

**GLASTONBURY TOWN COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY, JANUARY 23, 2020**

The Glastonbury Town Council with Town Manager, Richard J. Johnson, in attendance, held a Special Meeting at 6:00 p.m. at the Activity Room A and B, Riverfront Community Center, 300 Welles Street, Glastonbury, Connecticut. Also in attendance were Members of the Boards of Education and Finance, as well as department heads of town and education staff.

1. Roll Call

Council Members

Mr. Thomas P. Gullotta, Chairman
Mr. Lawrence Niland, Vice Chairman
Dr. Stewart Beckett III
Ms. Deborah A. Carroll
Mr. Kurt P. Cavanaugh
Ms. Mary LaChance
Mr. Jacob McChesney
Mr. Whit C. Osgood {excused}
Ms. Lillian Tanski

- (a) **Pledge of Allegiance.** *Led by Chairman Tom Gullotta*
2. **Public Communication and Petitions pertaining to the Call.** *None*
3. **Special Business as contained in the Call.**
- (a) **Annual Capital Improvement Program budget presentation and discussion.**

Mr. Johnson reviewed slides with an overview of the annual capital improvement program, emphasizing that maintaining infrastructure and ongoing projects represent roughly 91% of the budget with new programs representing 9%. In regard to the road overlay budget, Mr. Cavanaugh noted that the road overlay program has halved from 20 years and asked if there were options to buy different materials. Mr. Dan Pennington, Town Engineer/Manager of Physical Services, explained that the Town uses state bid contracts for the actual placement of the asphalts, which gives them economies of scale and the benefits of the state DOT resources. He explained that the material is not lasting as long as it once did because of a chemical issue affecting the elasticity, which is a disturbing development but there is no viable alternative to it at this time.

Mr. Johnson explained that this is the second year of the sidewalk maintenance allocation. Chairman Gullotta noted that as the Town continues to build sidewalks, the maintenance cost will continue to

incline. He asked if there were a way to have public versus private sidewalks because this is an escalating expense that does not need to be escalated. Mr. Johnson stated that the two are separate, but he can look into it. Mr. Niland asked what the average life expectancy is of the mower. Mr. Pennington replied about 12-15 years. Dr. Beckett suggesting trading in the tractor. Mr. Johnson replied that sometimes, the trade-in value is not as cost-efficient as selling it. Mr. Johnson continued discussing projects related to safety by reviewing the Town Center Streetscapes Improvements, explaining that the thought is to replace and reconstruct so that there are no slip and fall issues. Mr. McChesney asked if they will have to dig up the brick rework that was just done there. Mr. Johnson said no.

Police Chief Marshall Porter spoke about the need to upgrade their equipment, such as the mobile radios on vehicles. He explained that they have been collecting parts from other agencies, but their vendor advised them to upgrade. They are comfortable with a 3 to 4-year funding period to get them where they need to be. Vice Chairman Niland stated that they are about 13 or 14 years into this project, though it is a 20-year bond. Chief Porter replied that they are at the mercy of vendors when it comes to their planned obsolescence. Mr. Johnson added that, had they known 15 years ago what they know now, they probably would have issued a 10-year bond, rather than 20 years. He explained that, should they move forward and fund this, they do not expect to bond. Mr. Beckett asked if there is an opportunity to do a bulk purchasing to save money. Chief Porter said no, because everyone is on a different timed schedule so other towns cannot synch up.

Fire Chief Michael Thurz explained that they are required to replace the SCBA cylinders, which have a 15-year life expectancy. He noted that he received a grant 15 years ago, and he has been writing a new one for FEMA, which is very competitive. 30 of the cylinders have already been replaced, and by December 2020, they will need to replace the remaining 120 of their 150 air cylinders. Mr. McChesney asked if they, potentially, have 100% funding. Chief Thurz stated that if they receive the grant, then the cost will only be 10% of that grant; if not, they will have to spend all of the \$120,000. Ms. Tanski asked if the frameworks, which were part of the original grant, would also need to be replaced. Chief Thurz said yes, at some point.

Chief Thurz reviewed the renovation work they began at stations 1 and 2 of the GHS field house to update the buildings, such as accounting for female personnel on the signage and adding handicap access. The GHS lockers will also be replaced, with construction to begin in 2021. Dr. Alan Bookman, Superintendent, stated that the timing is very important. They are looking at starting the project in the spring of 2021 because the facility is most used in the fall. He noted that the renovations will address all Title 9 issues, such as ADA accessibility. Dr. Beckett suggested bonding as a better way to finance this than cash. Chairman Gullotta stated that that is a rhetorical question. Mr. Cavanaugh stated that if they explain the option to the public, he does not think it will be an issue. Ms. Tanski remarked that they are already about halfway in (\$1 million), so extending this process with a referendum, at this point, seems unnecessary. Mr. Cavanaugh asked about the design. Mr. Johnson stated that the design is all encumbered.

Mr. Johnson reviewed the moisture mitigation issue at the SMS gymnasium floor. Mr. Doug Foyle, Education Chairman, explained that there were a variety of reasons which they suspect led to a moisture issue. There was a 15-year warranty, but it did not hold up and the company that supplied

the material is no longer in business. Chairman Gullotta stated that the town has to do a better job of contracting companies and holding them accountable. Mr. Cavanaugh stated it sounds like they want to replace the floor without knowing the cause of the problem. Dr. Bookman assured that they are not going to put down the same thing without determining the cause of the issue first. However, he explained, they also cannot just leave the floors open to lawsuits. Mr. Johnson added that this is the analysis, and these are the recommendations for how to go forward.

Mr. Johnson then discussed tree management, which is budgeted to cost about \$125,000. Mr. Cavanaugh inquired about the process for reporting a tree for removal. Ms. Lisa Zerio, Director of Parks and Recreation, explained the three different ways in which someone from the public can report on a tree. Mr. Cavanaugh asked who they work with. Ms. Zerio replied, they contract out to 3 or 4 companies, and it is by bid. Mr. Johnson reviewed the Addison Park renovations, noting that it is hard to believe that the pool will enter its 26th year of operation this summer and this is the first year of a series of improvements. He noted that the \$225,000 budgeted for the project includes \$120,000 for the turf mower and \$25,000 for the Winter Hill farm. While the town receives rental income from the farm, there are horizontal cracks in the foundation, so they need structural engineers to take a look at it. Mr. McChesney asked if this is part of the crumbling foundations. Mr. Johnson stated that their structural engineer said no, but they do not know what the solution is right now.

Mr. Pennington reviewed the Main Street sidewalks project, explaining that they have run into some delays. They looked at different types of wall designs to find a solution for the slope issues near Old Cider Mill, and the neighbors are presumably in agreement with the new design. He explained that they looked into options that would eliminate the wall by shifting the entire road to the east but found geometric design constraints. Mr. Johnson discussed the new sidewalk construction, which is projected at \$175,000. He explained that they looked at two possible areas: Eastern Boulevard, which would complete the multi-use trail, and Spring Street. If either one of those two options were selected, they would fund it.

Mr. Johnson also touched on energy efficiency and sustainability upgrades, noting that the Eversource funding is ending, so it will cost about \$50,000. He then discussed the ramp configuration on New London Turnpike; the roundabout, which they have the funds to construct, should mitigate traffic concerns and delays. Finance Member Walter Cusson asked if the Town has any financial implications. Mr. Johnson said no, not if they do their project as proposed. Finance Member James Zeller pointed out that the state has pieces of land for sale on the turnpike so, given the opportunity, the Council should consider making a purchase. Chairman Gullotta expressed interest in seeing a proposal from the Police Department and the Town Manager on how to calm traffic because those residential streets will be used more and more.

Mr. Johnson continued his presentation with a review of the various new projects and proposals of the town, including \$500,000 for a splash pad at Addison Park. Ms. Lisa Zerio, Director of Parks and Recreation, explained that a child with special needs cannot get to all of the activities offered, and having a splash pad is a safe opportunity for children and teens. The intention is to keep the aging pool but design it in such a way so that more features could be added in the future. Mr. McChesney asked about the logic behind putting the splash pad next to the pool versus in one of the parks. Ms. Zerio explained that if they were to put it in a regular park, the water would go out to waste. Since

redirecting it is costly, this option is the most sustainable. Chairman Gullotta noted that, typically, when there is a splash area, younger children do not go to the wading pool.

Mr. Johnson discussed the Bulky Waste Closure Fund, noting that while closure funds are relatively common, the \$50,000 price tag he listed is a placeholder. Mike Bisi, Superintendent of Sanitation, explained that the facility opened in 1977, and the volume depends on the economy. They looked at two options: either a complete closure at one time (which they do not recommend), or dividing it up into 3 sections, with the first area closing in about 10 years.

Mr. Johnson stated that they allocated \$40,000 to put the oldest part of the Williams Memorial academy building back into meaningful public use. Chairman Gullotta remarked that there was a great article on the history of the building in last week's Glastonbury Citizen. He suggested that, through a public-private partnership, they turn the space into a lyceum, which would also ease the issue of public hearing space in the Town Hall. Mr. Johnson stated that, over the years, they have upgraded some of their facilities with Wi-Fi connection, so that they could operate some of their systems remotely, accept credit cards, etc. The \$50,000 allocation in the budget would allow the town to link a few more facilities.

Ms. Tanski asked to speak to the different types of roofing materials that have been used at the school and their life expectancies. Dr. Bookman explained that there are districts that replace their roofs after 20 years and get reimbursed, and in Glastonbury, they are hoping to extend theirs for up to 40 years by extending and maintaining, not replacing, them. Mr. Johnson went through a breakdown of the numbers discussed during his presentation, noting that he is not recommending a change in the Capital Reserve Fund Transfer this year. Mr. Johnson completed and summarized the presentation.

4. Adjournment.

With no further comments, Chairman Gullotta closed the meeting at 8:33 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Lilly Torosyan

**Lilly Torosyan
Recording Clerk**

**Thomas Gullotta
Chairman**