

Town Board Minutes October 20, 2003

SPECIAL BOARD MEETING TOWN HALL

OCTOBER 20, 2003 6:30 P.M.

Present were Councilman Damian P. Wiktor, Councilman Richard K. Hawkins, Councilman Karl J. Simmeth Jr., Councilman Dennis J. Mead, and Supervisor William A. Eagan.

Also present: Grants Consultant, Connie Miner.

At 7:58 p.m. on October 15, 2003 a Public Hearing was held to hear public comments regarding the use of Federal Community Development Block Grant Funds in the Town of Boston.

Resolution 2003-29, Community Development Block Grant Requests for 2004-2005 was tabled.

At 6:30 P.M. a Special Meeting was held to hear public comments regarding the use of Federal Community Development Block Grant Funds in the Town of Boston.

A notice was posted on the Town Hall bulletin board regarding the Special Meeting.

Supervisor Eagan noted that the Town Board has a copy of the proposed resolution with the requests for the 2004-2005 Community Development Block Grant. This meeting was called because there is a deadline to submit the application, which is before the next Town Board meeting.

A motion was made by Councilman Mead and seconded by Councilman Simmeth to remove Resolution 2003-29 from the table.

five (5) Ayes Carried

The CDBG funds requested are:

1st Priority ? Wildwood Drive Streambank Stabilization seeking \$90,000 in CDBG funds with a cash match of \$30,000 coming from Town's reserve fund.

2nd Priority ? Senior Center Construction Project seeking \$90,000 in CDBG funds with a cash match not to exceed \$40,663 using Senior Facility reserve fund.

3rd Priority ? Rural Transit Program.

Councilman Simmeth: We received \$90,000 last year (for the Wildwood Drive Streambank Stabilization Project) is that right?

Connie Miner: Foit-Albert Engineers did the study and the least expensive and the best alternative that the Town Board favored was the median wall system. Foit-Albert's estimate was \$320,000. We are hoping that the actual bid, once we advertise and open the bids, which will be later because we do not expect to go to construction until Spring, is less than the \$320,000 if we get the bids out early and contractors are eager for work.

Councilman Mead: Why are we only seeking \$90,000?

Connie Miner: That is the most you can ask for. It is essentially the identical resolution as last year except that Wildwood is phase two because the first \$90,000 wasn't enough. We are hoping if we get another \$90,000, we will then have \$180,000 plus the town match so we can then get that project wrapped up. The Town will have to contribute cash and obviously we are trying to limit that as much as possible.

Councilman Simmeth: Are there in-kind services we could do down there?

Supervisor Eagan: It's a possibility. The question is still being addressed because this is a tributary to 18-mile Creek and

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Supervisor Eagan (cont.): here is the erosion project that Erie County Soil and Water is handling. They are still researching if contributions we make to the Irish Gulf tributary could be used toward our cash contribution to the overall 18-Mile Creek issue. Kay Falkides (Boston Hills Homes & Estates owner) said she would contribute \$5,000 to this project. If we don't do this, at some point we are going to lose Wildwood Drive.

Connie Miner: Highway Superintendent Kreitzbender is worried about the road. The income survey that we did last year that qualified the area is good for three years. In the event we don't get the second \$90,000, I will do my best. The Project Selection Committee will be a little leery because we claimed that the first \$90,000 would be enough. The only thing I can say is that last year we didn't have the study done. Obviously, once the engineering is done then we will know what the real costs are. I was successful in doing a similar project in Elma. With the engineering done we know what it is going to cost and we will be able to wrap this up this year. If it doesn't get funded our only other alternative is to go to something like Rural Development which would be a grant/loan combination. Obviously this is a better package for us financially. The other thing we tried to do was get money from FEMA. FEMA did their own water flow tests and determined that the incidence where they would provide emergency funding wasn't really when there was a lot of damage done. If there is another high water incident this year we will try that route again with FEMA but they are very good at determining when the damage occurred.

Councilman Simmeth: What happens if we get a bad storm and it washes the road right out?

Connie Miner: That is something different.

Supervisor Eagan: They accepted the fact that it happened on the dates that there was a lot of erosion but the erosion on the street side is something that was eroding away for years.

Connie Miner: We tried our best and we had people working for us but it just didn't work. For the sake of the residents, if it doesn't happen this year we will still have one more year on the income survey. Not that I want to push it off, if we start construction in the Spring with the initial \$90,000 grant, we can extend it. I hate to do it piece meal but if we had to we would at least have one more year. If we skip this year we would be in jeopardy because we don't have enough money to do it. The best thing we can do is submit it and hope for the best. If it doesn't get funded by January or February, it is important to rank it as #1 because if a community gets a project and can't complete it or doesn't start using their money right away, in June Erie County Planning submits an amendment and goes down the list. So you want to get as many points as possible. That is why I insisted you have a Special Meeting because if I don't have this resolution by November 3, 2003 we lose a point. If it is not ranked as number one then it is ranked according to its priority. It is important for it to be #1 so that if it isn't funded right away in February, and in June someone pulls out and can't spend the \$90,000, we are the next one to automatically get it.

Councilman Simmeth: So the further down the list you get the less points you get?

Connie Miner: Priority #1 gets 3 points, #2 gets 2 points, and #3 gets one point. It is always important to make Rural Transit #3 because there are so many communities that collaborate that it automatically gets extra points and gets funded every year. There

is no reason to sacrifice points by moving Rural Transit up because it gets funded no matter what. It is not worth sacrificing points for another project at the expense of something

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Connie Miner (cont.): the town really needs. You can always get Rural Transit funded. The Senior Center, we just put that in. Will it get funded? I doubt it. We have specs from another building that Councilman Hawkins got that we are going to use as a sample but ideally I would like to see us do a preliminary engineering report.

Councilman Mead: Would a recreational project get a higher priority?

Connie Miner: No, it has to benefit seniors. It has to benefit low to moderate-income people. If it is not in a census lot tract group that has been identified in the census as low to moderate-income then you must do an income survey. Years ago we did Creekside subdivision and that worked and we did Wildwood but it does not always work.

Councilman Mead: What about the playground? It doesn't help the seniors but it does help low income.

Connie Miner: The problem is that it is in the middle. I have done it with other communities and it is never successful. Because the school owns the land it is precarious. We would have to income survey every family that goes there. You need a 92% response to qualify and of those, 43% have to be low to moderate-income.

Supervisor Eagan: Last Year Connie Miner and I met with Boston Valley School Principal Eric Pearlstein and Superintendent Roswell. Their grants-writer was supposed to pursue this. Eric Pearlstein raised outside funds and had a presentation to the parents to try and raise more money. The idea now is to look at the potential of leaving the swing set but taking the core out and buy sections at a time. If we have \$15,000 then buy \$15,000 worth of equipment.

Councilman Hawkins: The problem is that now with the arsenic in the wood they say all of these playgrounds have to be shut down within a year.

Councilman Mead: I drive all around New York State and see thousands of these playgrounds incorporated in with schools, some of them in towns. I would think that the companies that do it, this isn't the first time that they came in and said this is going to cost \$89,000 complete to do this whole thing but we can put this and that in for \$30,000. Next year we'll add this and that for a three-year program. Has anyone looked at that?

Supervisor Eagan: Up to a few months ago we were still waiting for the school grants-writer to get back and put things together.

Connie Miner: I am waiting for the Boston Community Foundation. We are limited in where we go for funding. Corporate funders like Home Depot can't fund us because we are a municipal organization however with a 501C3, this is a pet project, then yes we can go after it. That is my idea. However Hamburg Central Schools do have their own Community Foundation, which is great, and they could do that but they are not doing anything. We could phase it in. The vender we used to get a cost estimate could tell you how we could phase it in but at this point whether it is a member item, it should be collaborative and should come from both organizations.

Councilman Mead: The Town Board will be in trouble if by next year the weather is beautiful and the kids are ready to go to the playground and it is the same as it is this year.

Councilman Simmeth: Didn't Highway Superintendent Kreitzbender say he could go to the playground with a highlift and get all that

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Councilman Simmeth (cont.): stuff out of there in a couple of days?

Councilman Mead: I would take everything out and start from scratch and put as much money as we can to help get this thing started and give it over to them because we don't want to own that anymore.

Supervisor Eagan: One issue is whether our lease is still active or not.

Connie Miner: Why is the town involved in this?

Councilman Mead: It was started a while back when we contributed to the building of the playground as another park for the town. The one that it benefits the most is Boston Valley school.

Councilman Wiktor: The wording of the original lease was that the Town would contribute to help with a community project to build a playground and would be responsible for the maintenance of it.

Councilman Mead: When the lease is up, we as a Board need to write a letter to the School Board stating that we will remove all dangerous materials from the site, as per our original agreement on maintenance, and use the rest of the money in the account to further the growth. Even \$5,000 could purchase swings.

Councilman Hawkins: The two bad areas are the crocodile and the tires are where the bees hide. If we took those two ride areas out that would alleviate a lot of the problem. Get rid of the danger areas first.

Connie Miner: The arsenic is in the wood.

Councilman Wiktor: I think it is more important that since the playground is on school property that it be a joint effort. The two legislative bodies should work together, not just the town be worried of taking care of this, because as we have heard through the years, ?was that the best decision for the town to put a playground on school property?? The school literally owns the property and if they want the thing out of there we have to get it out of there.

Councilman Simmeth: Regarding Priority #2 would we get more bang for our buck if we said, community center/senior center?

Connie Miner: Senior Center is the catch phrase. The community can use it but it must be the senior center. The senior center is what is going to get you the point otherwise we would have to do an income survey to qualify the majority of the town which you know won?t happen.

Councilman Mead: A lot of towns have a senior center. We don?t have a senior center.

Supervisor Eagan: We don?t have one but they don?t set aside funds saying this is for senior centers and this is for youth etc. This is one pool of money.

REQUESTS FOR 2004-2005

The meeting was closed at 7:50 p.m.

KAREN A. ELLIS, DEPUTY TOWN CLERK