RECEIVED FOR RECORD
STONINGTON, CT.
16 SEP 13 PM 3:46
CYNTHIA LADWIG
TOWN CLERK

September 7, 2016

DRAFT

The Board of Finance held a Regular Meeting on this date in the Conference Room of the Police Station. Members present were Chairman Bryan Bentz; Secretary June D. Strunk; Glenn Frishman, Tim O'Brien and Michael Fauerbach. Also present were First Selectman Rob Simmons; Director of Finance James Sullivan; Public Works Director Barbara McKrell; Highway Supervisor Thomas Curioso; Town Engineer Scott Deledda, and various members of the public including several Bayview Avenue area residents

Chairman Bentz called the meeting to order at 7:15pm.

Comments From the Public-Attorney Ray Trebisacci spoke supporting the Bayview Avenue Drainage Project.

Previous Minutes-Mr. Frishman made a motion to pass the August 12 meeting minutes, Mrs. Strunk seconded, and voting was unanimous.

First Selectman Simmons- spoke in support of the Mystic River Boathouse Park. He stated that a year and a half ago he worked on a Plan for Conservation and Development for the Town with his colleagues. In a questionnaire, 78% of respondents said they wanted more waterfront public access and recreational facilities. He also stated that this park would also improve the gateway to our town, which sees two million tourists a year. SHS Crew Director Mike O'Neill spoke regarding the team needing a permanent home, as it has outgrown Mystic Seaport. He said there are very few places in town with access to the waterfront that could support this program, and that the upper Mystic River is ideal for rowing. Kelly Bolling from Trust Republic Land, who specializes in work with private land owners to bring land into public ownership, said there is an opportunity for grant funding with this project. Selectman Simmons stated that the impact of a median homeowner in town would be $11.75 a year.

Bond Council Joseph Selinger advised that the BOF first had to vote on adding the agenda item of discussing the resolutions, attached hereto as Exhibit A for making a recommendation, or not, to the BOS to appropriate funds and approve bonding for the purchase of Mystic River Boathouse Park. Mr. Frishman motioned to add the agenda item and Mr. O'Brien seconded. Mr. Bentz and Mr. Fauerbach were in favor, while Mrs. Strunk opposed. The motion was passed 4-1.

Mr. Frishman made the motion to consider appropriating and bonding $2,216,164 for the acquisition of land and related site improvements on Route 27 for the purpose of establishing the Mystic River Boathouse Park. Mrs. Strunk seconded, and the chairman called for questions and discussion.

In response to a question, Mr. Selinger stated the resolutions authorize the First Selectman and the Finance Director to decide on the terms of the bonding, which would go out to a competitive bid process to capture a favorable interest rate. He said the resolutions provide for preliminary issuance of notes followed by bonds, and also include language to capture a tax exempt rate, which is available to public improvements. They also authorize the Town to enter into disclosure agreements to provide information on an as needed basis to the buyers of the bonds.

Mr. Fauerbach asked Finance Director Sullivan if there were any other options for purchasing the land. Mr. Sullivan stated that he spoke to the Town Financial Advisor who recommended a bond issuance

rather than taking the money out of the Town fund balance. The advisor said a bond issuance would be the way to get the best rate, as there would be no added administration fees if it was done in conjunction with the school bonding.

Mrs. Strunk said that while has no objections to the project, she has concerns about how it is going to be paid for. She is concerned about the impact this will have on residents in addition to the schools project. She also stated that she would like this to go to referendum rather than Town Meeting.

Chairman Bentz stated that he agrees with the concern of overloading the taxpayers, but that this is an opportunity that comes along once in a generation. Mr. Frishman agreed that he would not like the town to lose out on the opportunity, although he is aware of the fiscal restraints. He said he is not in favor of dipping into the town surplus.

Mr. Fauerbach expressed concern about parking spaces. Mr. Frishman asked about funds passed through the DEP for remediation and asked if the remediation fees would be deducted from the purchase price. Selectman Simmons said they would. Mr. Bolling said that if parking spaces are increased, remediation fees would lessen. Mr. O'Neill said he expects a lot of support from the DEEP on this project.

Mrs. Strunk stated that she would like to keep the bonding separate from the schools. Mr. Frishman said that by combining the bonding it will lower the per dollar cost of issuance. He stated that he favors keeping the surplus intact.

Mr. O'Brien asked if there will be any changes in the conceptual design and asked why there is no funding for a seawall. Mr. O'Neill stated it was because the DEEP will determine what is allowed.

Mr. Fauerbach asked about the confidence in securing the funding for the boathouse. Mr. O'Neill said there are many people in the community supporting the program.

Mr. O'Brien questioned how long this project would be. Mr. Bolling said the purchase should be completed by early 2017 and construction would start immediately after that.

Mrs. Strunk asked how to keep non-residents out, and Selectman Simmons said you cannot deny access, although you can regulate the park.

Comments from the Public-
Attorney Mr. Nick Kepple stated that he vigorously supports the park, as his daughters rowed and their lives were altered by the crew program.

Brett Perkins stated that when SHS Crew went to the Nationals it was the only public school to medal. He also said that this will end an EPA nightmare with regards to arsenic leaching into the Mystic River. He also believes that the Friends of Stonington Crew will be able to build a boathouse

John Flaherty said the Crew Coach told him that four families had moved to this area to join the crew team. He said there are hidden aspects that will financially benefit the community.

Janis Mink said her daughter rowed for four years at Stonington. She went on to the Teach for America program in a rough area and said she could not have done it without the crew program.

Tom Sanford spoke of older people rowing on the Mystic River. He said there is a growing older group of rowers that he feels will support the building of the boathouse.

Danny Houston of the Mystic Seaport stated that SHS is not the first group to have the idea of having a rowing center on this property. He said this is the best use of the property and is what the Seaport would like for the property. He stated that it also gets rid of an eyesore and approves the approach to the town and as a taxpayer he hopes it goes through.

Mr. Frishman made a motion recommending to the BOS that the town appropriate and bond for $2,216,164 for evaluating, planning, and acquiring land along Route 27 on the Mystic River; clearing, remediation and demolition of structures; and construction of parking, sidewalks and certain other site improvements on said land for creation of a town park and authorizing the issue of up to $2,216,164 bonds and notes to finance the appropriation pursuant to the resolutions provided to the BOF by bond counsel in the form attached hereto as Exhibit A. Mr. O'Brien seconded, and voting was unanimous in favor of the motion.

Town Engineer Scott Deledda requested additional funding for the Bayview Avenue Drainage Project. Although monies were set aside to pay for the project, the additional $65,279 is needed for easements, permits, establishing a contingency fund as well as inspection services. He stated that the project is necessary to replace the output component of the drainage system. He said the system needs complete replacement as it is in disrepair and is also undersized. He said all permits have been obtained. Mr. Fauerbach made a motion to approve, Mrs. Strunk seconded, and voting was unanimous.

Bid Waivers-Public Works Director Barbara McKrell requested bid waivers for a Toro mower and a John Deere backhoe. She said both pieces of equipment were approved in the budget. She noted that the cost of each item is below what was approved in the budget. She also requested approval to do catch basin cleaning and treated road salt under the State bid. Mrs. Strunk asked for the price per unit on the catch basin cleaning. Mr. Curioso stated it is 18.30 per unit, and that the road salt is 81.50 per ton. Both items are less than they were last year. Mrs. Strunk motioned to approve the bid waivers, Mr. O'Brien seconded, and voting was unanimous.

Liaison Reports- Mr. O'Brien stated that the Retirement Board hired FIA to oversee and evaluate the plans. FIA will be an independent contractor to help the plan pay less in fees.

K-12- Mrs. Strunk stated that the design and development is completed. She said now estimates will be done based on the plans. She said the State has all the information that they need for reimbursement. She said if everything goes as planned it will be six months until groundbreaking. Chairman Bentz noted that he was told by the Economic Development Commission that they should look at the Monsanto Building as an option for Deans Mill School, as if viable it would save a significant amount of money. Mrs. Strunk stated that the committee spoke about it last night, and noted that although the building has the same square footage, it would still need to be renovated. She also said that even if we were able to get the building for 4 or 5M, it would still be 23M to renovate, and it would be starting all over again. She also stated that the State reimbursement is only for new construction or renovating an existing building, so it would drop the reimbursement rate.

With no more business before the Board, Mr. Frishman made a motion to adjourn, Mrs. Strunk seconded, and the meeting was adjourned at 9:17 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

June D. Strunk