



BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Clifford J. Hurgin Municipal Center, 1 School Street
Bethel, Connecticut 06801 Telephone: (203) 794-8501

Matthew S. Knickerbocker, First Selectman
Richard C. Straiton, Selectman
Paul R. Szatkowski, Selectman

MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING

Wednesday, September 22, 2010
7:00 p.m.
CJH Municipal Center – Meeting Room “A”

RECEIVED

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TOWN OF BETHEL
TOWN CLERK

PRESENT: First Selectman Knickerbocker, Selectman Straiton and Selectman Szatkowski. Also in attendance were Town Counsel Martin J. Lawlor, Town Engineer Andrew Morosky, Barry Bernabe, Financial Advisor from Webster Bank and members of the Board of Finance.

First Selectman Knickerbocker called the Special Meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. in the General Purpose Room along with the Board of Finance.

Presentation of Road Renewal Plan to the Board of Finance

First Selectman Knickerbocker had presented the Board of Finance various funding scenarios that show we can borrow the funds to do 31 miles of our worst roadways at a cost of \$8,500,000 which would not raise the budget, would take advantage of the historic low interest rates and, most importantly, would get the roads done in a fast, efficient manner. He explained that the biggest complaint residents have – is the condition of the roads. First Selectman Knickerbocker noted that the typical road construction account could be reduced substantially; this would be helpful in the event that state revenues are reduced.

Mr. Slifkin and Mr. Roden offered that they do not think that the Board of Selectmen is proposing enough money to complete the project and do not feel that the estimates are accurate and do not include the proper amount of escalation. First Selectman Knickerbocker offered that he feels very comfortable with the numbers presented by Town Engineer Andrew Morosky and Asst. Director of Public Works Robert Dibble.

Mr. Morosky explained that while no one has the ability to precisely forecast paving costs, the cost estimate does contain an escalation factor to it. Mr. Morosky advised that the town currently takes advantage of the state bid prices for road construction but offered that we could bid it on our own to see if the cost could come in cheaper. The Selectman Szatkowski suggested looking into the feasibility of seeing if one contractor could bid on the project and complete it in one year or two years or escalate the project to have the paving done in less time. Town Engineer Andrew Morosky explained that, working with the town Highway Department crew, a contractor typically can pave 5-6 miles a year, depending on the extent of preparations needed. If the road plan is approved, there would be several more months of “paving” time each year because the money would be approved prior to the asphalt plants opening. This would allow for 7-8 miles or more of road to be completed each year. Mr. Morosky added that the Highway Department saves the road account money by performing a significant amount of the work on a typical road paving project without charging labor or machine time to the road account.

J. Philip Gallagher offered that he thought we should look into bonding only \$4,000,000, due to the potential lack of revenues from the state, he suggests just doing the worst main roads. He is very concerned over the potential lack of revenues from the state, no foreseeable increases to the grand list, etc. noting that the bulk of revenues would be generated by taxpayers. He thought that the parking lots proposed in the plan should be removed and funded through the regular budgeting process. His thought is that as our debt decreases, we could use that money to offset budget increases. He continued that he would like to take the parking lots and dead-end roads out of the road plan. First Selectman Knickerbocker explained that they (the parking lots) are included in the road renewal plan because it would be cheaper to bond them in the package than in the budget. Timothy Draper offered that residents who live on dead-end roads pay taxes as well.

There was discussion of not only funding the road project but wondering whether this would leave enough for other projects, i.e. future police station, Johnson/Rockwell schools.

First Selectman Knickerbocker presented an additional funding scenario which takes into consideration the road plan as well as a future police station and still leaves room in our bonding capacity for unforeseen items and reduces our debt. First Selectman Knickerbocker was very clear in his statement that just because he was presenting this scenario, he was not, nor was the Board of Selectmen, recommending a police station project. The scenario presented was for informational purposes only to show that we can not only do the road project but also (*at a future point*) still have enough bonding

capability to do other projects as well and, most importantly, our debt will still continue to go down.

The Board of Finance tabled the Road Renewal Plan until their October meeting.

Selectman Straiton made a motion, which was seconded by Selectman Szatkowski, to adjourn the Special Meeting at 8:10 p.m. Vote, all in favor, motion unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Wendy Smith". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Wendy Smith (Recording Secretary