



Tanya D. Lane
Acting Town Manager

TOWN OF NEWINGTON

131 CEDAR STREET
NEWINGTON, CONNECTICUT 06111

MAYOR ROY ZARTARIAN

**NEWINGTON TOWN COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING
Conference Room L-101 – Town Hall
131 Cedar Street**

**March 15, 2016
7:00 p.m.**

Minutes

Mayor Zartarian called the Special Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in conference room L-101, Town Hall.

I. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

II. ROLL CALL

Councilor Anest
Councilor Budrejko
Councilor DelBuono
Councilor Klett - Absent
Councilor Manke
Councilor Marocchini
Councilor Nagel
Councilor Serra
Mayor Zartarian

Staff Attendees:

Tanya Lane, Acting Town Manager
Ann Harter, Director of Finance
Lisa Rydecki, Deputy Director of Finance
Ben Ancona, Town Attorney
Dave Langdon, Director of Facilities
Paul Boutot, Chief Information Officer
Stephen Clark, Police Chief
Chris Schroeder, Fire Chief/Marshal
Tom Molloy, Highway Superintendent
Bill DeMaio, Parks and Recreation Superintendent
Lou Jachimowicz, CFO – Board of Education
Jaime Trevethan, Asst. to the Town Manager

III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – ON AGENDA

Rose Lyons, 46 Elton Drive: Ms. Lyons thanked the Council and Acting Town Manager for including the terminus on Elton Drive in the proposed CIP budget.

Mady Kenny, 53 Crestview Drive: Ms. Kenny inquired about the breakdown of expenditure for the pool and playground repairs and maintenance. She also inquired about the reason for the \$250,000 Churchill Park environmental review and requested a breakdown of those costs.

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Patti Foley, 51 Crown Ridge (via telephone): Ms. Foley noted that the Churchill Park study/project has not come before the Council for discussion and suggested that the funds could be used elsewhere.

Peter Arbur, 23 Tremont Street: Mr. Arbur spoke about the proposed CIP and asked the Council to consider making road repair/maintenance a priority through bonding.

Carol Gremm, 54 Theodore Street: Ms. Gremm stated that she is on the Newington Board of Lacrosse and she stated that the Town's parks are in serious need of repair and upgrades. She stated that the Board of Parks and Recreation should have the chance to propose the upgrades to the Council.

Jeanne Picklesimer, 97 Vincent Drive: Ms. Picklesimer spoke in favor of the \$250,000 proposed for the Churchill Park study. She stated that she has a son with special needs and indicated that it is difficult to find activities to do with him. She stated that she has not been able to take him to a Town pool in over 5 years as he is unable to go up or down a ladder and is too large for her to move him in and out of the pool. She stated that age 20, he is too old to use a splash pool and indicated that a lazy river would be beneficial to him as well as others with special needs and everyone in the community. She stated that everyone in the community should be able to enjoy the park.

Stacey Martins, Mrs. Martins stated that she is a teacher at the Newington Transition Academy and indicated that she teaches special needs students ages 18-21. She spoke in favor of updating the parks for the special needs residents as well as the entire community.

IV. CONSIDERATION OF OLD BUSINESS

A. Kellogg Eddy House Lease Agreement

Mayor Zartarian and Attorney Ancona indicated that there are no concerns with the proposed lease.

Councilor Nagel moved the following:

RESOLVED: That the Newington Town Council hereby authorizes the Acting Town Manager to enter into a lease agreement, as attached to this resolution, between the Town of Newington (the Lessor) and the Newington Historical Society Trust, Inc. (the Lessee) for the Kellogg Eddy House, located at 697 Willard Avenue, Newington. The lease shall be for a twenty (20) year term commencing on July 1, 2016.

Motion seconded by Councilor Manke. Motion passed 8-0 (Councilor Klett Absent).

B. Budget Review: CIP/Debt Service/Equipment Reserve

Acting Town Manager Lane, Director of Finance Ann Harter and the Council discussed the proposed CIP budget. (See Proposed FY 2016-17 CIP book for details – CIP Message attached).

Councilor Budrejko inquired whether the Town anticipates any decrease in its credit rating. ATM Lane replied that the Town's financial advisors have projected out for five years and do not indicate any concerns over the Town's credit rating moving forward.

Facilities Director Dave Langdon and Chief Information Officer Paul Boutot spoke of CIP projects for Facilities and Information Technology. Mayor Zartarian inquired about the breakdown of IT projects over the next five years. Mr. Boutot indicated that he will provide the information.

Mayor Zartarian asked about the Library skylight. Mr. Langdon stated that there have not been any recent issues with the skylight.

Police Chief Stephen Clark and Fire Chief/Marshal Chris Schroeder spoke of CIP projects for emergency services.

Councilor Nagel thanked Chief Schroeder for the recent Council tour of the Fire Departments. Councilor Manke inquired whether personal protective gear includes uniforms, hats, jackets, etc. Chief Schroeder replied in the affirmative.

Highway Department Superintendent Tom Molloy spoke of the CIP projects for public works.

Councilor Budrejko inquired about how LOCEP funding is determined, given that Newington roads are used heavily by non-resident travelers. Mrs. Harter stated that she will check into the distribution calculations. Councilor Nagel inquired what percentage of the Town roads are maintained by the State. Mr. Molloy replied that the Town maintains about 104 miles of road while the State maintains about 22 miles of road. Councilor Nagel inquired about the process for determining the schedule for road repairs or repaving. Mr. Molloy replied that a combination of software, traffic usage, other projects (such as MDC projects), and regular assessments are used to determine the schedule. Councilor Nagel inquired whether the proposed CIP budget is enough to cover the street repair needs. Mr. Molloy stated that the funding has improved over past years, however, in a perfect world \$1 – 1.2 million would be ideal.

Parks and Recreation Superintendent Bill DeMaio spoke of the CIP projects for Parks and Recreation.

Councilor DelBuono inquired about the \$250,000 Churchill Park feasibility study, noting concerns about the timing of the project. Mr. DeMaio explained the purpose of the study – to prepare a design and information to continue the process of going before the various boards, commissions and Council with the ultimate goal for the project to go to referendum. Councilor DelBuono inquired about the timeline for the park study. Mr. DeMaio replied that the study will take 3-5 months and remarked that the park is currently not ADA compliant. He stated that the “grandfathered-in” period for non-compliance expires this summer. He also indicated that Churchill pool is losing dozens of gallons of water per day, with a crumbling pipe/drainage system.

Newington Schools CFO Lou Jachimowicz spoke of the CIP projects for the Newington school system.

Councilor Manke inquired about the John Wallace wing reconfiguration project. Mr. Jachimowicz stated that the purpose of the project is to return the space to a traditional classroom environment, with separate rooms and current safety standards in the event of a lockdown. He stated that the proposal calls for one wing to be reconfigured per year over the next three years. He explained the scope of the project. Mayor Zartarian inquired whether the same issue exists at Martin Kellogg. Mr. Jachimowicz replied in the negative. Councilor Nagel inquired whether the requests have matching State grants. Mr. Jachimowicz replied in the negative. He also spoke of the issues at John Patterson and Anna Reynolds elementary schools.

Councilor Nagel inquired about the \$188,000 requested for school technology. Mr. Jachimowicz stated that the money is earmarked for Chromebook purchases for grades 9-12. Councilor DelBuono inquired whether leftover funds from previous years could be used towards the Chromebooks. Mr. Jachimowicz replied in the affirmative and stated that some of the funding would come from the previous funds.

Acting Town Manager Lane and the Council reviewed Debt Service and Equipment reserve items of the proposed CIP (please see Proposed FY 2016-17 CIP book for details).

Councilor Anest inquired about the town wide fiber optic implementation. Acting Town Manager Lane replied that the item was not funded because it could be included in a bond issue. Mr. Boutot indicated that the pricing included bringing fiber optic to all Town facilities and possibly to Town parks.

Acting Town Manager Lane and the Council reviewed appendices reserve items of the proposed CIP (please see Proposed FY 2016-17 CIP book for details).

Councilor Anest inquired about the remaining balance of the Market Square project. Mrs. Harter stated that the Town is waiting for DECD final approval before it can close the project.

V. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – ON AGENDA

(Name not audible) The resident spoke of overspending on Police overtime. Mayor Zartarian stated that the police overtime budget is not on the current agenda and stated that a public hearing will be held on March 31 and the next regular meeting will be held on March 22.

Mady Kenny, 53 Crestview Drive: Ms. Kenny stated that there are differences in expectations between and environmental review and a design study and remarked that she was unaware that Churchill Park fell short of ADA compliance. She also spoke of recent news items identifying health concerns with artificial turf.

Rose Lyons, 46 Elton Drive: Ms. Lyons asked the Council to address the issues with the Mill Brook/Piper Brook area through whichever budgetary means appropriate.

VI. REMARKS BY COUNCILORS

Councilor Marocchini spoke in favor of the \$250,000 Churchill Park study and noted that most projects in the past several years have been pay-as-you-go.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Marocchini moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:52 p.m. Motion seconded by Councilor Nagel. Motion passed 8-0 (Councilor Klett Absent).

Respectfully Submitted,

Jaime Trevethan
Asst. to the Town Manager

Attach.



TOWN OF NEWINGTON

131 CEDAR STREET
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OFFICE OF THE TOWN MANAGER

March 15, 2016

Dear Mayor Zartarian and Members of the Newington Town Council:

I am pleased to present to you for your consideration the Proposed Long Range Capital Improvement Plan. This Plan, representing the long-range capital needs for Fiscal Years 2016-2017 through 2020-2021, starts with the current 2015-2016 fiscal year and plans an additional five years forward. As presented, I believe it provides a roadmap for the long-term capital needs of the Town.

Each day, the community, its residents, businesses and visitors use the public infrastructure – our roads, buildings and parks. As such, these valuable assets play a significant role in our community's quality of life. In order to best serve the needs of the community, however, such assets must be maintained appropriately. Over the years, the Town has established a solid record of maintaining its fleet through the Equipment Reserve Fund. The ongoing maintenance and capital needs of our facilities, however, have fallen behind. It is only through the timely and appropriate investment into our facilities that we may maximize the life expectancy of these structures while minimizing the impact of future bond issues on the taxpayer.

To address the capital needs of the Town in a comprehensive fashion, the Town Council in November 2006 established a Capital Improvement Program Committee that will provide a framework for the planning, scheduling and financing for the Town's multi-year capital improvement plan. Composed of Town Councilors (3) and Board of Education (2) members, with the assistance of Town and Board staff, the committee addresses the following components of the Town's capital planning process:

- Evaluation of project priorities within the Town's ability to pay, public health and safety needs of its residents and legal mandates.
- Integration of Town and Board projects.
- Financing plans for capital projects.
- Coordination of the CIP program with the annual operating budget.

It has become more apparent that it is time to address the failing state of our public buildings such as the Town Hall and a Townwide fiber optic system, the requests for improvements to Churchill Park and the Library, a renovation to Anna Reynolds School, and to acknowledge other building projects (such as new firehouses) which haven't yet come to the forefront. Our debt ratios are extremely low because we haven't borrowed money since June 2005. Since 2008 we have relied on an aggressive "Pay-As-You-Go" program, annually committing a level dollar amount of the budget to capital needs. This strategy has helped us catch up on a variety of neglected conditions. With our outstanding debt to be paid off in just a few years, we are nicely positioned to take on new borrowings—if the Town deems projects to be worthy and by referendum our citizens agree.

The most significant challenge in developing a truly integrated Capital Improvement Plan lies with the timing in which funding is available. The last time the Town conducted an exhaustive analysis of bonding capacity was 2002. Today we have the capability to borrow many millions of dollars—

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considerably more than in 2002. We are still in an environment with favorable interest rates, and we would not be out of line with other Hartford County municipalities that have been undertaking large building projects over the past few years.

Because our outstanding debt is so low, our financial advisors at Phoenix Advisors assure us that Newington can afford, should the voters choose, to bond various building projects. With assistance from our financial experts, I outlined at the *State of the Town* that Newington has the capability of borrowing \$82 million over four years. This exceeds the previous threshold of \$30 million set in 2002. As such the maximum annual payments on borrowing this amount would equate to 5.8% of the Town's total budget. Therefore, I am proposing that we replace our annually dedicated \$6.3 million for capital improvements with a different formula that considers the following:

- Forecasts annual budget increases of 3% then;
- Applies 5.8% of the total budget for CIP appropriations then;
- Reduces this base by the amount required for principal and interest payments; and
- The excess would be used for "Pay-As-You-Go (PAYG)" projects

This formulation will cause a tax increase sooner than our former method of funding PAYG, but in the long run it will create more money for the capital projects outlined by Town departments and the Board of Education. In order to minimize the financial burden to taxpayers, this five (5) year plan projects issuing \$50 million over the next five years. This formula is best illustrated in Table 3 - Newington's Proposed Long-Term Debt Schedule. The schedules contained in this document demonstrate how this recommended funding level impacts future capital needs.

The Long Range Capital Improvement Plan booklet has been reformatted for ease in viewing the information and to align better with the new debt parameter. The Long Range CIP document contains schedules to present the projects as requested and the use of State funds such as LoCIP and Town Aid for Roads to offset the cost to the General Fund. The capital plan is summarized in several methods to illustrate the overall picture for the next five years. Other schedules included present the payment of lease-purchase financing commitments, balances of existing capital projects, projected use of the Public School Capital Improvement Projects Reserve Fund including the Board of Education's approved Capital Improvement Plan, the Town's five year road program, and an updated status of the Town's entire fleet.

The definitions for Capital Projects include major construction projects, alterations to existing facilities, new equipment and other non-recurring expenditures that have a long useful life. Items or projects qualifying for inclusion in the Capital Projects category have a life expectancy of at least seven (7) years AND cost at least \$25,000. Items that do not meet BOTH of these requirements are funded out of the operating budget. An exception to this would be if a capital project for a smaller dollar amount was grant eligible and reimbursement required that it be in the Capital Improvement Plan.

In order to be eligible for the Local Capital Improvement Program (LoCIP) grant funds, the State requires that a Capital Improvement Plan be adopted by the Town Council. These grant funds are used for the Town's road improvement program. Annually, following discussion and review by the Town Council, a formal resolution by the Town Council to adopt the plan is required.

Please keep in mind that the projections set forth herein are a **plan**. These projections are not intended to establish policy or imply promises. There may be occasions in the five-year plan when departments or the Board of Education do not receive their requested funding. This Plan is intended to serve as a guide to the Town in addressing policy decisions for the upcoming years and the overall planning of Newington's growth. The time spent by the Town Council in reviewing this Plan, and subsequently adopting the Capital Improvement Plan, gives weight and credence to the importance of this document. As evidenced by the recently identified needs of our General Government and Board of Education facilities, this tool – in conjunction with the annual operating budget - provides a basis for fiscal stability while meeting the many current and future needs of the Town of Newington.

Respectfully submitted,

Tanya D. Lane
Acting Town Manager