185,780 from WPCA Treatment Facility CIP account #4022021-88326 to Town Hall Roof Repair CIP account #4022021-xxxxx.

Motion carried.

Request from Public Works Director to transfer \$116,260 from WPCA Treatment Facility CIP account #4022021-88326 to Human Services Roof Repair CIP account #4022021-xxxxx. Mr. Statchen motioned to approve, Ms. Young second. Director of Public Works Barbara McKrell states the project scope includes design and construction for the replacement of the asphalt shingle roof, membrane roof and other related work.

Mr. Statchen asked for clarification from Director Sullivan on the transfer of funds for the project and whether he was comfortable with the transfer. Director Sullivan stated that the funds are coming out of the WPCA CIP funds from the 20/21 fiscal budget. Noting that when the WPCA CIP projects became part of the \$10 million dollar bond that was approved, this freed up the \$1 million dollars in the WPCA CIP account. Director Sullivan stated that \$537,000 would be transferred out of that account upon the Board's approval this evening and he was in agreement with the process and request.

All members were in favor to transfer \$116,260 from WPCA Treatment Facility CIP account #4022021-88326 to Human Services Roof Repair CIP account #4022021-XXXXX.

Motion carried.

Request from Town Engineer to transfer \$74,000 from WPCA Treatment Facility CIP account #4022021-88326 to Town Hall HVAC Upgrades CIP account #4022021-xxxxx. Town Engineer Christopher Greenlaw informed the Board the funds would be used to install a mechanical ventilation system for the Town Hall. Mr. Greenlaw reported to the Board members that the existing second floor air ventilation system consists of opening windows for fresh air. This method is uneconomical as well as inefficient and coupled with the COVID environment warrants consideration for improved mechanical ventilation.

Mr. Greenlaw acknowledge that at the September 23, 2020 Board of Finance meeting, \$40,000 was requested to facilitate the design of the 2nd floor mechanical ventilation system and at this time the design plans and documents are prepared for the bidding process. The construction timeline is estimated 6 weeks post advertisement and award of the contract. With the Boards approval of the \$74,000 Mr. Greenlaw anticipates the project to be completed as early as this spring.

All members were in favor of the transfer of \$74,000 from WPCA Treatment Facility CIP account #4022021-88326 to Town Hall HVAC Upgrades CIP account #4022021-xxxxx. **Motion carried.**

Request from First Selectman to transfer \$20,000 from WPCA Treatment Facility CIP account #4022021-88326 to CRS/Flood Management account #10141-80196. Ms. Young motioned to approve, Mr. Frishman second.

First Selectman Chesebrough spoke to the Board noting the additional funding would fund external consultant services for FEMA/CRS Floodplain Manager. In summary, Selectman Chesebrough noted that the CRS (Community Rating System) is a national program developed by FEMA which allow the flood insurance premiums of a community's residents and businesses to receive discounted flood insurance premiums to reflect that community's work to reduce flood damage.

In March 2019, FEMA notified the Town that based on the prior year's activities by the Town's Floodplain Manager (CRS Coordinator) a %15 discount on flood insurance premiums was provided to residents within the 100-year flood plain, which equates to approximately 16% of properties Town Wide. Prior to December 2019 the Town Engineer and member of SPAA accepted this role. However, since that time no other bargaining unit member has accepted the role. Existing staff do not have the capacity to fulfill all the additional responsibilities of the CRS program. First Selectman Chesebrough states that the Town has contracted out this work to a consultant and the \$14,000 initial estimate appropriation has been expended and the additional funding request is a best estimate for what will be required for the remaining fiscal year. First Selectman Chesebrough estimates a yearly cost of \$35,000 for the position which will be added to the Planning Department budget. All members were in favor. **Motion carried.**

Request for Chief of Police to transfer \$10,000 each from accounts 10161-80068 "School Safety Personnel & 10161-80060 Special Officers, to Professional Services line item #10161-80552 to fund contract with Daigel Law Group for preparation of Police Policies Manual. Chief Stewart acknowledged to the Board that this was discussed previously with the Board, and this funding will start the process with Daigel Law Group. All members were in favor. **Motion carried.**

Bid Waiver Requests: None

Being a regular meeting, Chairman O'Brien asked for a motion to add an agenda item after Presentation/Discussion - Bridge Assessment, Preservation & Safety, a line item of Lantern Hill Bridge Discussion & Evaluation. Ms. Young motioned to approve the request, Mr. Fauerbach second. All were in favor. **Motion carried.**

Presentation/Discussion - Bridge Assessment, Preservation & Safety

Town Engineer Christopher Greenlaw addressed the Board noting that upon hire he was challenged to determine the status and priority of the bridges listed in the CIP schedule. Working with WMC Consulting Engineers, Mr. Greenlaw established a condition rating for the bridge infrastructures.

Mr. Greenlaw stated the goal of tonight's presentation is to outline the framework of the bridges in an effort to begin a program to forecast replacement or repair in the future and put together a program for bridges. Mr. Greenlaw introduced Mr. Jay Costello, President of WMC Consulting Engineers and Emanuel Duarte, Senior Structural Engineer with WMC Consulting to inform the Board and discuss the documents in support of a bridge forecasting program.

Mr. Costello proposed and discussed implementing a 4-Phase plan:

Phase One: Understanding Assets - Inspection & Inventory

Phase Two: Asset Management - Short/Long Term recommendations

Phase Three: Repair Implementation - Design & Construction

Phase Four: Maintenance - Scheduling & Implementation

The Board thanked Mr. Costello and Mr. Duarte for the presentation and information presented to them and Mr. Greenlaw for setting up the presentation.

Lantern Hill Bridge Discussion & Evaluation

Town Engineer Christopher Greenlaw spoke to the Board stating that the Lantern Hill Bridge had certain planned obsolescence, a result of not being funded. WMC Structural engineers analyzed its load rating and it was determined that with no repair at this time, structurally the load rating would need to be reduced. Mr. Greenlaw outlined three options for the Bridge, repair, replace or no action. WMC proposed some calculations on the options. Option One, repair, costing \$100,000, could extend the life of the structure another 5 - 10 years but would need to utilize a lower load rating. This lower load rating could support passenger cars but not large fire trucks or loaded sand vehicles. Option Two, completing larger structural repairs would cost approximately \$250,000 with a load rating capable of supporting fire trucks and sand vehicles. The third option, to do nothing, would mean the bridge will eventually meet its demise and the Towns would be looking at closure. In order to make the closed bridge safe for the traveling public would cost the Town \$20,000 for the Stonington side as signage, proper turn around for large vehicles and other requirements would be necessary. Mr. Greenlaw states action would be necessary in the immediate future as the recommendation from the structural engineer is to close the bridge within 6 months given its current state.

First Selectman Danielle Chesebrough added that through her conversations with Ledyard Mayor, Fred Allyn, he has committed to share 50% of the \$100,000 short term fix outlined by WMC for the bridge.

After further discussion, Chairman O'Brien asked for a motion to approve a line-item transfer of \$50,000 from WPCA Treatment Facility CIP account #4022021-88326 to Lantern Hill Bridge Repair CIP Line Item in the CIP Schedule. Ms. Young motioned to approve the transfer, Ms. Norman second. All members were in favor. **Motion carried.**

Review of Board of Ed Monthly Line Item Transfers: No action

Correspondence: None

Liaison Reports:

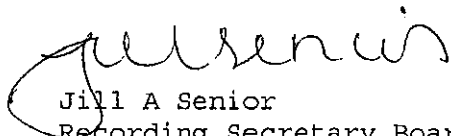
CIP - Ms. Young states there is a virtual CIP meeting scheduled for January 27th from 9:00am - 12:00 noon where the CIP requests will be presented by Department Heads. Anyone interested were invited to attend.

General Gov't - Mr. Fauerbach reports an update from Linda Camelio, Tax Collector, shows that the tax collections continue to trend above the point they were at last year at this time. Ms. Camelio informed Mr. Fauerbach that per the Governor's Executive Order, residents were offered the opportunity to apply for a tax deferral until January 28th. At this time there are 10 applications for deferral.

With no further business, Mr. Frishman motioned to adjourn, Ms. Norman second. All were in favor. Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Jill A Senior
Recording Secretary Board of Finance

Jill Senior

From: rnewton06355@gmail.com
Sent: Wednesday, January 6, 2021 12:22 PM
To: Bob Statchen; David L. Motherway; Deborah Norman; Glenn Frishman; Lynn Young; Michael Fauerbach Pfizer; Tim O'Brien
Cc: Jill Senior; James Sullivan; Christopher Greenlaw; Danielle Chesebrough
Subject: Comments for BOF meeting January 6, 2021

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hi - I have the following comments to the BOF for the January 6, 2021 meeting:

- While I realize there is an urgency for the roof repairs / hvac repairs at human services and town hall, the town should really be considering green infrastructure replacing old systems in order to reduce carbon emissions. Making sure the renovations can accommodate solar panels and changing out old hvac systems to newer technology could save the town money in the long run. The town of South Windsor is estimating they'll save \$7.7M over 20 years by installing a combination of solar panels / virtual net metering on schools and town buildings. They aim to be carbon-free by 2023. <http://bit.ly/2WWmhm7>
- Groton is looking into hiring a climate crisis specialist (new position). They were looking to split the costs with the city, but the city did not respond. Perhaps Stonington should inquire as to splitting the costs of such a position as there are going to be future issues with sea level rise that the two towns will have to work together on anyhow (downtown Mystic). Or Stonington could create their own position. Should the new hire be successful in finding savings such as South Windsor has, the position would more than pay for itself.
- Regarding the bridge assessment study:
 - Two of the AMTRAK bridges on the map are mis-labeled.
 - Nowhere is there any mention of factoring sea level rise (SLR) or increased stream flow due to heavier / more frequent rain events caused by climate change. If neither SLR or increased precipitation events were factored into the cost estimates, then they are artificially low. Bridges will have to be higher and wider and approach roads may also have to be raised.
 - Both the Hazardous Mitigation Plan and Coastal Resilience Plan have shown the Mason's Island causeway as the #1 priority to be addressed. If I'm reading this current analysis correctly, this consultant firm bumped it down to #3. Is there an explanation for that?
 - CT DEEP has developed a mapping tool that shows where SLR is going to impact roads at various time periods in the future. For example it shows the Mason's Island causeway is going to flood on either end of the causeway at least once every 30 days in 2040, so just replacing the current bridge with a newer version won't be that helpful unless the SLR issue at both ends is also addressed. The tool is on the UCONN ECO website:

<https://cteco.uconn.edu/viewer/index.html?viewer=slamm>

- There are a few undersized culverts on key access roads that may have to become bridges (or at least upgraded culverts) due to increased flows due to SLR: 1) Latimer Point Road, 2) Wamphassuc Point Road, 3) Cove Road, 4) Old Stonington Road, 5) Hewitt Road, 6) Mechanic Street. In my opinion, they should have been included in the study.

Rick Newton
Mystic

Note: I chair the Climate Change Task Force but the comments above are my own. If the BOF would ever like to have a joint meeting with the CCTF to discuss the climate crisis, please let me know.

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