

MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
SEPTEMBER 2, 2008 – 7:00 P.M.
LINCOLN CENTER HEARING ROOM
FIRST MEETING OF THE MONTH

PRESENT: Mayor Spadaccini, Deputy Mayor Peak, Secretary Pelletier, Directors Tweedie, Beckman, Zingler, O'Neill, Kissmann, and Farina

ALSO: General Manager Shanley and Town Attorney Naab

EXECUTIVE SESSION – 6:30 P.M.

The Board went into Executive Session at 6:30 p.m. for the discussion of Land Acquisition and returned at 6:50 p.m. Present were Mayor Spadaccini, Deputy Mayor Peak, Secretary Pelletier, Directors Tweedie, Zingler, O'Neill, Kissmann, and Farina, General Manager Shanley, Town Attorney Naab, and Director of Neighborhood Services and Economic Development Pellegrini. No votes were taken.

1. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. All in attendance participated in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, led by Mayor Spadaccini.

2. OPENING OF MEETING TO ELECTORS OR TAXPAYERS WHO WISH TO BE HEARD ON ANY SUBJECT WITHIN THE JURISDICTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS.

Joe Bernard, 28 Theresa Road, said Bentley School needs work but anything built new will be cheaply built. He advised the Board not to tear down the building but remodel it instead. He believes it will be a waste of money to tear it down. Mr. Bernard asked how many political parties exist; he is aware of the Republican, Democratic, and Independent parties. He has never heard of the Independent Democratic party and thinks Joe Lieberman should be thrown out of office. Mayor Spadaccini told Mr. Bernard that this is not the proper forum to discuss Mr. Lieberman.

Eileen Sweeney, 86 Hawthorne Street, said most Manchester citizens are not aware of the plan to demolish Bentley School. She requested a public forum including a presentation of budgetary and design materials and believes holding a public meeting to consider alternatives should become an established practice. Ms. Sweeney noted the upcoming ribbon cutting ceremony at Bennet School and pointed out that the Bennet building came very close to being demolished. Bentley can become another building to be proud of with some wise stewardship. She noted that the Town could apply for designations that can produce funding. Leaders of Manchester must embrace its historical and cultural resources. Ms. Sweeney is not in favor of relocating students

as young as eleven to Manchester High School. She stated that tax dollars have recently been invested in Bentley School in the form of a new boiler, a new roof over the gymnasium, new carpet and paint. Now these materials will be dumped into the landfill.

Dorothy Brindamour, 6 Morse Road, cannot see what the taxpayers would gain by taking down older buildings in Town. The Town Hall, Senior Center, Weiss Center, and Bennet School are all examples of the quality of older construction. She referred to the trouble UCONN is having with the newer buildings recently built on campus. Ms. Brindamour believes it costs more to demolish a building, discard debris, and build a new building than it does to remodel an older building. She again reminded the Board members of the buildings taken down in Hartford and the regret that city is having over its decisions. Ms. Brindamour would like to see the Hollister Street School building kept as part of the Village Charm heritage. She expressed her opinion that more women need to be on the Board of Directors since they have a more logical approach.

Bill Ogden, 137 Branford Street, said Bentley School should have been discussed during a Board of Directors' meeting. He feels that even when things are discussed at meetings and questions are asked, members of the public rarely get their questions answered. He previously asked how the applications for summer jobs were handled and has yet to receive an answer. Town vehicles should not be leaving Town as it is costing the taxpayers too much money. Employees are paid a good salary and they should not be taking Town vehicles home. Management Partners recommended a night crew for Fleet Maintenance and nothing was ever done about it. Instead work is contracted out. Mr. Ogden wants to see the work kept in house.

Terry Werkhoven, 88 Santina Drive, displayed an artist's rendering of the new facility planned for Washington Street. Work has been in progress for two months. The building will serve 190 Manchester children. He has heard speculation that something went wrong and if that is the case the Board of Education should come to a Board of Directors' meeting and tell the truth. Mr. Werkhoven believes the proper decision is to demolish Bentley. Neither the Board of Education nor the Town of Manchester has done anything in the last two to five years to prevent the deterioration of this building. Mr. Werkhoven offered to lead a public inspection at 12:00 p.m. on September 3, 2008 for anyone who would like to see the condition of the building. The cost to the Town of delaying demolition is between \$50,000 and \$75,000.

Bob Samuelson, 108 Hemlock Street, spent ten years on the Building Committee. Bentley School is in poor condition as a result of not being maintained properly. Leaking roofs should have been repaired immediately. Waiting 90 days for demolition does not make sense. If there was a procedural mistake along the way, find out who signed the papers. Mr. Samuelson has been through the building twice in the past two weeks. There is no way drop ceilings can go into the basement; the ceiling is too low. If anyone questions whether it is wise to demolish this building or not, they should go through the building and see for themselves. He would like to see the money put to use where it makes sense. He was not against saving the Bennet building because he recognized the value, but this is a whole different story. Mr. Samuelson believes stopping the project now will bring real problems with the construction company.

Milt Perlman, 3 Sanford Road, asked what the function of the Board of Directors is. He wishes the Board would answer questions of people that come up and ask them. Approximately 50 people were selected for summer positions in the Recreation Department and he would like to know what the selection process was. Mr. Perlman said the forefathers who created the Federal government created checks and balances. They exist at the State level as well, but are lacking in local government. When questions are asked during the public comment period, they should be answered. If an answer is unavailable during the meeting, an answer should be sent to the person who posed the question within two weeks.

Leslie Frey, 30 Florence Street, has spoken with several townspeople who are unaware of the demolition plans for Bentley School. Bennet School was built at about the same time as the Bentley building and was to be demolished as well. People stood up and fought against its demolition and it is now a showplace. Ms. Frey has protested the demolition of the Bentley building for three years. She doesn't understand why taxpayers would agree to take it down. The quality of construction of buildings built in the early 1900s is very costly to reproduce. Ms. Frey advocates saving this building from the wrecking ball and urged citizens to call the Board of Education and the Board of Directors. The decision on Bentley School should be made by referendum.

Tom Stringfellow, 183 Hillstown Road, feels that unions are still necessary in this country. He mentioned the book, Screwed, that talks about the problems of the middle class. Mr. Stringfellow agrees there should be a referendum on the Bentley School building. He has heard the building is unsafe and if it needs to come down, it should. He wouldn't want anybody to work in unsafe conditions. Mr. Stringfellow said the Board of Education will be making a presentation on the achievement gap on Monday, September 8, 2008 and he encouraged members of the public to attend. He expressed his hope that the public comment session would not become a gripe session.

Mayor Spadaccini said he understands preserving history but it is his recollection that this issue was thoroughly discussed at least two years ago. The decision was made and funding was sought for a Head Start Facility. He is unaware of any procedural mistakes. Both the Building Committee and the General Manger have been involved in this process. No referendum is required because there is no bonding needed for this project. Mr. Spadaccini invited anyone who wishes to express his or her opinion on this matter to the public comment session of the next Board of Directors' meeting on Tuesday, September 9, 2008. It sounds like there is a lack of understanding of the project and he asked the General Manager for a brief presentation at the next Board meeting. Mr. Spadaccini addressed the comments made about questions asked and not answered during public comment sessions. He thinks the Board and Town staff have been responsive to requests for information.

Secretary Pelletier respects the Cheney Historic District Commission but is not in favor of keeping the Bentley building standing. The townspeople are overwhelmingly in favor of a new Head Start Facility. She asked the people who submitted their paperwork to delay the project to reconsider. Ms. Pelletier offered to help create a committee that would look at these types of issues and avoid a situation like we currently have. She believes the delay is unfair to the children.

Deputy Mayor Peak agrees that a Commission to oversee projects in the future or even to review the demolition process is a good idea. In the case of Bentley School, the procedure was followed correctly. There may be some improvements that can be made to the procedure.

3. PUBLIC HEARINGS.

- A. 1. Approval of an amendment to the Code of Ordinances, Chapter 279, Newsracks in public rights of way, Sections 279-41, 279-43 and 279-45. (A copy of the proposed amendment may be seen in the Town Clerk's office during normal business hours.)
- 2. Approval of the fee schedule for the newsrack ordinance.

Mayor Spadaccini explained that he, General Manager Shanley, and Chris Powell of the Journal Inquirer met about two weeks ago to discuss this matter. The impression he left the meeting with was that the most significant objection to the ordinance is to the permit and registration fees. The Town Attorney has redrafted the ordinance that takes out the fees and is now awaiting a response from the Journal Inquirer.

Mayor Spadaccini opened the floor for public comment at this time. There being no public comment the hearing on this matter was closed.

- B. Appropriation to Special Projects as follows:
 - 1. Federal Asset Forfeiture Account\$7,671
for continuing narcotics investigations, equipment, and/or training to be financed by proceeds from narcotics investigations.
 - 2. Police Department – Public Safety\$400
for the use of the firearms range to be financed by a donation from the Office of the Inspector General, Department of Defense, Criminal Investigations Service, which is gratefully acknowledged and accepted.
 - 3. Manchester Dog Pound.....\$46
to be financed by donations which are gratefully acknowledged and accepted.
 - 4. Fire District Special Fund\$1,000
for support to the Manchester Fire Rescue EMS Wellness Initiative Program to be financed by a grant from the Mr. and Mrs. William Foulds Family Foundation which is gratefully acknowledged and accepted.
 - 5. Youth Service Bureau – Illing School Adventure-based Programs.....\$9,996
to be financed by a grant from the Office of Policy and Management for the Youth and Police Partnership Program.
 - 6. Elderly and Disabled Demand Responsive Transportation Program\$53,631
to be financed by a matching grant from the State Department of Transportation (FY 2008/2009)
 - 7. Certified Nurse’s Aide Training Program (FY08/09).....\$5,000
to be financed by grants from The Foulds Family Foundation.

8. Manchester School Readiness Council.....\$40,000
to develop a comprehensive community plan for young children
from birth through eight years to be financed by a grant from the
William Casper Graustein Memorial Fund.
9. Historic Document Preservation\$9,042
for restoration and preservation of historic documents to be funded
by preservation fees set aside by a statute for that purpose.
10. Senior Center Auditorium Stage Curtains (FY2008/2009)\$3,000
to be financed by a grant from the State of Connecticut.
11. Library Computer Purchases.....\$17,550
to be financed by a grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

General Manager Shanley explained that the grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation is a two-year grant, which requires a match from the Town. The first year's match is already budgeted. Accepting the second year is not a requirement of the grant.

Mayor Spadaccini opened the floor for public comment at this time.

Tom Stringfellow, 183 Hillstown Road, supports items B.1, B.5, B.6, B.8, and B.11. He spoke about the importance of each of these items.

Bill Ogden, 137 Branford Street, believes that any grant given to the Town should not require public comment. This is money the Town receives and isn't costing taxpayers a thing.

There being no further public comment the hearing on this item was closed.

Mayor Spadaccini explained that comment on public hearing items is a Charter requirement. The proposed revisions to the Town's Charter require a public hearing only if an item is over \$500. He pointed out that it may be conceivable that the Town may not want to accept a gift and gave the example of a piece of land given to the Town.

- C. Approval of the waiver of permit fees for construction on the Eighth Utilities
District Public Works Facility.

General Manager Shanley explained that this has been the practice in the past and needs the Board's approval.

Mayor Spadaccini opened the floor for public comment at this time. There being no public comment the hearing on this item was closed.

Director Zingler asked what the dollar amount is and thinks the Board should know how much money is involved before approving this item. General Manager Shanley did not know the dollar figure but will provide it to Board members for the next meeting.

D. Appropriations to Education Special Projects as follows:

1. Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA)\$1,579,348 for special education students ages 3-21 to be funded by a grant from the Federal government for 2008-2009.
2. Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA)\$68,935 for special education students ages 3-21 to be funded by a grant from the Federal government for 2008-2009.

Mayor Spadaccini opened the floor for public comment at this time.

Milt Perlman, 3 Sanford Road, noted that between \$8 and \$9 million is in the Board of Education's budget for special education this year and asked what would have been affected if the Town did not receive this grant.

General Manager Shanley explained that theoretically the Town would have had to come up with more funding for special education. There are certain legal requirements for special education and this money goes toward the total \$8 to \$9 million cost.

Bill Ogden, 137 Branford Street, commented on the Hollister Street School and was asked to keep his comments on the subject of the Public Hearing.

Tom Stringfellow, 183 Hillstown Road, supports the grant allotments. It is important to fund special education. He believes the Federal government has not lived up to its promise.

There being no further public comment the hearing on this item was closed.

Deputy Mayor Peak asked if the amount of the appropriation is about the same as what was originally budgeted for. He also asked if the number of students in the special education program has increased or decreased. General Manager Shanley will contact the Board of Education with Mr. Peak's questions.

Secretary Pelletier explained that there is not a direct correlation between the number of students and the amount of money spent for special education. Each student needs different services and therefore different costs are involved.

Director O'Neill asked if there is a deadline for approving this item and suggested taking it off of the Consent Calendar.

Deputy Mayor Peak does not want to take this item off of the Consent Calendar but just wants to know what was budgeted and what was received. He suggested allowing this to go through on Consent, but getting more information from the Board of Education.

4. CONSENT CALENDAR (with Item 3.C removed).

3B. Appropriation to Special Projects as follows:

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- 16C. Approval of a resolution authorizing the General Manager to execute a Memorandum of Understanding with the State of Connecticut to allow the Town to participate in the 2009 Emergency Management Performance Grant program.
- 16L. Acceptance of resignation of John W. Little, Jr. (D) from the Building Committee, with a term expiring November 2009.

Secretary Pelletier moved, and Director Beckman seconded the motion, to adopt the consent calendar.

Nine Voted in Favor

5. REPORTS.

A. Manager's Report.

General Manager Shanley had no reports at this time.

B. QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS BY BOARD MEMBERS REGARDING ITEMS ON THE AGENDA THAT MAY NEED ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR THE NEXT MEETING.

Secretary Zingler asked for backup on Item 16.E. General Manager Shanley will include it in the mail log.

Mr. Zingler asked for the background on Item 16.H. Mayor Spadaccini said that a firm date has not yet been set, but the target is sometime in October. He will contact Manchester Community College for some background information.

Mr. Zingler asked for back up information on Item 16.I. Deputy Mayor Peak would like to discuss a number of ideas.

Mr. Zingler was not invited to the meeting to discuss Item 3.A, Newsrack Ordinance, and asked that he be invited to this type of meeting in the future.

Secretary Pelletier asked if members of the Board of Education would be present for Item 16.F next week. Ms. O'Neill has been in contact with the Board of Education Chair and is aware of the subject matter.

Ms. Pelletier noted the item from Mr. Pellegrini that Board members received in their mail log and asked for more information, specifically which lenders will be involved and exactly what will be promoted.

Mayor Spadaccini informed Board members that September is National Senior Center Month and there will be a ceremony held commemorating this on September 4, 2008 at 1:00 p.m. on the second floor of the Town Hall. He reminded Board members of the Opening Ceremony for Bennet School on September 3, 2008 from 6-8 p.m.

Mr. Spadaccini reminded Board members that the forms evaluating the General Manager are due and asked them to complete and submit them as soon as possible.

Mr. Spadaccini suggested September 16, 2008 for the workshop on bonded indebtedness. If that is a problem for anyone, please e-mail Mr. Shanley with alternative dates.

Secretary Pelletier congratulated the people participating in the six-week training for the Manchester Citizens' Police Academy.

Director Kissmann informed the Board that Governor Rell established Saturday, September 6, 2008 as Firefighter's Day in Connecticut. This is one way to show that firefighters' bravery and sacrifices do not go unrecognized.

Mayor Spadaccini suggested the Town of Manchester create its own proclamation making September 6 Firefighter's Day. He offered his condolences to the Rivosa family on the death of Chief Rivosa. The Chief had a profound impact on the Manchester Police Department. He asked that all present participate in a moment of silence in honor of Chief Rivosa.

6. RECESS TO SECOND WEEK.

The meeting was recessed until the September 9, 2008 second meeting of the month.

Director Tweedie moved, and Director Farina seconded the motion, to recess until the September 9, 2008 meeting.

Nine Voted in Favor

Recess: 8:35 p.m.

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APPROVED:

ATTEST:

Secretary, Manchester Board of Directors