

**Town of Colebrook
Board of Finance**

Revised Minutes to Special Meeting of October 20, 2022

Members Present

J. Millar
T. Hiller
T. McKeon
D. Wilber

Absent

M. Neal
D. Bielefield

Others Present

C. Johnstone
A. Bakulski
R. Gilbert
And several others

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Chairman J. Millar.

1. Messrs. Johnstone, Gilbert, and Millar summarized a Zoom meeting on October 11 with Francis “Champ” Perotti, manager of the eponymous HVAC contractor in East Canaan. Key points of the meeting were: (i) the project is well designed, and lower cost alternatives (e.g., replacing the boilers) won’t provide ventilation and A/C; (ii) the project is large enough to require a general contractor and be subject to prevailing wage; (iii) Perotti could bid on the equipment piece but isn’t set up for prevailing wage; (iv) the remaining life of the model 88 boilers currently at school is indeterminate, but this model will be discontinued next year; (v) R. Gilbert subsequently contacted several schools and contractors who spoke well of the VRF system, and one mentioned that savings on oil (without A/C) about offset higher electricity costs (with A/C), and that the cost estimates of Roger LaFleur appeared to be “good numbers”; and, finally, (vi) we should expect long lead times and uncertain supply costs if we go forward with the project. Tom McKeon asked what was going to happen with the mechanical room and the tunnels at the school. Andy Bakulski replied that the pipes, etc. were to be removed but the tunnels would remain open as some of the plumbing/electrical still uses it. He also added that the mechanical room would not be “filled in” at this time as a cost savings to the overall project. Duncan Wilber asked Robert Gilbert and Chris Johnstone if the water mitigation would be covered by this grant. Wilber stated that the need for a curtain drain, repointing of the foundation and sealing of the foundation, was addressed by the study in a dollar amount only and not with an engineered study or a material list. Johnstone stated that although there were no engineered drawings, \$300,000 was the estimated cost to achieve the water mitigation. Wilber then asked Gilbert, Johnstone and Bakulski, if the money appropriated for the capital project for the roof and gutter drains along with the money for the proposed heating/ventilation grant would solve ALL the water mitigation issues. The response was “yes.”
2. J. Millar reported that National Iron Bank would be interested in financing the HVAC project for the town. The approximate annual debt service on a term loan of \$1 million at 6.5% for five or ten years would be \$240,635 and \$139,105, respectively. This will entail tax increases of 3.8% for five years or 2.2% for ten unless other line items are reduced.
3. J Millar then moved to recommend the Board of Education’s \$1.8 million HVAC project to the town for approval at referendum, subject to being awarded a grant that will limit the town’s share of the cost to \$1 million or less, and to further recommend that the town authorize the Boards of Selectmen and Finance to borrow up to \$1 million on terms

satisfactory to them for that purpose. Second, T. McKeon. Passed unanimously with a consensus that the town should vote on the project at referendum rather than a town meeting.

4. J. Millar moved to accept the minutes of September 21, 2022. Second, T. McKeon. Passed unanimously.
5. T. Hiller moved to adjourn. Second, D. Wilber. Passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 5:49 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

James Millar
Chairman

Note: The original draft minutes to the meeting of October 20, 2022, were never approved by the Board of Finance, because they did not explain the Board's understanding with respect to water mitigation included in the HVAC project. The revised minutes above were finally approved by the Board on December 6, 2023, when the failure to approve them earlier was discovered.