

**DRAFT  
BOARD OF FINANCE  
REGULAR MEETING  
November 10, 2008  
8:00 pm – Board Room of Town Hall**

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Neil Budnick	Paul Giusti
Mary Davis Cody	Susan LaPerla
Kathleen Corbet	Roger Smith
Robert DiPanni	Robert Spangler
John Emert	

Jeb Walker, Chairman

MEMBERS ABSENT: John Laird; Daniel Ward

ALSO PRESENT: George Maranis, Administrative Officer; Gary Conrad, Chief Financial Officer; Tom Stadler; Sally Hines, Selectman; Tiger Mann, Senior Engineer and Assistant Director, Public Works; Mike Pastore, Town Engineer; Fred Baker, Fire Marshal; Chief Ed Karl, New Canaan Fire Department; Chris Kaiser, Director of Information Technology; Tim Malley, Manager of Operations, Information Technology; representatives of the press.

Mr. Walker convened the meeting at 8:01 p.m. Mr. DiPanni called the roll and noted the absence of Mr. Laird, Mr. Emert and Mr. Ward. Mr. Emert arrived at 8:09 p.m. and was seated for Mr. Ward at that time. Mr. Budnick was seated for Mr. Laird.

**The Board addressed Item 2. - Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of August 12, 2008 and the Regular Meeting of October 14, 2008.**

Ms. Corbet noted that with regard to Item 3. of the minutes of August 12, 2008, no report has yet been received from the building Inspector, and Mr. Smith noted that with regard to Item 4. There have been no periodic reports on energy usage asked that the Board receive a monthly energy use update. Upon motion of Mr. Spangler and second of Mr. DiPanni, the Board approved the minutes of the Regular Meeting of August 12, 2008 as submitted, Ms. Cody and Ms. Corbet abstaining because of absence.

With respect to the minutes of the Regular Meeting of 14, 2008, Mr. Smith referred to Item 4. and inquired into the status of appointments to the Pension Plan Advisory Committee. Mr. Walker said that the Board of Selectmen was in the process of making appointments, but that not all nominees had yet been vetted. Mr. Conrad added that the Actuary's Report will be ready the week of November 21, 2008. Upon motion of Ms. Corbet and second of Mr. Smith, the Board approved the minutes of the Regular Meeting of October 14, 2008 as submitted, Ms. Cody and Mr. DiPanni abstaining because of absence.

**The Board addressed Item 3. - Approval of a request from the Public Works Department for a special appropriation from General Funds of \$21,500 for the installation of an underground fiberglass tank at Wellesley Drive to store water for fire protection.**

Mike Pastore explained that the tank is eight feet in diameter and thirty-eight feet long. It is made of double wall fiberglass and will be buried on Town property. Mr. Smith questioned the need for such a tank in this neighborhood, asking whether four nearby ponds could be used instead. Mr. Smith also asked if there was any urgency in installing this tank now, as opposed to including the request in the upcoming budget cycle.

Mr. Baker, although admitting a lack of familiarity with the ponds, questioned whether they were easily accessible. He also noted that ponds had to meet certain depth requirements and were subject to freezing over in the winter. A dry hydrant or cistern, such as this tank, would address many of these issues. Mr. Baker was asked how

many homes would be within reach of the tank. He said that he was not sure of the exact number, but he thought that there would be several.

Mr. Walker pointed out that he did not favor special appropriations from General Funds unless there was a demonstrable emergency. If this appropriation is approved, he recommends that it be charged to Contingency Fund.

Mr. Smith made a motion to defer this item to the next budget cycle, but the motion did not move forward. Ms. Corbet made a motion to approve the request as presented and this was seconded by Mr. Budnick. The Board then voted unanimously to oppose the request and it was defeated. At Mr. Giusti's urging, the Board agreed to address the request at the December meeting, as opposed to including it in the budget cycle. Mr. Baker was instructed to assess the availability and use of the neighboring ponds and report his findings. He was also to provide such additional information as would be helpful to the Board in deciding whether to approve the installation of the tank. The Board thanked Mr. Baker for his work and thanked, as well, the owners of the gas station who donated the tank to the Town.

**The Board addressed Item 4. - Approval of a line item transfer of \$20,000 from Capital Project Account, API Scanning Project for Finance and Land Use, to be used to fund the contract with Vermont Systems for upgrade of software and online services for the Recreation Department (and Lapham Community Center).**

Mr. Kaiser, Director of Information Technology, presented the Item to the Board. He said that a solution was sought for online registration programs at the Recreation Department and at Lapham Community Center. He gave a brief explanation of the software and its capabilities, noting that the Town already uses a Rectrac system which contains an extensive data base which would be adaptable to online registration.

Mr. Conrad explained that the Vermont Systems upgrade was already included in the five year capital expenditure plan.

Mr. Walker added that he supports online registration and he has urged the Information Technology Department to accelerate its installation.

Upon motion of Mr. Emert and second of Mr. DiPanni, the Board unanimously approved the line item transfer of \$20,000 from Capital Project Account, API Scanning Project for Finance and Land Use, to be used to fund the contract with Vermont Systems for upgrade of software and online services for the Recreation Department (and Lapham Community Center).

**The Board addressed Item 5. - Approval of an Amendment to the Resolution Appropriating \$5 Million For The Town's Road Management And Improvement Program and Authorizing The Issuance of \$5 Million Bonds Of The Town To Meet Said Appropriation And Pending The Issuance Thereof The Making Of Temporary Borrowings For Such Purpose.**

Mr. Conrad explained that this Amendment relates to the proposed \$5 million third phase of bond issues for road paving. The purpose of the Amendment is to make clear that the proceeds of the bond issue can be used for a number of purposes associated with road repaving, including the installation of sidewalks, whether extending existing sidewalks or installing new stand-alone sidewalks (all as described in detail in the bond offering.) Ms. Corbet expressed concern that sidewalk installation may deplete the funds available for road repaving, but Mr. Mann explained that these costs were not excessive. He said that the cost for the South Avenue sidewalk from Farm Road to Surrey Road is estimated at \$140,000, with the YMCA contributing funds toward those costs. The cost of the sidewalk itself is estimated to be \$100,000 with topsoil, fencing and cross walk striping making up the difference. Although the cost estimates for the Main Avenue sidewalks are not yet finalized, Mr. Mann estimated them to be in the \$75,000 to \$150,000 range. These expenditures would not materially impact the \$5 million appropriation.

Upon motion of Mr. Emert and second of Mr. DiPanni, the Board voted unanimously to approve an Amendment to the Resolution Appropriating \$5 Million For The Town's

Road Management And Improvement Program and Authorizing The Issuance of \$5 Million Bonds Of The Town To Meet Said Appropriation And Pending The Issuance Thereof The Making Of Temporary Borrowings For Such Purpose.

**The Board addressed Item 6. - Presentation by the Sub-Committee on Public Safety of an overview of the operations and related matters of the New Canaan Fire Department.**

Ms. Corbet and Mr. Budnick presented this Item to the Board. Ms. Corbet explained that she and Mr. Budnick had met with members of the Fire Department in May and again in October. There has been continued discussion over the last few months with the goal of better understanding and improving the Fire Department budget process and encouraging constructive dialogue with the Department.

Comparative analysis data from surrounding towns has been obtained. Ms. Corbet asked members of the Board for suggestions as to other information to be requested and addressed by the subcommittee. Mr. Spangler inquired as to overtime patterns and cycles. This information will be covered in depth during the budget process. Ms. Corbet noted that actual results to date are in line with budget, with the exception of sick time and overtime, which are at approximately 60% of the full year's budget.

The expected budget increase for the FY 2009-10 budget is in the low to mid-teens overall, including a 15% increase for personnel costs alone. Half of this increase is attributable to contractual step increases. Budget increases for FY2010-11 are expected to decline less than a 6% increase and less than 4% increase for FY2011-12.

Mr. Walker thanked Ms. Corbet and Mr. Budnick for their efforts.

Mr. Spangler announced that this was Roger Smith's last meeting as a member of the Board of Finance after 15 years of service. Mr. Smith urged the Board to be independent and always protect the interest of the taxpayers. His service was acknowledged, with thanks, by the Board.

There being no further business, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn at 9:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert DiPanni, Secretary