

BOARD OF FINANCE

**Emergency Meeting Minutes
Lower Level Conference Room**

**February 27, 2020
Directly Following Budget Meeting**

**Minutes are not official until approved at the next regular meeting*

Members Present (a quorum of 4 members is required to conduct business):

Mike Makuch – Chairman
Geoff Prusak – Vice Chairman
Peter Tanaka – Secretary
Stephanie Summers
Mike Perry

Members Absent:

Christina Mailhos

Also Present:

Selectwoman Erika Wiecenski
Superintendent Phil Stevens
Director of Public Works Troy Sposato
Members of the Public

Chairman Mike Makuch called the meeting to order at 8:28pm.

Geoff Prusak made a motion to seat Mike Perry for Christina Mailhos.

Stef Summers seconded the motion.

Vote: 4 Yes (M. Makuch, G. Prusak, P. Tanaka, S. Summers), 0 No

BUSINESS

1) Public Works Fuel Tank

Selectwoman Wiecenski stated that she checked with the Town Attorney to make sure this item qualified for calling an Emergency Meeting, and that it checks all the boxes. She provided the background that there is an 8000-gallon fuel tank at the Public Works garage that is 30 years old and needs to be removed. The tank is used to fuel buses, Public Works vehicles, and other Emergency Services vehicles. There is a project in place to replace it and there is \$100,000 in the State of Connecticut Local Capital Improvement Program (LoCIP) for this fiscal year through the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). The town has been waiting for \$346,965.54 in reallocated Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP) funds to be released from an agreement with the Department of Transportation (DOT), but that delay has now caused an issue with getting the tank out of the ground and has caused the tank to be red-tagged and shut down by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) due to it being at end-of-life.

Selectwoman Wiecenski continued that on Monday the DEEP let Willington know that they'd be red-tagging the tank on Tuesday, so Selectwoman Wiecenski was able to share the information with the Board of Selectmen at their meeting. Now that the tank has been red-tagged, the town cannot get fuel from it or receive fuel deliveries. She noted that all town vehicles were fueled up before the tank was red-tagged, so it did not prevent anything from running. Superintendent Stevens added that the buses are being fueled by Mansfield.

Director of Public Works Troy Sposato and Selectwoman Wiecenski attended a hearing at the DEEP this morning to appeal the red tag and have been granted an extension order. The town must secure a contract by March 20th to have the tank out of the ground by October 21st, 2020. The state recognizes there aren't a lot of vendors that do this work and, as it can only be done at certain times of year, those vendors can be backed up. Today they came and opened the tank so the town can use the remaining fuel, but the delivery company is notified that the tank cannot receive deliveries until the contract is in place. Selectwoman Wiecenski noted that testing has been done on the tank and there are no leaks or issues at this time other than being past end-of-life.

Selectwoman Wiecenski stated that the town cannot sign a contract, even with knowledge of the STEAP funds and the \$100,000 in LoCIP, without it being appropriated in the correct fashion. Though the plan is to use a portion of the STEAP funds, it took years to get them reallocated and has taken since August for DOT to start looking at Willington's STEAP project and get the town the necessary paperwork to move forward. As a result, Business Manager Donna Latinsics and Selectwoman Wiecenski started looking to see if there were funds available to do just the tank removal and replacement without waiting for STEAP funds, as they are not sure the STEAP money will be available within the time they need it.

Selectwoman Wiecenski stated that using the \$100,000 LoCIP funds would require a Town Meeting. Troy has been working on getting new quotes as the original quote was from Service Station from last July for about \$178,000. A quote received from a separate company today came in significantly lower, and they should have a new Service Station quote within a few days in order to produce a number for the Town Meeting.

Selectwoman Wiecenski stated that Donna found the funds available to complete the entire project, and that it would take some transfers from the Board of Finance. However, they are not at that stage yet.

Peter Tanaka inquired whether the funds can then be replaced with STEAP money after it's spent. Selectwoman Wiecenski replied that she guesses no, but did put in a call in to DOT asking that very question. She cited that the state has very specific procedures including a bidding process.

Chairman Makuch inquired how much the lower quote was for. Selectwoman Wiecenski replied that Kropp Environmental quoted that to get the tank out of ground would cost \$13,225. To replace it with a similar above-ground tank ranges from \$144,621 to \$155,594. With a couple additional items, it still comes in under \$178,000. Service Station anticipates a 3%, 5% or 8%

increase over their original quote. Donna used the highest number and was able to find a way to fund the project even if it comes in at 8% higher, or \$192,000. Tankworks will be coming out tomorrow for a third quote.

Chairman Makuch summarized that the minimum they need allocated tonight would be \$13,225 so they can sign a contract to remove the tank from the ground. Selectwoman Wiecenski asked that the Board allocate the entire amount at once, as the monies for the rest of the project would not require a Town Meeting. By approving it all at once, the project would only have to go to Town Meeting once, but they would be able to sign a contract to both remove the old tank from the ground and install a new above-ground tank, because the town can't operate without a fuel tank. Selectwoman Wiecenski clarified that the Town Meeting would only be for the \$100,000 coming from LoCIP and added that the STEAP funds could be saved entirely for the salt shed portion of the project, and that by doing it this way they can be confident that they can see the project through to completion instead of the timeline being dependent upon the release of STEAP funds.

Chairman Makuch inquired what kinds of transfers would be involved and why they won't require Town Meetings. Donna gave the example that the Board of Finance has a contingency line item in the budget this year which consists of \$32,990 set aside for the possible Teacher Retirement. That didn't happen and that money isn't needed for Teacher Retirement, so the Board can transfer that amount from Contingency to a Capital Project: Underground Tank Removal. It doesn't have to go to Town Meeting because it's in the budget for the town, the use of the money is just changing. Using LoCIP money, though, does require a Town Meeting.

Selectwoman Wiecenski clarified that they are only asking tonight for the \$100,000 to be appropriated out of LoCIP. No new taxpayer money is being appropriated. They will return to a future meeting for transfers for the rest of the project once they have a final number.

Stef Summers asked for clarification on the amount in LoCIP altogether. Donna replied that she didn't have those figures with her but that the fund started at \$185,000 on July 1 and had planned expenditures of \$100,000 on this diesel tank, \$45,000 on lighting at River Road, and \$20,000 for the MS4 storm water in this fiscal year.

Geoff Prusak inquired whether the tank has to be tied to the salt shed project. Selectwoman Wiecenski replied that the projects were originally planned together when they asked for the STEAP funds. Where the salt shed is now is where the fuel tank was going to go. Now the plan is to keep it where it is but above ground and to locate the new salt shed as planned. She clarified for board members that the quotes are all for above-ground steel or concrete-vault tanks which will be owned by the town.

Mike Perry inquired about the life of this tank and whether these things will be planned for in the future so it is not a scramble to replace again. Selectwoman Wiecenski replied that when Troy began last year, he alerted her that the tank would need to come out of the ground in October. There should have been a plan in place but with turnover of staff over the years, it was lost. However, the state doesn't monitor above-ground tanks and this won't be a problem in the future. Checking around the tank becomes part of the Public Works daily operations and a leak is

visible if there is one. The underground tank at the school is brand new and there will be similar concerns, but the plan is documented and it is the responsibility of the people in place now to pass that information down.

Stef Summers inquired how much fuel is currently in the tank. Selectwoman Wiecenski replied that there is approximately 4,200 gallons, which, based on usage, will be good for a month. If this appropriation goes through and passes Town Meeting, Selectwoman Wiecenski anticipates being able to sign a contract on March 12th.

Mike Makuch made a motion to recommend that the Board of Selectmen call a Town Meeting to appropriate \$100,000 from Capital Projects Fund – LoCIP – Public Works Underground Diesel Tank Replacement to be reimbursed by the State of Connecticut Local Capital Improvement Program.

Stephanie Summers seconded the motion.

Vote: 5 Yes (M. Makuch, G. Prusak, P. Tanaka, S. Summers, M. Perry), 0 No.

2) Center School Leach Field

Superintendent Stevens informed the Board that the leach field at Center School may have failed this afternoon because grey water came up from the ground. The septic gets pumped every summer and it was pumped again today to bring it down. They will have it scoped tomorrow morning and if it has failed, it will cost a significant amount of money, i.e. a couple hundred thousand dollars if the soil is outstanding or half a million dollars if it's bad.

Peter Tanaka made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:51pm.

Mike Perry seconded the motion.

Vote: 5 Yes (M. Makuch, G. Prusak, P. Tanaka, S. Summers, M. Perry), 0 No.

Respectfully submitted,

Marysa Semprebon

Recording Secretary