

**PUBLIC HEARING
APRIL 14, 2009
LEGISLATIVE CHAMBERS
Ordinance regarding the Capital Improvement Program 2009-2010**

Public Hearing was called to order at 6:54 p.m.

President Slifka: We will call the 6:45 public hearing to order. Could we have a roll call please Ms. Labrot?

Councilors Adler, Brennan, Coursey, Davidoff, Slifka, Thornberry, Verrengia, Visconti were present.

President Slifka: Mr. Coursey would you read the subject matter please?

Vice President Coursey: I certainly would. Ordinance deauthorizing \$1,512,000 for projects in the Capital Improvement Program for the Fiscal Year 2009-2010, appropriating \$451,000 for projects in the Capital Improvement Program for the Fiscal Year 2009-2010, appropriating \$9,483,000 for projects in the Capital Improvement Program for the Fiscal Year 2010-2011, and authorizing the issuance of bonds of the town in the amount not to exceed \$9,934,000 to finance the appropriations and pending the issuance thereof the making of temporary borrowings for such purpose.

President Slifka: Thank you Mr. Coursey. Mr. Van Winkle, I assume we have a presentation?

Mr. Van Winkle: A short one. This is the ordinance that takes the Capital Budget which is part of your annual budget here, the first two years and appropriates money for those projects and in this case, we are taking projects out because we are reducing our Capital spending and re-programming some of that money. So, this ordinance will do what is in our budget as proposed by the Town Manager and then as you may remember, at the end of 2008, we were due to go to the markets to sell bonds, we decided not to because they were in chaos at that moment in time. We expect to be able to go in July, and so this authorizes us to go to the market and sell 9.9 million dollars with the bonds for projects that have been previously approved by you or about to be constructed this summer.

President Slifka: Thank you Mr. Van Winkle. Are there any questions for Mr. Van Winkle? Mr. Adler?

Councilor Adler: Through you Mr. Mayor, thank you. Mr. Van Winkle, with the rescoping of the Capital Improvement Plan, for 2009-2010, have we, do we have a lock down on those projects that we are in fact going to be doing, versus those that we may or may not do?

Mr. Van Winkle: Yes, through you Mr. Mayor, in 2009-2010, last year you approved 17 million dollars worth of projects that are approved and all I would need to do is go to the

Director of Finance and say put that into the account and I'll start drawing on it. This year in re-looking at that, we took out – I said 17 million, but I meant more – but we eliminated 14.1 million dollars worth of projects which have been previously approved by you for this coming year. It took us down to approximately 6 million which are basically, projects that are there to maintain. To repair roads that we must maintain, to repair roofs, those sorts of things – to maintain our structures and our buildings. We've got 2 million square feet of buildings in the Town of West Hartford, 215 miles of road, so we can't take it down to zero because we have to continue to do that repair. But there is nothing new – no expansion, no addition, no major renovation of any facility in West Hartford. These are basically bonds to take care of our existing infrastructure.

Councilor Adler: Thank you Mr. Mayor. Thank you Mr. Van Winkle. This is strictly in the Town side of the Capital Improvement? Are we also including the Board of Ed on this? Or is that a whole other CIP discussion?

Mr. Van Winkle: No, through you Mr. Mayor. The Capital Budget is both Town and Schools so there are projects in here for replacement of boilers at schools, that have been there for more than 50 years, the replacement of some roofing at schools, those kinds of projects.

Councilor Adler: Thank you Mr. Mayor. Just one more question, in terms of the stimulus money – if and when it shows up, and the dollars that are associated with that – how will that be commingled with the CIP? Are we going to have to maybe reprioritize some of those projects with this stimulus money that we may in fact get?

Mr. Van Winkle: Yes, through you Mr. Mayor. There are dollars coming to us through the stimulus money, most notably in this area – Energy Conservation money. Five hundred plus thousand dollars, almost \$600,000 of Energy Conservation money. That money is – we are now looking at the rules and regulations and trying to decide how they allow us to spend that and we will be coming back to you with a proposal. It may mean that we co-mingle; it may mean that we're just able to do some more projects to save. But the goal that we have placed upon staff that are looking at what our budget options are, is that we will try to expend those monies in a way that will reduce our operating expenses.

President Slifka: Thank you Mr. Adler, anyone else? Mr. Visconti?

Councilor Visconti: Through you Mr. Mayor. Mr. Van Winkle, could you elaborate a little bit more about the pools – is there money in there for the pool repair, or the status – I missed the committee meeting where we may have gone over this, and I'd like to find out what may be in there for the pools.

Mr. Van Winkle: Yes, through you Mr. Mayor. There was substantial dollars in our budget for replacement of tanks of our pools. Some of them are quite old and unfortunately, we are not able to do those, because of the constraints on our budget this year. We have put those off. In the second year of the Capital Budget, there is \$107,000 for CNRE money which is not bonded money – it comes directly out of the general fund.

You are not approving that in any of these ordinances, that's an action for you next year to take a look at and we will look at it again next year. But right now, within this budget, there is no funds bonded money, and this ordinance does not allocate any money to the replacement or substantial renovation of any pool in town.

President Slifka: Mr. Visconti?

Councilor Visconti: A little more elaboration – will all pools be able to be open or operational this year? Without these tank repairs and without any other repairs that my come out of the CIP?

Mr. Van Winkle: Yes, through you Mr. Mayor. All of our pools are reasonable shape that we'll have to do some maintenance on them to get them up to speed, but we will be able to open all of our pools. I would note that within the budget there is an option to consider not opening all of the pools as an effort to reduce spending. But the condition of the pools right now – we will be able to open them. They are very old tanks – they leak a lot, but some of them we put water in every day because they lose so much water. So, at some point in the future, we're going to need to expend some dollars on these pools.

Councilor Visconti: You said \$107,000 for the tanks?

Mr. Van Winkle: In year two of the Capital budget, there is suggested, that we allocate \$107,000 of CNRE money, not bonded money, not the ordinance that we are talking about tonight, but CNRE money that you will consider when you look at next year's budget, not in this year's budget. That \$107,000 is the money that we would expend on fixing cracks, doing repairs at the pools, not replacing. The replacement of a Fernridge Park pool, which is one of those, is a million plus project.

Councilor Visconti: The reason I'm asking is, this issue plus the traffic signals for which we are not paying for, the Federal Government is, seem to bring confusion to me, bring confusion to the budget process, and I wanted to make it clear that we are not bonding for those repairs although we may be able to try and raise money another way. Those two issues may become hot potatoes and I don't think we'll be clarifying enough what we're doing.

President Slifka: Thank you. Anyone else? Ok..Mr. Alair would you mind looking at the sign up sheet? Mr. Alair reports the sign up sheet is blank. Is there anyone who did not sign up who wishes to testify to the subject matter of this Public Hearing? Seeing none, we have to read something in for the record. Mr. Coursey?

Vice President Coursey: Yes, a letter dated April 7, 2009, from Jeffrey Daniels, Chairman for TP & Z recommending approval for the Capital Improvement Program for 2010-2021.

President Slifka: Thank you Mr. Coursey. If there is nothing further we will close the Public Hearing.

Hearing closed at 7:04 p.m.