

EAST HAVEN TOWN COUNCIL
PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 2016

Stacy Gravano, CTC
TOWN CLERK

In accordance with Chapter III, Section 6 of the East Haven Town Charter, the East Haven Town Council Hearing Committee held a public hearing meeting Tuesday, September 6, 2016, at 7:00PM at the East Haven Senior Center, 91 Taylor Avenue, East Haven, CT 06512.

Chairman Fred Parlato calls the public hearing to order at 7:00PM.

Item #1

Roll Call for Hearing Committee – 12 present – 3 absent (Santino, Depalma and Spaduzzi).

A quorum is present.

Item #2

To conduct Public Hearing #1 regarding "An Ordinance making appropriations for various public improvements aggregating \$2,450,000 for the 2016-2017 Capital Budget and authorizing the issuance of \$2,450,000 bonds of the Town to meet said appropriations and pending the issuance thereof the making of temporary borrowings for such purpose."

Council comment:

- Councilman Richard Anania seeks clarification, the ordinance is for approximately \$2,000,000 and the paper they received tonight is different it's approximately \$6,000,000.
- Chairman Parlato says the \$6,000,000 is the total amount requested and the Ordinance shows the actual. What happens is the requests go to the Mayor, Finance Director and Board of Finance and then the Council.
- Councilman Nicholas Palladino asks about the \$90,000 for Town wide HVAC and then a separate \$130,000 for HVAC at the Police Department. He says the PD is part of the Town, right?
- Finance Director Paul Rizza addresses the Council and says he did have request from a few Council members to see what was requested which is what they received in addition to the actual Ordinance which is what they would be borrowing- \$2,450,000. As to his question, there were two requests; one from Public Services which is what is considered "Town wide" to all buildings and the Police Department put a request for new HVAC systems within the Police Department specifically. Is the Police Department part of the Town, yes, but the

Police Department put their own request in for their own building. No matter what, it will have to be bid.

- Councilman Palladino says their request then is to get the HVAC system in the Police Department to where it is supposed to be and the \$90,000 is for all other buildings. His other question is that he sees bonding for police vehicles again like they did a couple years ago. He asks if this is the best way or should they start budgeting for these instead of bonding.
- Mr. Rizza says he thinks once they get to a position where they have a 5% fund balance they will be putting those numbers into the general fund operations.
- Councilman Palladino asks what he anticipates; will that be 2 years, 4 years?
- Mr. Rizza says he may not be here in 4 years and in his mind he will still be here when they hit the 5%. In the past they have bought cars out of the general fund, which was back 10-15 years ago and they do use cars for 5-8 years. He saw one today that was still being used with over 100,000 miles on it and it runs pretty well.
- Chairman Parlato explains that he has had conversations with Paul about some of the things they are bonding for and Paul has to give him the pros and cons of the situation he would like to see which is having a separate line item, such as when they had to bond for the chillers and didn't know exactly what it would cost, it didn't come out anywhere near the amount allocated so they took those funds to use for other things. Police cars, blinds and things that don't have a 5 year use he has a different idea of how it should be handled; he doesn't think it is doing the taxpayers a favor by giving a tax break and then bonding for 20 years; if we have the money now we should take care of it and not pay interest on it. They have bonded for lawn mowers because of all the grass being cut every week those wear out faster. When it comes to durable goods he would rather not bond for and have the Council, at the recommendation of the Finance Director and the Administration, keep track of this line item when there are things that someone needs and they can get them. He will wait to see what Paul says as to whether it is something they can do and he will make the Council aware before any action or direction is taken on it. They are getting to a point where the fund balance is where it should be and with Paul's initiatives and plan this coming year is looking to be a very good one along with Mr. Brancati bringing in businesses to add to the grand list. This is just his concept, nothing has been agreed to yet.
- Councilwoman Linda Hennessey says looking at the vehicles line item, how long do they last, what is their life span? Also looking at small items like the blinds, she agrees and doesn't think they should be bonding 20 years out for the small things.
- Councilwoman Lettizia Lettieri-Morales says that is what she was going to say, Police cars and blinds she feels will cost more in the long run this way.

- Chairman Parlato says years ago the Board of Education used to bond for VCRs and things like that. In a way, it's not really showing what it costs to run a Town for a year. Some of the things they are delaying the cost of this way. State wide, we are in a real advantage being 1 of the few Towns that had a surplus two years in a row. We are on the right track but are we delaying some of the big ticket items so that is something they need to look at; he would rather have the money to go out and buy something than have to bond for it because it was politically correct at the time but not financially astute.
- Councilman Palladino says he thinks that is what they did two years ago, they did what was politically correct and they had the money for the police cars and didn't buy them. In knowing how police cars last after driving them for 28 years, they are ready for the junkyard and we are still paying for them. He agrees they need to find a better way. Another question is with Hemingway Ave, isn't that a State road? We have to contribute to raise a state road, at what %?
- Sal Brancati, Director of Administration & Management explains that they put in a grant application 1.5 yrs. ago which is being run through DOH out of the Sandy relief money. They determined that the raising of the intersection of Coe/Hemingway by 2 ft. would eliminate the disaster of not being able to get an emergency vehicle down to the beach. The total amount submitted in the grant application is \$1,655,000; our share is \$415,000. In the last budget they spent \$100,000 on design and architecture. The match from the State is \$1,241,000 and our \$415,000 contribution gives the total \$1,655,000. The designs are just about complete and will be reviewed by DOH and then they will go out to bid; Kevin White is reviewing them now. Last year the Town spent \$100,000 and this year will spend about \$340,000 for some odds and ends that go above the \$415,000. The Town will then meet their obligations to draw down the \$1,241,000 to complete the improvements for Coe/Hemingway.
- Councilman Anania says last year in the capital improvements they put in for North High Street, sidewalks/bike lane. Did that go forward?
- Mr. Brancati says the Town did not put any money in, they applied for a grant through the State, and the State wanted the Town to do sidewalks and a bicycle path. The Town told the State they didn't want the money if they had to do a bike path because it is unsafe, the road is not wide enough, cars travel too fast and there wasn't enough room for both. If the State plan went through, the Town would be in the homeowner's living rooms because the State already owns 15 ft. from the curb line in, which most people were unaware of; they have now made them aware through this application. There are also sprinkler systems on people's front lawns within the 15 feet owned by the State which now have to be moved. The Town puts no money into that; it is a \$1,500,000 grant from the State through DOH. He has been meeting with the residents of North High Street over the last few weeks and showing them their properties and that no property is being taken from them, everything is being done within the 15 ft. right

of way that the State owns. He has letters signed off on by residents now. The Town did ask for an easement because of some of the equipment which may be on front lawns which would be repaired once the work/construction is done.

- Councilman Anania says didn't they bond for \$20,000 or so for a study?
- Mr. Brancati explains that they actually put in \$90,000 for the preliminary design in order to qualify for the \$1,500,000 two years ago. They hired CDM Smith as the engineering firm to do the design to show the State that it would work and fit within the 15 ft. right of way. They Town told the State that if they had to build a bike path, they don't want the money because it is unsafe for the bicyclists, and people walking on the street. The State finally relented and agreed to give money just for the sidewalks. The sidewalks run from the Kimberly Ave Bridge to Rt. 80 on one side.
- Chairman Parlato asks when the sidewalks are put in if the homeowners are responsible for shoveling the sidewalks.
- Mr. Brancati says they are and it wasn't a popular thing because there's also the possibility of someone who lives on North High Street shoveling their sidewalks and then the State truck comes by and puts the snow back on the sidewalk; and the Town has an Ordinance that sidewalks must be shoveled within 24 hours or there are fines. In reality, they will be responsible for the maintenance.
- Councilman Ken McKay asks if Hudson Street is coming into the plans for the sidewalks, will they go down to the Middle School. Because the kids from the center walk to the Middle School.
- Mr. Brancati says no, the Town would have to pay for them. It would not be included in the State grant, that is only for the State road.
- Councilwoman Susan Archambault asks how long this would take.
- Mr. Brancati says they are planning on doing it in three phases according to the design.

Public comment:

- Donna Richo-67 Charnes Drive, East Haven, CT- Ms. Richo says the Council basically addressed her concerns, a lot of this stuff is maintenance and there should be line items within the budget; they shouldn't be bonding for general maintenance. She understands with the cars as they need them but it should all be part of a realistic budget.
- Jeffrey Lendroth- 320 Tyler Street-Mr. Lendroth says he didn't realize this was a budgetary meeting but he wants to know how to go about the fact that the basketball courts at Overbrook have grass growing; the courts and playgrounds around Town have become horrible.
- Chairman Parlato explains if it is the Board of Education's property he should go before the Board as they maintain it. The Public Works Department cuts the grass. As far as improvements go, there needs to be a request sent to the

Administration via the Mayor and it would go to the Board of Finance. The Board of Education has a separate budget as a separate entity and as soon as their budget is approved, the Council has no control over what they do. If things need to be done and he doesn't get recognition from the Board of Education, he can contact the three representatives on the Council from his district who can address the Chair and the Vice Chair and they will try to get it rectified. He says that he was up in arms about the A/C running at Tuttle School three days a week and nobody is in the building so he spoke to the Chairman of the Board of Education to express his concerns. He explains that is Board of Education property, the Town cuts the grass/maintains it so if it is something Mr. Parente's group can take care of they will but if it is maintenance the Board of Education would be the one to take care of it.

Item #3

Adjournment of Public Hearing #1

Councilman Anania makes a motion.

Councilwoman Lettieri-Morales seconds the motion.

Voice vote: all in favor-none oppose-none abstain. Motion carries.

Item #4

Hearing Committee report to the full Town Council and recommendation of action on Public Hearing #1.

Councilman Parente makes a motion.

Councilman McKay seconds the motion.

Roll call vote: all in favor-none oppose-none abstain. Motion carries.

Item #5

Adjournment of Hearing Committee.

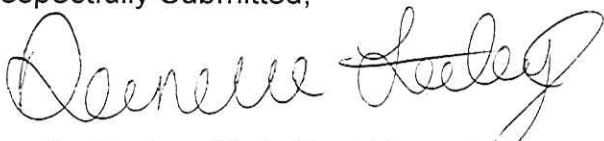
Councilman Richardson makes a motion.

Councilman Butler III seconds the motion.

Voice vote: all in favor-none oppose-none abstain. Motion carries.

Meeting is adjourned at 7:38PM.

Respectfully Submitted,



Danelle Feeley, Clerk, East Haven Legislative Town Council

