

Town of Plymouth
80 Main Street
Terryville, CT 06786
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Plymouth Town Council
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Minutes

February 7, 2012

Call to Order: Mayor Vincent Festa, Jr., called the scheduled February 7, 2012, Town of Plymouth Public Hearing Meeting to order at 6:00 p.m., in the Community Room, Town Hall.

Roll Call: Present were Town Councilman Remie Ferreira, Sr., Mayor Vincent Festa, Jr., Town Councilman Richard Foote, Town Councilwoman Susan Murawski, and Town Councilman Tom Zagurski. Also in attendance was David Bertnagel, Director of Finance Anthony Lorenzetti, Director of Public Works/Town Engineer and Martin Sandshaw.

Mayor Festa noted that Town Councilwoman DiAnna Schenkel had an excused absence.

Fire Exits Notification

Mayor Festa noted the Fire Exits for the record.

Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Festa led the Plymouth Town Council and the Public Audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Presentation/Reading of Legal Notice Posted January 30, 2012

Mayor Festa read the Legal Notice into the record, posted on January 30, 2012, for the Town Council and Public Audience, as follows:

Notice is hereby given to the legal voters of the Town of Plymouth and all qualified tax payers of the Town of Plymouth that the Plymouth Town Council will hold a Public Hearing to allow the Public to be heard. Public Hearing will take place at:

**Town of Plymouth Public Hearing
February 7, 2012
Page Two of Six Pages**

Presentation/Reading of Legal Notice Posted January 30, 2012 Cont'd.

Plymouth Town Hall Community Room, 80 Main Street, Terryville, CT, Tuesday, February 7, 2012, 6:00 p.m. for the following purpose:

To give citizens the opportunity to hear and/or make oral or written recommendations concerning additions, deletions or changes to the following: Special Appropriation in the amount of \$282,470.00 for the Energy Conservation Program, Vincent Festa, Jr., Mayor, Dated this 30th day of January, 2012, Plymouth, CT.

Public Comments/Written Recommendations re. Special Appropriation of \$282,470.00 for Energy Conservation Program

David Bertnagel, Director of Finance, stated that at the last Council meeting there had been questions as to the funding mechanisms and what the Town was actually planning on doing with the appropriations. He further stated that the Town would be making an appropriation for \$282,470.00, for the purpose of the Energy Conservation Program, and that of that amount, \$49,000.00 (and change) remained for the Energy Efficiency Block Grant. David Bertnagel stated that this was the piece, which the Town would actually cut checks for, and be reimbursed by the Federal Government American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) money. David Bertnagel stated that the remaining piece of that money would come from the Energy Efficiency Fund, itself. He further stated that there would never be a cash transaction and that the only thing the Town would have would be upgrades to the facilities that the Town would capitalize. David Bertnagel stated that this was the reasoning for going out for the whole \$282,470.00. He further stated that the repayment for this Program would be two and a half years. David Bertnagel stated that the current utility bills have a certain rate on them and that the rate would be lower for the usage piece of the bill and that we would be adding in for the repayment of the two and half year capitalization cost. He further stated that would give the Town a net expenditure savings (not revenue, as previously stated) of approximately \$649.00 per month in the first year. David Bertnagel stated that the budget would be lowered, in total, by \$649.00 per month and that the figure would grow as time went on.

As a result, David Bertnagel stated that the entire Town would get an evaluation done (for the most part) of work for all the facilities, upgrading and would be making them energy efficient. He further stated that as a result, the Town would save on paid out energy costs. David Bertnagel stated that this was also better for the environment.

Public Comments/Written Recommendations re. Special Appropriation of \$282,470.00 for Energy Conservation Program Cont'd.

Referencing the spreadsheet (previously distributed by Anthony Lorenzetti) David Bertnagel noted that it would aid in explaining the process in Column G, which showed all the facilities.

David Bertnagel stated that this also showed everything that would be funded by the Town, noting that the \$282,470.00 was shown in Column A, the number that the Town would be appropriating.

David Bertnagel stated that the annual electricity cost savings would be \$33,158.00 and that the annual fossil fuel cost savings was \$35,452.00, total combined was \$68,610.00 or \$5,717.00 per month, noting this figure was the savings and that Column G showed \$5,068.00, which was what the Town would be paying back to the utility company for the energy upgrades, so the difference would be \$649.00 approximately per month.

David Bertnagel stated that Anthony Lorenzetti and Marty Sandshaw had several meetings with the providers and that he knew there were more incentive based grants available in 2012, so the Town may end up paying less and reap more benefits depending on the incentives that the Town received. He further stated that this was a conservative estimate by the Consultant.

When questioned by Town Councilman Zagurski, as to whether or not the Town was bonding anything, David Bertnagel stated that the Town was not bonding anything and the only expense the Town would make was the \$49,000.00 (and change). He further stated the Town was taking on the extra capital because the Town was getting upgrades to the buildings and would have to record it, noting that as a result, the Town buildings were increasing in value.

Town Councilwoman Murawski questioned where the \$49,000.00 would be coming from and if it would hurt the Town's capital.

David Bertnagel stated that it would not hurt the Town's capital and that the Town would be appropriating the money in the Town's Capital Non-recurring Fund.

David Bertnagel stated that for the most part, as soon as the money was expended the Town would submit for reimbursement within a month to a month and a half in time, and that the Town would be in fine shape.

Public Comments/Written Recommendations re. Special Appropriation of \$282,470.00 for Energy Conservation Program Cont'd.

When questioned by Town Councilwoman Murawski, David Bertnagel recommended that the Special Appropriation come from "Other Public Building 043."

When questioned by Town Councilwoman Murawski, David Bertnagel stated that the Special Appropriation could only be once per year, per Department.

Anthony Lorenzetti stated that David Bertnagel had done a good job of explaining everything. He further stated that at the end of January, he, Marty Sandshaw, and the Town's Energy Consultant, had met with a number of representatives from Northeast Utilities and there was a possible upgrade in the percentage that Northeast Utilities could give out in 2012 versus 2011. Anthony Lorenzetti stated that there might be some positive news when they return, but at this point he did not have any numbers. He further stated that the \$49,000.00 (and change) had to be expended and reimbursement applied for by June 30, 2012, noting this was Federal ARRA money and that it had been kicking around for a while.

Martin Sandshaw, 7 Richmond Drive, Plymouth, stated that he had been working with Anthony Lorenzetti on the Energy Project and that it was important for the Town to take a hard look at the project.

Martin Sandshaw stated that in January, he had attended a stakeholder's meeting for the Connecticut's Clean Energy Communities Program and that by having the program in place, the Town could earn points and that once the Town reached 100 points, the Town would be eligible for a \$5,000.00 Grant that could be used for additional energy programs, i.e., installation of a dual-service burner, window replacement, etc. He further stated that out of a possible 100 points, the Town currently ranked at 16.

Martin Sandshaw stated that they had a teleconference with a CL&P Representative and that they had discussed Business and Municipal Programs concerning percentages of the Town and that the larger the percentage the more points the Town would receive.

Martin Sandshaw stated that because the Board of Education had been so successful with their energy portfolio, CL&P had stated that the Town would be able to take the Board of Education's five buildings and roll it into the Town's municipal portfolio, which would put the Town closer to the 100 points.

Public Comments/Written Recommendations re. Special Appropriation of \$282,470.00 for Energy Conservation Program Cont'd.

Martin Sandshaw stated that it was very important for the Town to take these types of initiatives and get the ball rolling because of the programs that would be coming along, month after month.

Martin Sandshaw stated that the Town could earn six points for one percent of households that participate in residential programs such as home energy solutions, residential new construction, such as the new homes on the Armbruster property, noting they were all Energy Star homes and that the Town was getting credit for them.

Martin Sandshaw stated that the Town could earn eight points for each one percent of households that redeem home energy solution rebates, four points for each one percent of commercial/municipal accounts in the Community that participate in business and municipal programs and 10 points for the Municipality for special energy conservation, energy efficient projects and conservation challenges, behavior based campaigns, turn off lights, Earth Day events, etc.

Martin Sandshaw stated that this \$49,000.00 (and change) opportunity was important and that it was Federally funded. He further stated that he was in possession of a brochure entitled "101 Ways to Save Energy" that literally showed 101 examples of how to save energy with very simple measures such as turning down the thermostat, reducing the temperature in daily showers, etc. He further stated that perhaps the brochure could be mailed out with the tax bills.

Peter Giancesini, 8 Kimman Drive, Terryville, thanked the Administration and the Town Council for moving this issue forward, and also thanked Martin Sandshaw for starting the ball rolling on the school side of the budget, noting that he was doing a wonderful job.

Peter Giancesini stated that we often hear of people that are fiscal watchdogs who question why Municipal budgets can't be treated more like businesses. He further stated that the company he retired from had replaced lighting in three of their larger buildings at a cost of approximately one quarter of a million dollar and that they had realized a \$35,000.00 saving in the first year.

Peter Giancesini stated that in addition to cutting their electrical costs with a subsidized Grant from CL&P, the money they saved helped cut the bottom line cost of their product.

**Town of Plymouth Public Hearing
February 7, 2012
Page Six of Six Pages**

Public Comments/Written Recommendations re. Special Appropriation of \$282,470.00 for Energy Conservation Program Cont'd.

Peter Giancesini stated that the work areas were brightened substantially and assisted the machine operators using sophisticated measuring tools such as calipers and verniers, etc., as well as helping with being able to see/read instructions, diagrams more easily. He further stated that the new lighting improved the ergonomics of the work area and that he felt it also helped everyone's attitude that was working in the buildings because of the dramatic difference the lighting made.

Peter Giancesini stated that this was an opportunity to save money in the Budget and use the money for further education and that in this particular case, use the cost savings on the Municipal building side. He further stated that this was being done all over the country and again, and recommended that the Council move forward with this issue.

Council Comments

No report.

Adjournment

Town Councilwoman Murawski made a motion, seconded by Town Councilman Zagurski, to adjourn at 6:17 p.m. This motion was approved unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Acting Recording Secretary