

**TOWN COUNCIL OF NEW CANAAN
REGULAR MEETING
Wednesday, January 16, 2008**

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Dr. Mark De Waele
Ken Campbell
Kathryn Devereaux
Paul Foley
Elizabeth Jones

Stephen Karl
Tucker Murphy
Thomas O'Dea
Johnny Potts
Penny Young

MEMBERS ABSENT: Christine Hussey and Dick White

ALSO PRESENT: Jeb Walker, First Selectman (and member, ex-officio, Town Council); George Maranis, Administrative Officer; Gary Conrad, Chief Financial Officer; Vin Soggi, Chairman, School Bus Facility Committee; Sally Hines, Selectman; Colleen Flaherty, New Canaan Advertiser.

Dr. De Waele convened the meeting at 7:35 p.m. Mr. O'Dea read the Notice of Meeting and called the roll, noting the absence of Ms. Hussey and Mr. White.

Dr. DeWaele asked that the minutes of the Public Hearing of December 19, 2007 be approved and, upon the motion of Mr. Karl and the second of Ms. Devereaux, the minutes were approved unanimously, Ms. Murphy abstaining.

Upon the motion of Mr. Foley and the second of Mr. Potts, the minutes of the Regular Meeting of December 19, 2007 were approved unanimously, Ms. Murphy abstaining, after amendment to include Ms. Young among the attendees and after noting that Ms. Young had asked that the members receive resumes and interview the candidates for appointment and reappointment prior to vote by the Council.

Finally, upon the motion of Mr. Potts and the second of Ms. Murphy, the Council unanimously approved the minutes of the Special Meeting of January 3, 2008, Ms. Young abstaining.

Upon the motion of Mr. Foley and the second of Mr. Campbell, the Council voted unanimously to add the following items to the agenda:

Item 2, Request from the Finance Department to pass a Resolution authorizing the issuance and sale of Town of New Canaan General Obligation Refunding Bonds in an amount not to exceed \$35 million; and

Item 3, Discussion of the 2008-09 Budget.

Item 1, Request from the School Bus Facility Committee for appropriation from General Funds as follows:

- **\$33,236 to execute an agreement with Amano USA, Inc. to install a traffic control system at New Canaan High School.**
- **\$20,580 to execute an agreement with Santella Electrical & Communications to supply labor and material to install (1) 3 Barrier Arm Traffic Control Gates and (2) a 150 amp 3 phase, 4 wire service for a two story pre-fab modular building.**
- **\$23,950 to execute an agreement with Peter Lanni, Inc., to furnish labor and materials for the completion of a trench for electrical conduits.**

Mr. Socci reviewed the progress of the project up to this point, noting that the purpose of the traffic control gates is to manage traffic and keep passenger cars out of the bus area. The traffic control system consists of six gate controllers, two at each of three locations: one at the Farm Road entrance, one at the north end of the High School and one at Dunning Field. High volumes of traffic are not anticipated at the latter two locations. There will be a siren operated sensor, which can be activated to automatically open the gate when an emergency vehicle needs access. There will be a video surveillance system installed at the gate locations. The Board of Selectmen and the Board of Finance have approved the appropriation. The project can begin in as little as two weeks if the warm weather holds. It was stressed that safety is the paramount justification for installation of the system, and that the Police Department, Fire Department, Fire Marshall and EMS have either endorsed the system or have no objections to it.

Mr. Foley expressed concern with respect to the traffic control gate at Saxe Middle School and with the frequency that it is broken or inoperable. Mr. Foley was also concerned with the location of the electrical conduit that will be installed to service a proposed two story modular building. He further questioned why the appropriations related to the bus parking facility were not charged to the High School renovation project and thereby qualify for State reimbursement. Mr. Socci responded to the first two concerns, and Mr. Conrad said that he would look into the possibility of adding the bus parking facility costs to the renovation project.

Upon the motion of Ms. Young and second of Ms. Jones, the Council approved the request 9-1-0, Mr. Foley opposed.

Item 2, Request from the Finance Department to pass a Resolution authorizing the issuance and sale of Town of New Canaan General Obligation Refunding Bonds in an amount not to exceed \$35 million.

Mr. Conrad explained that the Resolution would permit the refinancing of callable bonds once interest rates decline to a level that would make refinancing economically justifiable. Any such refinancing would have to be approved by the Bond Committee.

Mr. Conrad said that a savings in interest cost of \$600,000 to \$700,000 would make the refinancing a viable option, but that the markets had not yet reached that point. He disclosed that the Resolution had been approved unanimously by the Board of Finance. Upon the motion of Mr. Foley and the second of Ms. Murphy, the Council unanimously approved the request from the Finance Department to pass a Resolution authorizing the issuance and sale of Town of New Canaan General Obligation Refunding Bonds in an amount not to exceed \$35 million.

Item 3, Discussion of the 2008-09 Budget.

The Council discussed the upcoming budget process. Discussion focused on measures to be taken to permit the Town Council to take a more active role in the budget deliberations, particularly steps to become more involved in the early stages of the budget process. It was decided that the Town Council will meet separately with the Board of Education, Public Safety and the Park and Recreation Department., while meeting in tandem with the Board of Finance to review the remaining Town agencies, including Public Works, Social Services, General Government, Revenues, Capital and Debt.

Dr. De Waele disclosed that a subcommittee, comprising Ms. Hussey, Ms. Devereaux, Mr. Foley and Mr. O'Dea, (and Mr. White ex-officio), has been formed to review the ordinance on Tax Relief for the Elderly.

Mr. O'Dea said that a seminar will be offered by his law firm addressing Freedom of Information, Roberts Rules of Order and the Code of Conduct. A tentative date of April 7, 2008 at 6:00 p.m. has been set for this seminar.

There being no further business, upon the motion of Mr. Potts and the second of Mr. Foley, the Council voted unanimously to adjourn at 8:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas O'Dea, Secretary