

Board of Finance  
Regular Meeting - July 17<sup>th</sup>, 2012  
(DRAFT) Minutes

**Attending:**

Board of Finance Members: Warren Serenbetz , Gail Lavielle, Jim Meinhold, Andy Pforzheimer and Al Alper. Lynne Vanderslice participated via conference call.

Others: Sandy Dennis (CFO), Bill Brennan, Tom Thurkettle (DPW), Hal Clark, Greg Van Deusen, Alex Ruskewich (Wilton Citizen) and Joan Lownds (Wilton Bulletin).

**Call to Order:**

Chairman Warren Serenbetz called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm.

**Approval of Minutes:.**

A Motion was made by Al Alper to approve the June 19th, 2012 regular meeting minutes. The Motion was seconded by Jim Meinhold and approved unanimously.

**Wolfpit Rd. Sewer Project:**

Bill Brennan gave a background on the sewer project, for which the WPCA (Water Pollution Control Authority in Wilton) hired a contractor to open roads for the sewer pipe. The 3 -year project is expected to begin next week and part of the contract includes conduit installation. Civil engineers will be present and conduct daily inspections. The BoS is requesting the BoF appropriate \$235,179 from the Charter Authority to fund the conduit installation.

The Townwide Network Committee, the recently established technology committee, pursued a 3<sup>rd</sup> party evaluation from the firm Blum-Shapiro to do an infrastructure risk analysis. This report is expected in about 8 weeks, at which time 28-29% of the conduit will be laid for a cost of \$65,000-70,000.

Mr. Brennan stated the goal is to accomplish the sewer project and lay the conduit, and by starting the work now most of the first 1.9 mile project can be completed before winter.

Mr. Alper wanted confirmation that if the Blum-Shapiro study says fiber cable is not the way to go then the installation of the redundant conduit would stop. The answer is “yes”, that part of the project would stop.

Ms. Lavielle inquired if anyone has asked the utility companies if they want to bury any power lines while the road is being opened. Mr. Brennan responded no, the power companies usually have a long- term plan in place and would have to act quickly to change their plan.

Ms. Vanderslice asked if the town could pause or delay the project while CL&P was asked about the conduit. Mr. Brennan stated CL&P won't move quickly enough. Ms. Lavielle stated it was still important to ask the question.

Mr. Meinhold asked if it was possible to put plates down, not use back-fill, on the open roads until the decision was made about the conduits. The answer was once there is a hole opened in the road with gravel and sand it creates travel issues, especially in that area which sees high school traffic.

Ms. Vanderslice inquired why it's necessary to approve the entire requested amount now, when in 8 weeks it may not be needed. One possibility is to approve \$90,000 now to cover the initial part then decide whether or not to continue. This option would force a timetable to ensure things happen quickly. Mr. Brennan responded the bid was based on entire contract documents, full length of the sewer project and it would be easy to stop and pay only what is needed. Ms. Vanderslice asked if the contractor is aware we may need to terminate part of the agreement and / or is there any liability if we stop. Mr. Brennan answered no, they don't know we may change the contract and once the contract is signed he will tell them there may be a change. The question was asked if there is a penalty clause in the contract and how do we get out if needed. Mr. Brennan said there is nothing in place that says a financial penalty may / may not occur if there is a change. Ms. Lavielle said it was important to get the negotiations finished with the contractor before signing the contract.

Mr. Alper stated he was not in favor to just lay the conduit but he is in favor if we can stop the project as needed as next years' taxes will be difficult. Mr. Pforzheimer is in favor of just going ahead with laying the conduit. Ms. Vanderslice is concerned about the 8- week decision point and would approve only the 1<sup>st</sup> part of the expense.

Mr. Brennan responded by saying the sewer project is approved. There are time elements and schools involved so it needs to get started. If we delay then the entire project could be delayed. He wants the ability to proceed with the already approved project.

Ms. Lavielle said given the contents of the 3<sup>rd</sup> party report are unknown at this time, proceeding now is speculation . Time will be needed to digest the report and if stopping the project needs to be negotiated we don't know that yet. She is uncomfortable appropriating all the funds now and would rather stay neutral until the facts are known.

Mr. Pforzheimer believes there are good reasons to do the project and appropriate the funds now.

Mr. Alper believes it is not responsible to make a decision now, although he is comfortable with the \$235,179 amount if it's needed.

Greg Van Deusen commented the cost would be an additional \$250,000 if we waited 5 years as digging the trench is the most expensive part of the project.

A Motion was made by Andy Pforzheimer to approve \$235,179 taken from the Charter Authority to provide for redundant conduit to be laid down while the sewer project takes place and the roads are opened. The Motion was seconded by Jim Meinhold and approved 5-1. Ms. Vanderslice cast the dissenting vote.

### **STEAP Grant Application:**

Wilton has the ability to apply for a Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP) Grant associated with the 3.4-4 miles of resurfacing local roadways and finishing the sewer project. This project will create economic activity for contractors who work on the job. Infrastructure improvement qualifies as helping with economic activity.

Mr. Meinhold asked if we don't get the grant will the paving still take place and the answer is yes.

A Motion was made by Al Alper to approve the STEAP Grant application in connection with the 3.5-4 miles of local roadways to be resurfaced. The Motion was seconded by Gail Lavielle and approved unanimously.

### **Committee Reports:**

None

### **Other Business:**

Ms. Vanderslice asked about the recent fundraising solicitation efforts to turf the Middlebrook field. She asked if there was any background information or if the town had been approached. There is no information yet and the thinking is the funds will need to be raised before coming to the town.

Mr. Alper commented on the Wilton Library now allowing people to charge their electric cars and cell phones for free. He pointed out it's the taxpayers paying 75% of that electric bill and he hopes the ongoing work to establish guidelines for Public Private Partnerships will address this issue.

### **Public Participation:**

None

### **Adjournment:**

The meeting was officially adjourned at 8:40 pm

Respectfully Submitted,  
Amy Roberts  
Recording Secretary