

**ENFIELD TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF A SPECIAL MEETING
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2021**

A Special Meeting of the Enfield Town Council was called to order by Chairman Ludwick on Monday, September 20, 2021. The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m.

ROLL-CALL – Present were Councilor Cekala, Cressotti, Hemmeler, Ludwick, Mangini, Muller, Riley, Sferrazza, and Unghire. Councilors Bosco and Szewczak were absent. Also present were Town Manager, Christopher Bromson; Assistant Town Manager, Kasia Purciello; Town Clerk, Sheila Bailey; Town Attorney, James Tallberg

MOTION #5924 by Councilor Mangini seconded by Councilor Muller to go into Executive Session to discuss Real Estate Negotiations and Pending Claims and Litigation.

Upon a **SHOW-OF-HANDS** vote being taken, the Chair declared **MOTION #5924** adopted 9-0-0.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Executive Session of the Enfield Town Council was called to order by Chairman Ludwick at 5:31: p.m.

ROLL-CALL - Present were Councilors Cekala, Cressotti, Hemmeler, Ludwick, Mangini, Muller, Riley, Sferrazza, and Unghire. Also present were Town Manager, Christopher Bromson; Assistant Town Manager, Kasia Purciello; Town Clerk, Sheila Bailey; Town Attorney, James Tallberg; Director of Human Resources, Steven Bielenda; Director of Finance, John Wilcox, and School Superintendent, Christopher Drezek.

Chairman Ludwick reconvened the Special Meeting at 6:04 p.m. and stated during Executive Session the Council discussed Real Estate Negotiations and Pending Claims and Litigation with no action or votes being taken.

JFK BUILDING COMMITTEE PRESENTATION

Present for this item were Chairman of the JFK Building Committee, Randy Daigle; Jill Lekse, Construction Administrator for JCJ Architecture; Marcus Brennan, Project Executive with Gilbane, and Samantha D'Agostino, Assistant Project Manager, Construction Solutions Group

Ms. D'Agostino stated the total project budget is a little over \$84 million dollars. She noted ineligible costs are around \$450,000, which means those costs that are not reimbursable by the State. She pointed out that means a remainder of eligible costs that will be reimbursed by the State of a little over \$83 million dollars. She noted eligible costs are reimbursed at a rate of 70.71%. She stated to date, they've been reimbursed a little over \$22 million dollars to put towards the project.

Mr. Daigle stated they currently have a little over \$7 million into the State for reimbursement, which the Town should be getting within the next several weeks, therefore, it will then be close to \$29 million dollars reimbursed by the State.

Mr. Daigle stated they are a little over halfway through the project at this time, and they are several million dollars under budget and ahead of schedule.

He noted when this was first put out to bid, it was pre-pandemic, and since then building costs have sky-rocketed, however, they were able to lock the price in and start off the project under budget, and they are maintaining the project under budget. He stated when the architect, the owner's rep and Gilbane put out the trade bid packages, they pulled some of them as an alternate. He explained they did not know at that time where the costs were going to come in as to whether it was going to be under budget or on budget. He stated luckily it came in under budget, so they were able to put back in all those alternates.

Illustrative slides were presented and highlighted as follows:

- The entire building footprint has a new roof, except for the old media center wing.
- The entire north lot has a new parking lot.
- The fields in the back are roughly graded at this point and over the coming weeks will be hydroseeded and growing grass over the fall season.
- The balance of the work on the south lot will take place next summer.
- One of the two-story wings is currently under construction.
- The center hub is partially under construction.
- The gymnasium is under construction, and that will be done in October.

Mr. Daigle stated the new auditorium, cafeteria and gymnasium can be locked down from the rest of the school for evening functions, which keeps the rest of the school secure.

- The temporary classrooms no longer exist.
- There are new basketball courts.
- There will be a new baseball diamond.
- All fields will be irrigated.
- Instead of steel or concrete bollards in front of entrance areas, there will be boulders, which provide a more natural look.
- The 600-seat auditorium is nearly complete, and that space will be turned over soon.

Mr. Daigle explained water recently entered the building due to a microburst, and this happened because that part of the roof only had a temporary roof. He noted this issue has been rectified. He pointed out every project will have issues, but they did not miss a beat or a single day.

- LVT (luxury vinyl tile) flooring is being used, and it is a very low maintenance floor.
- Furniture has been installed in all the turn-over areas.

- The ceiling system has an open grid in the band room with an acoustical treatment, and this helps with sound.
- The old boys' locker room is now the kitchen servery, and this area has been turned over and is up and running.
- The old pool is now the new cafeteria, and there is also spill-over or extended cafeteria space.
- Near the cafeteria is a cardio room, which has treadmills, ellipticals and equipment that can be used for gym classes.
- The gymnasium floor has been completely laid and fastened down, and gym equipment is currently being installed, and they will be working to complete the gym floor over the coming weeks.
- There are brand new locker rooms and bathrooms, which are located right off the gymnasium.
- The white wing, which is a two-story wing, was completed over the summer.
- New desks are adjustable in height.
- The entire building is air-conditioned.
- Red wing is the last two-story wing under construction, and demolition and abatement is complete.

Mr. Daigle stated when they started designing this building, they understood that they had to keep this building open. He noted they were able to utilize the construction pattern by having some wings under construction, while students are in the other wings.

He concluded stating the entire building will be brand new.

Councilor Sferrazza stated it is a beautiful building, and he thanked everyone for all their work. He questioned if the classroom doors are equipped with locks that lock from the inside, and he was informed that all the classroom doors are lockable.

Mr. Daigle stated every door and exterior window is numbered, and the fire and police departments will have a map with these numbered doors and windows.

Councilor Cressotti stated he is very impressed with this project, and the progress is fantastic. He referred to the media center and questioned if the roof will be re-done, and Mr. Daigle stated the roof is still under warrantee and in good shape. He noted if anything were to fail, they could go back at that time.

Councilor Unghire questioned the projected completion date, and Mr. Brennan stated the intent is to wrap up major construction by the end of next summer.

Councilor Riley stated she is very impressed with this project and excited her children will have the opportunity to attend this school next year. She questioned if the outdoor classroom will be covered, and Mr. Daigle stated his belief the intent is not to cover it. He added at some point it could be covered. He pointed out it is not a dedicated classroom, but rather an extra classroom so that teachers will coordinate who can use it and when it can be used. He went on to note there is

also outdoor seating for the cafeteria, and this will be a secured and fenced area, which can be used in nice weather.

Councilor Riley questioned if all the entrances have the boulders, and Mr. Daigle stated there are some doors that have bollards, i.e., under the canopies of blue, white, and red wings because it made sense traffic-wise.

Chairman Ludwick stated he believes the hub is the biggest thing because it is a place where students can interact and converse with other students. He went on to note he liked the idea of the boulders because it gives the area a campus feel. He noted the basketball courts look great, and people are already using them. He questioned if they'll be ready for any sports this fall or next spring, and Mr. Daigle estimated they'll be ready next fall. He went on to note that there will be lighting for the courts. Chairman Ludwick stated it's great that irrigation has been included.

Mr. Daigle stated this was a team effort from the beginning, and they are reaping the benefits from cost-wise, to quality-wise to design-wise.

Chairman Ludwick questioned the status of the boilers, and Mr. Daigle stated everything is brand new.

Mr. Daigle thanked everyone for their support.

AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN PRESENTATION

Mr. Bromson stated staff has been working over the last several months to make a recommendation as to how to spend Enfield's share of the American Rescue Plan funding. He noted this presentation will be a preliminary introduction, and the Council will have time to consider this. He noted they are still awaiting the federal government to adopt some final rules for the final expenditure of these funds. He stated they have been working with Congressman Courtney's office and attending State and CRCOG meetings to get some guidance.

He highlighted the criteria for eligible use of funding, i.e., to support public health expenditures, address negative economic impacts from the emergency, replace public sector revenue, provide premium pay for essential employees, invest in water and sewer infrastructure, and invest in broadband infrastructure. He pointed out these are the areas that the government says they can expend these funds.

Mr. Bromson stated Enfield will be receiving \$12,920,906, and in June they received the first half, which is almost \$6.5 million dollars, and that is in the bank in a separate designated fund, and the balance should be received in 2022.

He stated Enfield has until December 31, 2024 to encumber the funds, and they would have until December 31, 2026 to make the expenditures.

Mr. Bromson highlighted the recommendations for this funding:

- The purchase of the Enfield Express for drive-thru Town services and a police hub at the Enfield Express for \$725,000
- The Town has already encumbered and started to implement the Higgins Park. The Town put in the playscape this summer, and the Town funded the two walking trails, plus an outdoor basketball court, and these are all funded already and underway. He noted this area is adjacent to the St. Adalbert's indoor basketball and sports facility, which the Town already funded as well. He noted that will be on the agenda in October for the signing of the lease and to actually purchase it and make improvements. He stated some things were done out of the budget, and some things were done in the budget, and they're expending some money from the ARA funds.
- He noted they will have parking for the Higgins Park, and this area is behind the Enfield Express at a cost of \$425,000
- Fitness stations at the already funded walkways
- A bandshell, which would be in the Higgins Park

Mr. Bromson stated these items were put in the Recreation Referendum, but if the voters decided not to go forward on the splashpads and the pool, the Town would still have this money available to complete those portions of the park. He pointed out if the referendum passes, it will free up this money for other purposes, which could be decided later.

- Pickleball lighting at the pickleball court at a cost of \$57,500.
- Field improvements, i.e., a new girls' softball field to replace what was taken away behind Town Hall for the Higgins Park, and that will be constructed in the spring, and that was almost three quarters of a million dollars
- Powder Hollow for boys' baseball-the Town funded improvements amounting to three quarters of a million dollars
- They authorized funding of almost a million dollars for a new turf field and track field at the high school.

Mr. Bromson stated these items were all bought and paid for. He noted they would like to appropriate \$1.5 million dollars for the general use of fields for all the Town's sporting programs. He noted they entered into discussions with the Superintendent of Schools, Public Works, Finance, and the Town Manager's office, and they started a new focus group concerning the other four athletic fields at Enfield High School, which they've been unable to use due to flooding. He explained the drainage is inadequate. He noted it was decided that rather than spending a million dollars appropriated for the fields, they believe they should look at the whole complex, so they included an additional \$1.5 million, and the Superintendent will match. He noted they would like to fix the drainage, and those four fields could be four or more, and they would like to do them in turf, and they could use them for all the different sports in town. He stated there are old trailers in that area, and they have an inadequate media box, and there are no bleachers for home games. He noted there would be a grand entryway with locker rooms and other facilities. He noted they should get the most for the money, and they want to invest that money appropriately. He feels this could be a sports complex that they can be proud of.

Mr. Bromson stated they've included a \$100,000 payment towards the bike path design, and this is the plan for which they received a \$925,000 state grant, which connects Thompsonville to

Windsor Locks and Suffield. He noted Enfield's share of the design is \$100,000, and he believes this is an appropriate use as well.

He stated they would like to include bathroom facilities at Brainard Park for \$378,000 and the same amount for the Powder Hollow Park.

Mr. Bromson stated they've included in the referendum bathrooms for the new pool area at Higgins Park, but if the referendum does not pass, they would like to have the bathrooms for the Farmers Market because the portable bathrooms are unsightly and sometimes unsanitary. He went on to note that the Town Hall bathrooms are antiquated, need repairs, and they constantly get complaints, and they included those bathrooms as well.

He stated they have looked at what other towns are doing, and basically this is an appropriate use of this funding because it is to support small businesses that have been impacted by Covid over the last couple years. He noted there would be a \$400,000 fund, and it's anticipated that Nelson Tereso and Community Development would oversee the funding. He stated they have criteria for this, and it will be for the Council's final approval. He noted this involves one-time grants for small businesses with under 50 employees, who have not received other large amounts of federal aid. He noted they could receive a one-time grant of \$5,000 to \$10,000. He noted they are recommending this under the use of the ARA.

Mr. Bromson stated Enfield purchased the seven acres adjacent to the existing Public Safety Complex, so that the Town could propose a regional public safety complex to house EMS, a Police Department, and a regional facility for training. He noted the Town was fortunate enough to have the Governor include that in his bonding bill this past winter. He stated they carefully articulated with the help of the bond counsel the question for the Public Safety Complex, and the total cost of the complex is going to be \$15.1 million dollars, and they hope to receive \$12.8 million dollars under the public act and the Governor's bond bill. He noted the balance would be \$2.3 million dollars, which they assessed for the regional portion of this, therefore, there would be no taxpayer dollars from Enfield expended on this project. He stated if they don't receive the bonding money from the Governor, they will not go forward. He noted they would not even have to borrow the \$2.3 million dollars if it was decided to designate \$2.3 million dollars of the ARA towards that, so they'd have a brand new state-of-the-art regional public safety complex with the expenditure of no Enfield tax dollars.

He stated the Town upgraded the Water Pollution Control facility, which is a state-of-the-art facility, and it will serve Enfield for many decades, but as part of that pump stations are needed throughout town. He noted they have been doing pay-as-you-go and saving. He stated Enfield has 17 pump stations, and currently they've saved \$4 million dollars that they have in the bank, and the total cost to replace and repair the existing pump stations is about \$13 million dollars. He stated they're recommending using ARA funding.

Mr. Bromson spoke about premium pay and noted the federal government made this designation for front line workers, such as police, EMS, and Public Works – those who worked on the front lines during Covid. He noted they designated \$750,000 in a fund, and the Council would determine

the criteria. He stated they would tell the Council who is eligible, and the Council could determine the amount, and that would remunerate them for their courageous service during Covid.

He stated Enfield has been given \$12,920,906 dollars, and they've allocated \$12,920,906. He noted they tried to address needs that otherwise they'd have to pay through the tax rate system of the town.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Ludwick declared the Special Town Council meeting adjourned at 6:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sheila M. Bailey
Town Clerk
Clerk of the Council

Jeannette Lamontagne
Secretary to the Council