

**SPECIAL MEETING  
AUGUST 11, 2008**

The Wethersfield Town Council held a special meeting on Monday, August 11, 2008 at 6:00 p.m. at the Pitkin Community Center, 30 Greenfield Street, Room F-3, Wethersfield CT.

Present from Council: Councilors Console, Forrest, Hemmann, Walsh, Deputy Mayor Montinieri and Chairperson Adil.

Absent: Councilor Cascio, Kotkin and Roberts

Also present: Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, Lisa Hancock, Finance Director, Christine Fortunato, Chairperson of the School Building Committee, Frederick Bushey, Supervisor of Buildings and Maintenance, and Karen Clancy, Director of Business Services, and Dolores Sassano, Town Clerk

The meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Dolores Sassano, Town Clerk, took attendance.

Chairperson Adil said that a member of Quisenberry Archari Architects is not here yet so he would like to begin with the second item on the agenda.

Councilor Walsh moved **“TO TABLE ITEM ONE AND MOVE TO ITEM TWO OF THE AGENDA”** seconded by Councilor Forrest.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 6-0-0.

Councilor Walsh moved **“TO AUTHORIZE THE TOWN MANAGER TO SIGN THE LEASING DOCUMENTS FOR THE LEASE/PURCHASE OF THE TWO DUMP TRUCKS AND THE AERIAL FIRE TRUCK AS OUTLINED”** seconded by Councilor Forrest.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that the Town Council has approved that she negotiate for leasing for the two dump trucks and the aerial ladder truck. There were a couple of provisions in the lease that she would like the Town Council to be aware of before she signed it. There have been a few additional changes since the Town Councilors received their packets.

Lisa Hancock, Finance Director, said that the language in the entire part about the non-appropriation has changed. The Town removed the part about having to pay interest if a non-appropriation has been set by the Town Council in any one year. Within the lease documents, there is a part of the agreement where the equipment is part of the capital security. In essence, if

there was ever a default in payment, that equipment could be used or taken back. It does not use the word repossession, but when there is a capital interest for the security of the loan, that is always a possibility of how it would work. The point of the non-appropriation clause is gone as far as interest having to be paid. If the Town were to issue debt in excessive of \$5,000,000, the Town would be in violation of the small issuer exemption certificate which would have to be signed as part of this deal. This provision has now been removed from the lease. This allows the actual lease to be a tax exempt type of financing with the IRS. In the Town's current situation, it will not have to sign that particular agreement. The Town will have to sign the bank eligibility certificate which means that if the Town issues debt in excess of \$10,000,000 before the end of 2008, then the Town would be in default under the lease because it would change the taxability of the agreement. She said that she is not as concerned with the \$10,000,000 as she was with the \$5,000,000. Currently, the Town has planned on issuing debt in December depending on whether there are any payments for an open space bond. The total of the open space bond could be \$4,000,000. There is \$4,000,000 left on the Town Hall bond, a remaining balance on the sidewalks and roads that were approved in other years, and possibly anything from the Silas Deane Middle School or Webb and Stillman School bonds. The Board of Education is working on getting those final documents in place. The total of these items could come very close to \$10,000,000. If it appears that the total is more than \$10,000,000, the Town would have to wait until January 2009 to issue the debt. There would not be too much of an impact with the timeframe. The interest rates are very low, so the Town is saving money as far as the loss of interest on investment earnings compared to the debt. Her concern is that if the Town has too many expenditures by the end of the year it could have a little bit of a strain on cash flow as of December as taxes are not paid again until the end of January.

Councilor Forrest asked if the \$1,100,000 for the trucks would be included in the \$10,000,000.

Lisa Hancock said that it would not be included.

Councilor Forrest said then it looks more like \$8,500,000 with a little from the two mostly closed out projects.

Lisa Hancock said that she would hope that it would not be \$2,500,000 for the schools. She is waiting for the school grant information to be sure.

Councilor Console said that there are some variables there.

Chairperson Adil thanked Lisa Hancock for her work on this and said that he was pleased with the low interest rate.

Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. Councilor Console voted NAY. The motion passed 5-1-0.

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Councilor Forrest moved **“TO TAKE OFF THE TABLE ITEM ONE OF THE AGENDA”** seconded by Deputy Mayor Montinieri.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 6-0-0.

Chairperson Adil said that there are representatives from Friar and Associates, Quisenberry Archari Associates, and Christine Fortunato, Chairperson of the Schools Building Committee at the meeting to discuss the bid awards.

Councilor Walsh moved **“TO AWARD THE PRE REFERENDUM ARCHITECTURAL WORK FOR RENOVATION OF HANMER SCHOOL TO FRIAR ASSOCIATES INC. IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$26,500 AND THE PRE REFERENDUM WORK OF WETHERSFIELD HIGH SCHOOL TO QUISENBERRY ARCHARI ARCHITECTS IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$65,000”** seconded by Councilor Forrest.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that the School Building Committee spent endless hours widdeling down the number of architectural firms to five for interviews. The interviews took place and the Committee unanimously recommended these two firms. The Town Council allocated \$100,000 in the budget for the pre-referendum architectural service. The total of these bids will be \$91,500. These bids will include some LEADERSHIP IN ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN work and energy work. The LEED work is a new energy program that the Town is not required to get certification in, in order to receive State reimbursement but the Town has to fill the criteria almost as if the Town was getting certification. With all of the energy pricing and conservation that is going on nationwide, this is now being required by the State in order to receive State reimbursement.

Christine Fortunato, Chairperson of the School Building Committee, said that she is available to answer questions along with members of the school staff.

Glenn Yeakel, Project Manager, Friar and Associates gave an overview of the bid. He said that his approach is to look at the project in four pieces: the educational programming, code aspects of the project, energy conservation, and the mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems. A lot of thought was given to their proposal and his firm is ready to get started.

Councilor Forrest asked about the LEADERSHIP IN ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN [LEED] certification process. He asked if Friar and Associates would be able to provide the Town with what it could consider energy savings, what the schools are now paying versus what they would be post renovation and a percentage of savings of energy costs.

Glenn Yeakel said that included in the process will be looking at the operating expenses of the facility now and what can be potentially changed and how the pieces will dovetail together and then the firm can run that type of analysis. No one can control the costs of energy in the future but an effort will be made to have the best possible systems in place to afford the Town the greatest economies.

Councilor Forrest asked if the Town would be able to get an accurate view on energy consumption for the building.

Glenn Yeakel said that as part of the design there will be energy modeling. The pre-referendum piece of the work will go so far in the ability to at least make a projection. The full design piece needs to be done to know where the Town will be at the very end. Hanmer School is a smaller building than the High School so that there will be less opportunities there.

Chairperson Adil said that when the plans came in, Friar and Associates price was a little higher. He asked for an explanation of the higher fee and why the Town should pick the firm.

Glenn Yeakel said that in the last five years working with the Town on the Silas Deane Middle School and Webb, the firm has a good understanding on the level of services that the Town wants and needs to complete a project and be successful with the project. His firm knows what the Town wants and can give it the best.

Deputy Mayor Montinieri asked for an example of something that is not included in the planning phase now that has been captured in this proposal.

Glenn Yeakel said that Hanmer is full of asbestos. He is very aware of that and during the process can target where in the building he knows it exists and take care of those costs through the budget. There will be no surprises about where the asbestos exists. This will be handled in the design phase so that the costs can be projected out properly.

Deputy Mayor Montinieri said that this proposal does not have an exclusion for hazardous abatement.

Glenn Yeakel said that from a design standpoint, the Town has an on-call consultant. He said that he would be coordinating with the consultant. He said that from a design standpoint he knows where the building will be affected. He will work with the on-call consultant to say here is what will be demolished or what walls will be moved to make sure that there is no asbestos in the caulking or drywall or behind the plumbing wall that will be affected when it is torn down. All of that will be carefully looked at in this phase.

Councilor Console asked if there was an issue with asbestos after the fact at Webb.

Glenn Yeakel said that there was an issue with window caulking with additional windows that were to be put in with a change order.

Councilor Console asked if this could be an issue with Hanmer School, too.

Glenn Yeakel said yes, that is why he would like to have everything tested now so there won't be surprises later.

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Chairperson Adil asked if there has been any thought about when the renovations would take place and if they would take place with children in the building.

Glenn Yeakel said that would be a discussion with the Board of Education. He believes that the Town will need to look at some temporary classrooms onsite. He said that it is a little bit premature to discuss now.

David Quisenberry and Steve Dewey, of Quisenberry and Archari Architects introduced themselves.

David Quisenberry said that they are a relatively new firm. They have all worked together for larger firms on school projects. He said that they do a wide variety of work now, not just schools. The firm recently did the Soundbridge school project in Wethersfield with CREC. Steve Dewey will be the Project Architect for this project. He comes from a firm with a lot of experience, linking together the knowledge base that is out there. As a young firm, they are very eager to build up references and continue this line of work. This will be the most important project the firm has and will therefore get the most attention. This will be a showcase of what the firm can do.

Steve Dewey said that he worked on the Silas Deane Middle School and Webb School projects as well as Soundbridge. While the firm is relatively new, most of the people at the firm have been in the business for a long time with larger firms. The staff does have school specific experience.

Chairperson Adil asked if there are other architects that will be available in case the lead architect is unavailable.

David Quisenberry said because of the importance of the project, Steve will be the primary architect but there will be full partner involvement in the project. All members will be aware of the projects. It will be a team effort.

Steve Dewey said that he will be the main contact to eliminate any confusion, but at every meeting there will be two members of the firm to represent the project so that issues can be addressed in a timely manner.

Councilor Forrest said that his interest is in energy. He asked what the firm's confidence level, pre referendum, is to give the Town energy consumption figures for the high school.

Steve Dewey said that as part of the fee, the firm insured that there will be a lot of time and energy focused on analyzing what is existing in the building. There are issues and concerns. Little things that are done architecturally and bigger things that are done mechanically will be looked at together. It will also be compared with State reimbursement rates to see what is feasible.

Councilor Forrest asked if the firm will be able to provide estimates as to reductions or the stabilization of consumption of the utilities.

Steve Dewey said that a lot of the decisions on what approach is taken, is based on an accurate assessment of the savings. The engineers will start with an energy audit and existing utility bills to develop a baseline. Every idea to save energy is going to have to be looked at as a cost model for the improvement of the building and what the savings will be. This is a very important part of the process.

Deputy Mayor Montinieri said that the School Building Committee met with this firm and felt very strongly and saw great detail in the presentation. He said that historically with the bid process, he is cautious with the low bidder when it is so far away from the median bid. His instincts tell him to ask where the other shoe will fall when a bid is 50 percent off of the median. The Town has had experiences when the low bid is chosen and then people have regretted that. He has been assured by folks that they feel very good with using the firm, but he asked how it was possible that the firm could be 50 percent lower than the median bid and still make some money.

David Quisenberry said that as a younger firm, they are eager to get into different architectural categories. They have been able to get into these categories by being low. The firm has to be efficient to do that. Operating costs are kept low because the firm runs out of a building that he owns. Employees are paid a little less than the industry average, but it is made up by making it an enjoyable place to work. There has been essentially no turnover. The partners also make less than other partners at larger firms. Part of the bid price may be some inexperience in establishing what the bid number is.

Deputy Mayor Montinieri said that six months down the road and there are things that were not anticipated by your firm that may have been anticipated by a larger firm what will happen.

David Quisenberry said that the fee is what it is. The firm will stand by what it does. This firm does a huge number of projects because of its diversity. There is a huge volume of work and allows the firm dynamically to move along. If the firm feels that the hours poured into this project are not being covered by the billing, the hope of the firm is that so many other things going on will be a live and learn situation. The next time the firm goes out to bid with a town it can increase the bid if it is needed. The firm can't look at project sheets from a previous project to see how many hours it takes. The firm has to work with its fee.

Deputy Mayor Montinieri asked if an exclusion could come up that would drive up the fees, like an exclusion on hazardous materials.

David Quisenberry said that it is not likely to happen, but if it did happen it would be because there were components of the project that were outside the scope of what was anticipated. The scope that everyone is working off of is based on a study done by previous architects about what

is anticipated at the school. In the pre-referendum services, the firm is going to establish very clearly what some of the issues are. There is the possibility that the firm's recommendation on how to move forward varies in scope from what was anticipated because of discoveries.

Deputy Mayor Montinieri asked if that is suggesting that once the firm is done with the pre referendum work, that the picture with respect to the detail could be greater and in some way alter something significantly.

Davis Quisenberry said that he doesn't know that he has enough information now to know that nothing will come up in the next few months. He said that it is a management and research project that the firm has to undertake over the next several months to determine the proper course of action. He is not comfortable saying now that there will not be deviations in the plan of attack based on what is discovered.

Steve Dewey said that is why the firm focused more on the pre-referendum work, because it gives them time to sit down with the Town Council and different boards to define the scope of the project, and not just programmatically meet the needs of the high school. Preliminary conversations will also be held with the State to guide the firm on what will be required for funding.

Deputy Mayor Montinieri said that members of the School Building Committee are very enthusiastic about this. From a municipal point of the view, the Town Council has the obligation to be as cost effective as it can. Anything that gets costs down and accomplishes the goal is appealing in a municipality. It is hoped that the savings that the firm is offering does in fact bear out.

Frederick Bushey, Supervisor of Maintenance and Operations, said that a new twist was thrown into the proposed high school referendum in the review recently completed by the Office of Civil Rights and Bureau of School Facilities. It is over and above what the existing facility study indicates was done in 2006. He asked how the firm would attack this and prioritize this work.

Steve Dewey said that until the firm sits down and analyzes what is existing, not just program wise but also code wise, that is where the experience comes in. The firm will be looking in all areas of the building to make sure that all code requirements are met. If it impacts the programming, then the firm will have to sit down and keep everyone in check and say costs associated with one issue are going up and therefore the project needs to be kept at a number and it will have to be looked at as to what else can be adjusted. With the Bureau of School Facilities, he doesn't know any of the details on civil rights issues which exist, so he can't comment on any legalities or immediate issues that may be foreseen. There are ways of incorporating phasing into the schedule over a duration of time to highlight the point if there is a specific element that has been brought to the attention of the school facilities. The key issues will be addressed and the firm will see how they play into the scope of the project going to referendum. If there is an issue based on legal issues, then it may have to be split out somehow.

Frederick Bushey said that for the record, the Office of Civil Rights has to do with the American with Disabilities Act and a study that was done through the Bureau of School Facilities at the high school.

Christine Fortunato said that this was a very long and deliberate process. The criteria was established by the School Building Committee in addition to questions that were posed to every candidate. Both firms that are here tonight came to the Committee meeting with several representatives. Both are ready to meet all of the Town's needs, both the architectural needs and education piece.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that it is the intent of the School Building Committee that the firms will be continued on if the referendum passes. There are no guarantees, though. The post referendum bidding would come back to the Town Council.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 6-0-0.

Deputy Mayor Montinieri moved **“TO TRANSFER \$10,000 FROM THE CAPITAL RESERVE ACCOUNT TO ACCOUNT 3000-54425-30400 TO REPLACE THE PITKIN COMMUNITY CENTER EXTERIOR DOORS BY THE FIRESIDE ROOM”** seconded by Councilor Hemmann.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that the 9/11 renovations are moving along. In order to get ready for the big celebration of the 9/11 Memorial opening, these doors should be replaced. Kathy Bagley, Director of Parks and Recreation, has received very good pricing for the exterior doors, \$19,200. She was able to find \$9,200. There is approximately \$59,000 in the Capital Reserve Account.

Deputy Mayor Montinieri said that he sat in at the 9/11 Building Committee meeting this week. He is in favor of the motion. The building is almost done. It is fantastic. The Director of Parks and Recreation has found some funding to make this happen. The replacement of the doors will be offset some by the energy savings of the current doors that are in bad shape. Also, in the three months since the previous expenditure at the Community Center, several sources of funds have come in as grant money.

Chairperson Adil asked if the doors would be replaced prior to the 9/11 opening.

Kathy Bagley, Director of Parks and Recreation, said that the doors need to be ordered so that they will not be installed in time. The windows in the banquet room will also be installed after the ceremony but before the heating season.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 6-0-0.

8/11/08

14695

Councilor Walsh moved **“TO AWARD THE ROAD PAVING WORK FOR THE SUMMER AND FALL PAVING TO RAFFERTY FINE GRADING IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$75,000 AND TO AMERICAN INDUSTRIES INC IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$375,000”** seconded by Councilor Forrest.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that Nott Street can be paved before school starts if the bid is awarded tonight. This is the State low bid.

Deputy Mayor Montinieri asked if this was in the budget already.

Bonnie Therrien said that it is. It is for the award of the bid for the summer and fall paving programs.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 6-0-0.

Councilor Forrest moved **“TO TRANSFER \$969 FROM ACCOUNT #1220-54423 (FIRE DEPARTMENT FURNISHINGS) TO ACCOUNT #1221-52254 (FIRE MAINTENANCE – ELECTRICITY)”** seconded by Deputy Mayor Montinieri.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that this is an interdepartmental transfer from last fiscal year. It is for higher than expected electricity.

Deputy Mayor Montinieri asked if this was an isolated thing or if it will continue.

Bonnie Therrien said that this cost is for all of the firehouses for last year.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 6-0-0.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

At 7:10 p.m., Deputy Mayor Montinieri moved **"TO ADJOURN THE MEETING"** seconded by Councilor Forrest. ~~Councilor~~ All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed ~~6~~9-0-0.

Dolores G. Sassano  
Town Clerk

*Approved by vote of Council  
August 25, 2008*