

1. The Special Meeting of the Town of Plymouth Town Council, Wednesday, **May 6, 2009** was called to order at **6:44 p.m.** by Mayor Vin Festa in the Assembly Room, Town Hall. In attendance: Councilwoman Jacqui Denski, Councilman Peter Giancesini, Councilwoman Jeannine Jandreau, Councilwoman DiAnna Schenkel and Mayor Vin Festa. Councilman Sekorski, excused absence. Also present, Robin Gudeczauskas, Clerk of the Council and Dave Bertnagel, Comptroller.

2. Fire Exits – Noted for the record

3. Pledge of Allegiance

4. Town Council Rules and Procedures

5. Public Comment

6. To Discuss and Take Action on the Municipal Facilities Committee Report  
Carl Johnson gave history of last two years and have entertained presentations from volunteer organizations and utilizing most of Main Street School property, did site walks. Requested funds from Town Council for consulting firm for report on conditions and marketability, solicited proposals and based on recommendations from the selected firm at their April 6th meeting motioned to recommend to Council to sell Prospect Street School with caveat to keep use of ball fields and motion passed. After longer discussion and a separate motion passed by majority to recommend selling Main Street School property as a whole based on engineering recommendations. Councilwoman Denski asked if included ball fields at Main Street School; Carl, yes, as zoned as light commercial and industrial. Carl noted that Prospect Street School is recommended if golden proposal is received, yes, to sell all but right now with tennis courts in back and soccer field but no separate parking as whole you might have to sell whole thing but until then put an easement or condition on deed to use ballparks until some time construction is done in area. Councilwoman Jandreau thanked the committee for thought put into this and work done. Hildie Siematoski, 249 East Washington Road, Plymouth is her home town and have worked with young Plymouth families and children for many years and today she subbed for the Board of Education and served on Municipal Facilities since inception and as a commission had the opportunity to visit town facilities such as library, town garage, police department and town offices as well as schools (Prospect Street and Main Street). Most departments are very much in need of additional space and to name number one is police department. Mayor Festa and the Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Distasio, work together to bring two departments plus an office for Early Childhood Council to Main Street School. During the past year and a half she has had a director from Plainville YMCA and Mike Suchopar Director of Bristol Boys and Girls Club present possibility of programs for all ages in our town. In her humble opinion she sees Main Street School as a valuable resource; first for location on Route 6, proximity to town hall, parking, plus a very much needed gym. The recommendation from the Municipal Facility Committee comes to Town Council as result of 7-4 vote to sell both Prospect Street School and Main Street School. During these economic times it is certainly not the time for selling property and it is a buyer's market; and hopefully we will not give buildings and property away and at this point your vote will truly have impact in our community. And she has discussed many concerns with Mayor Festa. Thank you. John Pajeski, 4 Lynn Avenue, the BOE is having use of Main

Street School and still under control of the BOE whereas Prospect Street School was turned over to the town and the town's responsibility and not BOE. Is there any time in future the BOE will be moving into new quarters and anything in works. Mayor Festa stated it depends relative to facilities discussed this evening and what the plans can be for the BOE and town side as well. Currently they turned over MSS ball fields to the town. John Pajeski stated he believes and agrees with Hildie that PSS, sell it; MSS would benefit the town with the gym and everything and one floor of newer half could be utilized to a lot of use. Everything costs money, tear down and build new say is cheaper but who knows. There should be grants or money to utilize that building especially the seniors are looking for place for exercise and meeting and stuck in room half the size downstairs and that would work perfectly well. Something to keep in mind for Council to remember and take care of people in town and not just tear down buildings. Granted we have to maintain but see what is out there; make things work. Carl Johnson, 30 Cross Road, at Municipal Facility and P&Z discussed property and MSS older half, 1929 portion, looking at it for a space for public and it is cost vs. benefit. Engineering, need to have money because benefit does not equal cost; study to divide the two might cost too much; the old portion is small and limited use out of it and only thing looked at on land use portion was if someone came in the tax base brought in by business or residential would benefit the town greater than spending money and putting something in there. That is what they looked at cost vs. benefit over long run. We can hold on and maintain for 10-15 years; it will take 5-7 yrs for someone to get engineering plans in the works for construction. This is a long term investment to keep property and need to start now with plan and invest a lot of money to front end this project to keep and use. It is cheaper to build new because you do not need to worry about asbestos, lead and foundation; you don't know what is in there or under the ground and the main thing they looked at. Not disagreeing that these people have great programs but cost vs. benefit. Councilwoman Schenkel stated what constituents and people hearing is fact site is valuable off Rt 6; is benefit outweighed by cost in sense giving up prime piece of property for police station or fire station and we don't have a lot of open space; any benefit to keep because of location. Carl, you need if centralize the town and create a village district and connectivity; being a mile or mile and a half from Bristol we are building on edge of property as a community and value, throw it out there and see what you get and maybe can get industry in town and it is a great location between 72/6 and get jobs in town and higher tax base. To hold on because maybe some day we will do something with it does not make sense. Councilwoman Schenkel, once sell you do not have control over what is going in and can have storage facility or eyesore; just expressing concerns brought to her attention. Councilman Ganesini stated everyone serving on commission and all have experience and contributed and unusual to get unanimous decision. It is valuable property and number of uses people are proposing and if have structure designed for partial application, school with gym, but if want it to house police station or section of police station, you are spending a substantial amount of money to modify something not designed for particular application and money spent for code upgrades will result in facility not as satisfying as one designed for particular applicant. To demolish building and start from scratch it may not be more expensive and with funding available for 1.6% for bonding and other projects coming off line, if investment you are investing in something designed for use with today's existing technology. Example of library back in 70's compared to today, every computer station is full and few people wandering to take books out. If you were to design a library and build today you would have more people with internet access and high definition TV's; and facilities you would have same as police department different from 60's. Can see both sides of the story as have old

building sitting there and many uses put to and can sway should we really keep putting money into this and end up with something not as adequate. Commend people who worked on it. Councilwoman Jandreau stated she tends to agree with the firm who suggested we put on market and sell. They are nice facilities and there a long time and a lot of people have nice memories in those buildings but to be fair they are white elephants and cost too much to heat and too much for upkeep and think if we put on market and get a decent price we should. Councilwoman Denski stated real estate is dead and property in Bristol is old mall, sitting a long time, and agree right now might not be time to sell and also we know the children have no where to go and whether sell or not would like to see us find somewhere for them to be entertained like boys/girls club who did give us a wonderful prentation. Councilwoman Jandreau, things with expense to keep buildings up, we have to have better use for our money. The market is suppose to start going up and low interest rates we can probably find someone to buy and what they put in there the tax base will go up. Benefit of the town and if keep it is pulling at fuel and electric costs; not easy to heat, old systems and believe we should sell. Councilwoman Schenkel stated we made commitment that when the new high school built we would ease burden on taxpayer with consolidation and advocate for kids and programs for decent citizen out of children. At this time it is an extreme endeavor to keep buildings and while disappointed, would like to see property developed with something in the Mayor's bond package and goes with majority. Councilman Giancesini stated a minor point in Bristol and curious why they did it, but recall the owner of Rt 6 and North Street property evicted all tenants and tore down buildings and same with mall and think they would have use in mind and something locked up. He is not in favor of knocking down Main Street School and then say what can we do with it. You don't have to sell to anybody and if get decent price that is one thing. At Prospect Street School you are limited and architect found the building a nightmare, cannot divide, code issues and forced into something to knock down. At MSS if nothing suitable we can consider temporary use of other things and boys/girls could do things in gym and make sure code wise it is safe. Mayor Festa stated since feasibility study met and moved forward on decision rendered, he has had 3 interested in property; 2 on MSS and 1 on PSS. What he is hearing is that we need to take step forward and venture to see possibility on interested property and price tag willing to offer. Do not have to get rid of property if price is not correct and you cannot put good money after bad. Carl Johnson stated that Bill Kuehn, former Town Planner, had one suggestion made that it is not about what you sell it for but for what proposed to do with it and can control that with bond that will be secured and based on finished project and do as say. That is one way to control what goes here and other thing leasing the property to someone for use and gets into another idea and takes it off your plate and then it is occupied and maintained by someone else and if they leave you can pick up where they left off. Mayor Festa noted it is important that we leave ourselves open for as many possibilities as possible.

Mayor Festa thanked each and everyone for job done and we need skill and expertise they have collected over the past few years but appreciate continuance on project.

**MOTION:** To accept the report by Councilwoman Jandreau; second Councilwoman Denski and the vote unanimous.

#### 7. To Discuss and Take Action On The Resolution As Proposed By The Water Pollution Control Authority (WPCA) Negotiations

**MOTION:** To accept by reading the Resolution into record by Councilwoman Jandreau  
"PLYMOUTH WATER POLLUTION CONTROL AUTHORITY RESOLUTION WHEREAS;

the Town of Plymouth, Water Pollution Control Authority (WPCA) has an interest in pursuing and completing the nitrogen removal project CWF-458-D (Project); WHEREAS; the Project is in a (shovel-ready) condition, fully designed and ready to proceed; WHEREAS; the Town of Plymouth has previously submitted the Project to the Governor's office via the Town's shovel-ready project list; WHEREAS; the final design plans and specifications for the Project have been reviewed and approved by the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection; WHEREAS; it is estimated that the cost to complete this Project is approximately \$1,201,400.00; and WHEREAS; the WPCA intends to secure one hundred percent funding in the form of a seventy percent loan and thirty percent grant from the Clean Water Fund of the State of Connecticut in conjunction with the American Recovery And Reinvestment Act of 2009 a/k/a Stimulus Bill through the State of Connecticut. NOW THEREFORE; be it hereby resolved that the Chairman George F. Andrews, Jr., and/or the Plant Superintendent, Terence M. Vigeant, are hereby authorized to submit the Project and/or applications and/or any other documents or items necessary to seek funding and proceed with said Project on behalf of the WPCA; and the Chairman, George F. Andrews, Jr., and/or Plant Superintendent, Terence M. Vigeant, are hereby authorized to send a copy of this Resolution to the Town Council of the Town of Plymouth seeking a Resolution of Support and Endorsement by the Town Council for this Project.", second Councilwoman Denski. Discussion: George Andrews, Chairman of WPCA, stated this project came upon quickly past year and started in 2001 and new limits for nitrogen for plants. The WPCA hired a consultant to design improvements for the plan to resolve limits that become more and more tight through 2014. At the time they were selling credits to the state and situation has changed, limits have come down and cost of credits up and we are now buying credits. They are struggling for funding for project and subsequent to ARRA there has been federal funding infused in the Clean Water Fund of about \$42 million and that has freed up additional monies in Clean Water and we are able to harvest at this time. Alan Asikainen from Maguire Group is here for details and technical issues. Alan distributed "Points of Interest" stating he has been with Maguire for 32 years and involved in Plymouth for 20 years. This project, referred to graph on handout for buying credits; nitrogen credit program, the Town was doing below the goal required for nitrogen removal and as go toward 2014 the nitrogen numbers need to be lower and lower; as go to those lower numbers the plant cannot meet requirements. Two levels for treatment, first low level about 6 mg per liter and next level is very low 3.5 mg/liter of nitrogen and huge dollars and we are finding 4 communities that can do it and they are the big plants. The goal is to improve the quality of water in Long Island Sound and as a result finding most of the communities are not going down to low level because you can buy credits cheaper. Now the town is buying credits of \$11,000 per year and over 20 years it will be over \$80,000 - \$100,000. If the Town goes forward with upgrade it will reduce cost to buy credits; we will need to buy credits but not as much. As George said this is a program the state is offering 30% grant, 2% loan for remainder of 20 years and annual cost of \$50,000 - \$51,000. The bidding climate is very good. Reviewed bids from area towns and people now are hungry for work and good opportunity to have project go out to bid. For this project it will be 100% by users of system and no effect on town's mill rate or taxation. Councilman Giancesini stated (a) he remembers sitting in on meeting to WPCA presentation and modification to replace blowers for aeration and quite high as hp usage; Alan responded 100 hp blowers and he did similar project to this in N. Haven and original blowers were 200 hp and reduced hp to 125; he expects reduction in hp on blower use and magnitude about \$20,000 per year savings. There are now premium efficiency motors and power company giving rebates and they will explore that to get a few dollars back. George

Andrews gave summary on financing plan, looking at user fund 100% user fee to fund; first 2-3 years will be challenging and have been stocking away \$77,000 per year for project and pay loan off in 5 years and have 3 years left. They have robust undesignated fund balance and Dave Bertnagel has evaluated and gave comfort level on where stand with savings. The first 3 years will not encounter a lot of expense this year and 2-1/2 years of carry for project and will pull to keep user fee where is. \$51,000 per year for first 2 – 2-1/2 year of payment for reimbursement from fund balance so as not to increase user fee and 3 years from now, 2011-2012, will retire debit and free up \$77,000/year to fund this project. They can handle from drawing from fund balance and maintain user fee at reasonable level and 3 years from now can continue at level and possibly reduce; savings from electrical may pay off more quickly than 20 years or reduce user fee. Dave Bertnagel stated he met with WPCA and does not see any problems financing and recommendation if Clean Water Act provision, 70% loan 30% grant and closing occur when majority completed would have to start making payments and debt service make same payment every year going out. Based upon analysis on credits, once the plan comes into play the credit will foster that much as well and would have had to increase user fees to pay state and a benefit by doing this project. It would be user fund oriented and not affect general funds ability to borrow. Councilwoman Jandreau stated concern as she has user fee and how much you say go down or stay same and how much can we expect user fee to go up; George responded as a result of this project he does not anticipate it will go up; if it does go up it would be as a result of something else i.e. sludge disposal that can hit us. Councilman Ganesini noted obviously if look at graph and do nothing we will pay more for credits and rates will go up and inefficient use of equip i.e. electrical, kilowatt will go up. Councilwoman Schenkel noted numbers are based on people paying sewer taxes on time and in this economy we know that people are struggling. Does fund balance offer flexibility that if collections are down can they take more; Dave absolutely, they have a big fund balance. Councilwoman Denski stated she trusts their recommendation. Mayor Festa stated the Council will vote on Resolution of Support and Endorsement and last sentence stating seeking resolution of support and endorsement, and vote will have Town legal counsel draw up the Resolution. Vote: Councilwoman Denski, yes; Councilwoman Schenkel, yes; Councilwoman Jandreau, yes; Councilman Ganesini, yes. Motion carries unanimous, 4-0.

#### 8. Executive Session For The Purpose of Water Pollution Control Authority (WPCA) Negotiations

**MOTION:** To go into Executive Session at 7:30 p.m., inviting the Mayor, Terry Vigeant and George Andrews from WPCA by Councilwoman Jandreau; second Councilwoman Schenkel and the vote unanimous.

The Town Council came out of Executive Session at 7:53 p.m. noting they had invited Comptroller Dave Bertnagel into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing impact of finance on negotiations.

#### 9 Action, if necessary From the Executive Session

#### 10. Public Comment

#### 11. Town Council Comments

12. Adjournment

**MOTION:** To adjourn by Councilwoman Jandreau; second Councilwoman Schenkel and the vote unanimous.

Meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robin Gudeczauskas, Recording Secretary