

RTM Finance & Budget Regularly Scheduled Meeting Minutes - January 13, 2014

Present -J. Palen, T. Duffy, D. Ritchie, M. Banks, K. Hoffman, S. Anderson, B. Ball, B. Hayes, G. DuPont, J. Davis, R. Cardone.

Absent- J. Boulton, Anita Rycenga

Guests:

First Selectwoman- Jayme Stevenson, Selectwoman - Susan Marks.

Board of Education Chairwoman - Betsy Haggerty- Ross, Vice Chairwoman - Heather Shea, and Katie Stein.

Darien Athletic Foundation members - Peter Graham, Jennifer Montanaro, Mark Maybell.

RTM Moderator Sara Seelye.

Town Counsel- Wayne Fox and Edmund Schmidt.

- The room location for the meeting was changed just prior to the start of the meeting from room 213 to room 209 to accommodate the number of those attending.
- With a quorum of 10 of 15 members present the meeting was called to order by Chariman J. Palen at 7:34 p.m.
- Chairman Palen read the agenda for the meeting.
- A motion was made to accept the agenda as distributed and was approved unanimously.
- Shortly after the minutes were approved 3 additional members arrived bringing those in attendance to 13 of 15 committee members.

Chairman Palen read the resolution 14.1.1 for the Authorizing Acceptance Of A Gift worth \$500,000 From The Darien Athletic Foundation For A Concession Stand At Darien High School. It should be noted the resolution did not have the actual resolution number when presented. A motion to move the resolution and have discussion was made by S. Anderson and seconded by D. Ritchie.

Peter Graham from the DAF gave a presentation which included a display of the proposed concession stand. The proposed stand would not have a kitchen but would be "fitted for future" in case this was desired down the road. Following the presentation there was a discussion.

- There was question regarding the cost of future maintenance. It was explained that the DAF gift included monies to cover future maintenance costs. There would also be nominal fees charged to groups using the facility to offset costs.
- A question arose on vendor usage. The concession stand will be used by various student groups as a means for fundraising and not a specific vendor.
- There was a question regarding liability while construction was taking place and this will be covered by DAF during the construction phase.
- A question on any future kitchen setup requirements. This would require permitting which would have to come the various town boards.
- A motion to vote was called and the resolution passed unanimously with 13 in favor, 0 opposed, no abstentions.

Chairman Palen thanked the DAF for their very generous gift to the Board of Education.

Chairman Palen then read resolution 14.1.2 Authorizing The Acquisition Of The Property Known As 4 Short Lane. It should be noted the resolution presented did not have the resolution number on it. A motion was made to move the resolution by J. Davis and seconded by T. Duffy. A discussion followed.

- A few committee members expressed concerns there was not a clear plan as to what the acquisition would be used for. Many felt there was a clear benefit to the land acquisition but would like to see the use having more defined plans and future potential costs presented along with the resolution. It was noted the property is on the town's master plan for potential desirable land acquisition. The Park and Recreation Commission, who would be the primary steward for the future plans of the property, provided a memo outlining various ways that the property could be used
- Discussion surrounding the appraisal price of \$1,400,000 appraisal of the property conducted by KFValuation in August 2013, the \$1,589,000 valuation of the property subsequently conducted as part of the 2013 assessment revaluation and the contract price of \$1,750,00 was held. The KFValuation appraisal was done prior to 2 houses selling in the area which sold at a higher appraisal rates which would have likely increased the appraisal rate used in the report. Although not reflected in the appraisal, the valuation, was also likely increased as a result of, a single owner purchasing the land which already own adjoining property. The town of Darien already owns the surrounding land. There were also other potential bidders interested in purchasing the property. The original asking price was noted as \$2,100,000.
- The town would waive its rights to be a member of the Noroton Bay Association.
- The underground oil tank on site was removed and the site was given a clean approval from the fire department with no environmental hazards existing.
- There were no known complaints from neighbors regarding the acquisition.
- There will not be any grants applied for by the town. It was also explained the town could not substitute grants it had previously made for the Hecker property.
- Tax revenues being forfeited from the property were estimated to be \$12,700
- per year.
- A motion was made by J. Davis to vote and seconded by R. Cardone.

The resolution passed with 8 in favor (Palen, Duffy, Ritchie, Ball, Hayes, Dupont, Davis, Millar) and 4 against (Banks, Anderson, Hoffman, Cardone), Marc Thorne had to leave during discussion and was not present to vote, no abstentions..

Chairman Palen then read resolution 14.1.3 Appropriating \$1,925,000 for the Purchase Of Real Property Located At 4 Short Lane And The Issuance of Bonds and Notes In The Amount of \$1,925,000 To Meet Said Appropriation. It should be noted the resolution presented did not have a resolution number on it.

- A motion was made to move the resolution by R. Cardone and seconded by D. Ritchie.
- A discussion followed on the topic of funding the acquisition of 4 Short Lane from the general town fund account or from the issuance of bonds. It was noted the Board of

Finance ultimately determines how it will fund the acquisition of the property. The F&B committee was voting on the appropriation for the ability to issue bonds up to the \$1,925,000 amount.

A motion was made to vote on the resolution and it passed with 8 in favor (Palen, Duffy, Ritchie, Ball, Hayes, Dupont, Davis, Millar) and 4 opposed (Banks, Anderson, Hoffman, Cardone), no abstentions

J. Davis and R Cardone gave a brief overview of the upcoming budget meetings for the Board of Education as well as the Selectman.

A motion to adjourn was made by D. Ritchie and seconded by S. Anderson. The meeting was called to a close at 8:36 p.m.