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Community / Senior Center Advisory Committee

Thursday, March 24, 2022 @ 6:00 PM

Board of Education Conference Rooms

Special Meeting

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Audience of Citizens
4. Approval of Minutes, March 14, 2022
5. Discussion of items to include in presentation
6. Open Discussion
7. Adjournment

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Community / Senior Center Advisory Committee  
Monday, March 14, 2022 @ 6:00 PM  
Board of Education Conference Rooms  
Special Meeting Minutes

1. Call to Order

Chairman Luddy called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Attendance:

Members Present: Donna Bovee, Dave Cyr, Barbara Gombotz, Chairman Luddy, Tim Grady, Mike Urrunaga

Members Absent: None.

Staff Present:

Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services Jennifer Ochoa

3. Audience of Citizens

Tim Thurston, 100 Saw Mill Dr.

Mr. Thurston said the town needs a competitive 8 lane pool, a diving board and a therapy pool. The Berlin Boys Swim Team had their state trials at Cornerstone Aquatics Center. It is a very large facility that the committee should look at. All of the state trials and finals were held there and they have an 11 lane competition pool. The stands are about 3 ft. from the end of the pool which made the ground very wet in front and that is a mistake not to make. Also, the diving board should not face the fans, fans should sit on the side. Maloney High School is also a good place to visit, they have a beautiful indoor pool with mezzanine level stands. Seniors can walk right in without getting wet, as that was an issue at some of the pools.

3. Approval of Minutes, March 3, 2022

Ms. Bovee moved to approve the March 3, 2022 minutes.

Seconded by Mr. Grady.

Those voting in favor: Ms. Bovee, Ms. Gombotz, Mr. Grady, Mr. Urrunaga

Mr. Cyr and Chairman Luddy abstained as they were not at the March 3, 2022 meeting.

Vote being 4-0-2 (MOTION CARRIED).

5. Discussion of items to include in presentation

Chairman Luddy said there is a lot of information to put together and present to the Town Council and the Committee is working hard. Mr. Cyr had put together a packet and Ms. Bovee has given a lot of information. Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services Ochoa put together some of the operational costs for the committee to go through. Chairman Luddy and others added input on the PowerPoint information and will keep that kind of highlighted and have all of the back-up information more detailed in the report. The committee does not want to make it a long presentation, but there are highlights and we can probably go right off of Attachment A.

Mr. Cyr said that the committee is sort of running out of time. We have a meeting on March 24 and I think that we have to finish up our report that we planned to give to Town Council. That is a priority, because the PowerPoint presentation becomes bits and pieces of our work and we need to allow Town Council enough time to review it, ask us questions and make a decision on if they want to send this to referendum. We don't have to have our PowerPoint presentation the day that we hand it over to Town Council. Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services Ochoa said it won't take her long to pull bits and pieces into a PowerPoint. It is going to be the more thorough piece of information. Mr. Cyr suggests continuing to shoot for an April 1 date. The committee probably won't make that date, but has to get the report done and turned over to Town Council and 2 weeks later we give our PowerPoint to Town Council. They will have had a chance to review the report and will ask questions when we give our PowerPoint. Because they will be ready and had the report for a couple of weeks. Mr. Cyr said he does not believe it is necessary to have the report and PowerPoint fully completed on the day that we do it. We have to surge ahead and finish, there is a lot of information. Mr. Cyr said he made up some numbers when putting together his report, because there are membership fees that he did not know. Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services Jennifer Ochoa said between Mr. Cyr's report and Chairman Luddy's rough draft PowerPoint with the information I put in, you have a good baseline for your report. The committee has this meeting, March 24 and March 31. There is a good chance to have a completed report by then. Mr. Cyr added that because he gave the committee his report on the same night that YMCA CEO Benigni had presented, he did not have a sheet for the YMCA. Mr. Cyr said that he made one based on what YMCA CEO Benigni said at the February 24 meeting. There should be a sheet in the report that says this is what YMCA CEO Benigni said regarding the YMCA and what we learned from it. Mr. Cyr handed out his sheet. Ms. Bovee added that one of the things that we add in the details report and the PowerPoint is pros and cons of each option. Because that is critical for both the Town Council and for the public. Mr. Cyr added these are some of the things that I learned from YMCA CEO Benigni's presentation and there may be things that others learned that I missed. We need to add a sheet that explains what the YMCA said.

Ms. Bovee said in the packet are the follow-up questions to YMCA CEO Benigni. The committee had a couple of pages of questions that were sent to the YMCA and those are the answers. Ms. Bovee added that she was disappointed because most answers said to be determined on them in the 2-page set of questions that we sent and YMCA CEO Benigni had acknowledged that. Then we sent the follow-up questions and if anybody has any other questions, we should send it to YMCA CEO Benigni. Ms. Bovee said YMCA CEO Benigni had called her and gave verbal answers, but Ms. Bovee said she was not comfortable with verbal answers and asked to put something in writing for the questions and answers. Ms. Bovee added that she was disappointed because the committee spent a lot of time on the 2- page questions and he didn't have a lot of good answers, it was to be determined. Some I can understand, but not most. Ms. Bovee offered to summarize what YMCA CEO Benigni said for the additional questions and then sent it back to him. That is what we have here.

Mr. Cyr said that his sheet is based on what he learned from that YMCA presentation and the committee can add, subtract, or move. Mr. Cyr said he does not mind adding to the Word document and having mark-ups emailed to him and will take them. Ms. Bovee added that we have to go through this page by page anyway, then people throw out comments, either I don't agree, or I do agree and can we change it. Mr. Cyr said that is going to happen, but the page by page iteration is going to take time. Ms. Bovee said we have to do it as a group to be fair and we have a lot going on outside of this room. The committee has to review it and if we can only do it here then that is where we spend the time. Mr. Cyr added that others might have picked up things to add to his sheet. There is another sheet as well that are add-on's to the first draft. The items should be added to the report. The first one,



the people making decisions should know about the swim and dive team at the high school and know the numbers. The public needs to know if we build a new YMCA, or a new community senior center there are membership fees. That is an important part that Town Council should know about. Also, grant funds expire if you don't use them by 12/01/22 and I don't know what happens to those funds after that. Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services Jennifer Ochoa will ask Finance Director Delaney. Mr. Cyr said maybe an extension is possible, or if you don't use it by year end we have to give it back, but I wanted to have that somewhere in there to answer that question. The other thing is there are some add-on's for the unanswered section, maybe page 21. Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services Jennifer Ochoa added that she emailed the documents to Mr. Urrunaga who was attending through Zoom. Mr. Cyr said the original document had a traffic study question and it said not evaluated, I found out that the busiest time on Patterson Way is 6:30 a.m. to 7:30 a.m. and 1:45 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. When the YMCA said their biggest program is daycare, dropping off young children could cause a traffic issue with the high school traffic. Mr. Grady said they explained in the presentation they were not going to give up their existing day care places. Ms. Bovee said YMCA CEO Benigni answered that one question for the summer camp. The summer camp he may move to the new facility, which is a very big camp the YMCA runs at Willard. There is a deal they would take over a couple of classrooms at McGee and Hubbard to do daycare and convert those rooms, but who knows what they will do, things can change. There has to be a traffic study no matter which option you do. What does the opportunity cost? Whatever goes there, the opportunity cost is gone. The YMCA does this massive daycare center, but that doesn't really have an impact on other daycares. What towns would Berlin YMCA serve? Putnam served 13 towns. Mr. Grady said all the surrounding towns. Anybody that is a member of the YMCA nationally is welcome to any YMCA. Ms. Bovee said the surrounding towns are mainly Meriden and New Britain, but you could get people from maybe Plainville or Waterbury. Because if it is built and its new, people will want to go just to see it and maybe that will die down over time. Mr. Cyr said those are the 2 sheets that he put together. We don't have a lot of time. Mr. Cyr said he would take the mark-ups and work on it. Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services Ochoa said that she already has the rough draft write up of everything and has the current expenses sheet from Finance Director Delaney.

Mr. Grady asked if we can track how much of the town's resources are used for this committee? Committee members go out to visit all the sites and charge it back to the grants. Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services Ochoa asked every time you have a meeting? Mr. Grady said we had town employees going to different facilities, plus time to work on this. If we could cut that out and use the grant. Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services Ochoa will ask Finance Director Delaney.

Chairman Luddy asked if we could discuss the estimated costs spreadsheet. Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services Ochoa said she added Social and Youth Services because as of right now they are included in this conceptual design from QA&M to be moved to that building. So, I want to make sure that budget was included, as well as any needs they may have. That includes annual operating cost, in addition to current budgets, this is all the additional staffing that would be required. I don't know about facilities staff, but assume more custodians, not sure how many, or the cost. Not sure about Public Grounds staff either, but we can reach out to them, or invite them to a meeting. The rest is lifeguards, we added an additional 60% and took 8 weeks out of 52 and did simple math to get there. Ms. Bovee asked if the first column is salary and then second is with fringes and benefits? Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services Ochoa said yes, that is the budgeted amount with fringes and benefits. Ms. Bovee said so Facilities and Marketing Administrators is \$58k salary, with fringes it is \$96k. Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services Ochoa said correct, you have to add 15% to every salary, plus \$30k for health insurance and assume everyone you hire is taking advantage of health insurance. We couldn't look at other towns to compare what they did, we went by union contract as to what levels.

When you get to the Parks and Recreation budget, you have to understand that years ago a special revenue budget was adopted. The town actually created that as a way to not cut into the operating budget as much for Parks and Recreation programs. The only major programs that come out of the operating budget for Parks and Recreation is the pools, basketball and summer camp. Every other program that Superintendent Dennis runs is self-sustaining and runs through a special revenue account. That is why your operational costs for Parks and Recreation are not going to skyrocket. Because it is really only those 3 things that are on that budget program wise.



For Senior services, if you look at Senior Center Director Doyle's operating budget, it is only \$9,200. Her 2 items 50% is only \$2k and that is not a huge budget to begin with. Utilities and maintenance, I heard from Matthew Ariniello at Newtown Community Center and got numbers of what he spent on water, electricity and HVAC every year and sent those numbers to Town Architect Arcari at QA&M. QA&M said use these numbers for your building. I don't know if and what additional expenses for facilities, parks and grounds would be, or what a security system would be either. That is something we have to figure out, maybe Facilities Director Solek would know. Then on top of that, Town Architect Arcari's budget has \$150k for FFE, which is furnishings, fixtures and equipment. Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services Ochoa said she spoke with David Melesko at Bloomfield Community Center and his facility is 56k sq. ft. and his FFE came to \$342k, so it kind of opened my eyes. I reached out to Town Architect Arcari and said we have the basketball court, gym, pool and kitchen, give examples of what is included and what is not. With the pool the diving board, diving stand, starting blocks and scoreboard are included. Pool and all that other stuff is not included, those are startup costs you have when you open the building. For the gymnasium, that will need built-in bleachers. Town Architect Arcari's numbers did not include that.

Ms. Bovee asked if the pool incremental to what Town Architect Arcari already built into the cost is \$37k? Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services Ochoa said it is estimated. Ms. Bovee said we rounded to \$40k or something. Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services Ochoa said lifeguard chairs range from \$6,500k to \$3k per chair, but we just don't know how many we would get until we have a more formal plan. Ms. Bovee said this is kind of conceptual because that is all we have. It is \$37k and there are a couple of empty spots. The exercise room is an additional \$225k. Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services Ochoa said correct, we are doubling the size of it and doubling all of our weight equipment, it is very old. Rocky Hill outfitted a 588 sq. ft. facility for \$55k, so I multiplied that and took some money off. We have a couple of new bikes and treadmills that we can carry over. Ms. Bovee said so your recommendation is to add that? Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services Ochoa said these are all just startup estimating costs. The first one is your typical FFE fee, that is kind of like the bulk \$150, but I had no idea how many tables and chairs we need for the rooms due to fire codes. We could put all of this in one block and everything else would be additional. Exercise room, café, and kitchen. The kitchen includes the oven, range and refrigerator, but does not include dishwasher or microwave. Also, outdoor patio, health room and game room. Rocky Hill added a game room and we can email them for an estimate. Ms. Bovee said we have some of those games currently. Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services Ochoa said that we want to replace the pool tables and has to look at the size of the room. Also, the food pantry. It is a rough cost and not sure if the committee wants to invite Facilities Director Solek to the next meeting.

We have pool costs and how much we spend on chemicals. That will be another big operating expense. Ms. Bovee said the pool has to include all of the chemical costs. Newtown talked to us about what they did to decrease the use of chemicals, the types of chemicals and how much it currently costs. We have that detail and have to put it all in. We need Facilities Director Solek to come to a meeting, or reach him another way to understand what those costs are incremental to what he already spends. Facilities Director Solek provided savings on the pools. It is small, but his variable cost would go away if we closed one of the pools. Mr. Grady said he is curious what it costs to close one of those pools? Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services Ochoa said \$350k to \$500k. Ms. Bovee said yes, to close down one pool, it is \$350k-\$500k range. That would come off the capital. Let's say we have in our 10 year budget, to make them ADA compliant, each pool has a \$750k capital estimate. Off that, if you close one of those, one of the \$750k goes away. In addition, then you have to spend \$350k to \$500k to close it down. Your incremental is \$250k in savings. Mr. Grady said you have to spend \$350k right up front. Ms. Bovee said you have to make them ADA compliant in the next 4-5 years and can't keep putting it off. The point is, if you have it in your capital budget and decide to close it, that goes away. You replace it with a brand-new facility with the pools and it is incremental. That is how you have to look at this stuff.

Ms. Bovee said the Aquatics Director is part time right now, is this over and above incremental to that salary? Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services Ochoa said it is an 8 week part-time position. Ms. Bovee said you have those dollars in your budget, but is that incremental? Director of Community, Recreation and Park



Services Ochoa this would be a full time position at \$72k and also a certified CPO. Now that the pool is indoors, I don't know how much the Grounds Department is going to maintain it. The Grounds Department currently carries the CPO, which is a Certified Pool Operator. This would be a requirement for this person that we would be hiring. Ms. Bovee said here are the detailed budgets which we all have. Parks and Recreation, Senior Services, Social Services is in here too. Also, in there is the Aquatics Director and that is where I keep talking about incremental and it is really important. Because if you had a full time position and get a quarter time position, it doesn't cost the town \$113k. It might only cost \$95k, that is small dollars, but that is the kind of stuff we have to understand. We start with your budget, we take out things that aren't going to happen and replace it with things that are going to happen, like you have here, and those are savings. Same with the pools, those are savings and you have to look at your capital and look at your operating. Ms. Bovee said to Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services Ochoa that she thinks this is a great start and if maybe two of us might be willing to, as she has gone through things with Finance Director Delaney in the past, sit down with him and make sure we have the incremental add-on to the current budget for operating a town funded facility and whatever departments may have impact. We don't want to say that we didn't get it. Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services Ochoa said she can send it to Ms. Bovee via email if she wants to sit down with Finance Director Delaney.

Mr. Cyr said our goal is to create two things for understanding. One is additional costs for startup. Then what we believe to be the cost to run the facility annually. Mr. Cyr said he could add 2 sheets to the report to plug that in, or whatever the committee comes up with and put it into the report. Ms. Bovee said we will have the detail behind it. Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services Ochoa said the only thing we are really missing right now is the additional expenses from the facilities and grounds, cost of a security system and the game room. Ms. Bovee said Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services Ochoa included utilities and maintenance, best estimates. We have utilities and maintenance in our packet from this current senior center and for the current community center. Ms. Bovee said those currently don't appear within the Parks and Recreation department, but are savings the town is going to recognize, it is in the packet from last week. Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services Ochoa said you don't know about HVAC, electricity or water for the community center because the library is still above it. It is unknown if they can shut down that half of the building down completely.

Ms. Bovee said she is going through the numbers in great detail and understands the budgets because she has gone through it with Finance Director Delaney quite a bit for Parks and Recreation. She has the senior, but doesn't know it completely. Ms. Bovee said she would be glad to put together using Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services Ochoa's information, here's where we are, these are the costs that will not repeat itself, reduce the current budget, add-in the new costs including facilities and all that. Summarize it, the incremental impact to be added to consider the mill rate, ongoing operating costs and startup costs like the furniture and fixtures. Everything that Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services Ochoa has and other things not already in the \$35.7M. Would that be helpful? Chairman Luddy said absolutely.

Mr. Grady asked if QA&M gave \$150k for their total startup costs? Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services Ochoa said that is what they had for their FFE, but Town Architect Arcari's startup for the pool obviously has stuff included, just not everything. That first paragraph under startup costs, where tables and chairs is listed, we can bulk that and say \$150k. It will be impossible to estimate that. Mr. Grady said it is way in excess of \$150k. Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services Ochoa said Bloomfield sent theirs and it is \$342k. Ms. Bovee said two people is good, having a good set of eyes. Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services Ochoa will email Finance Director Delaney tomorrow to say the committee will be reaching out and how she came up with stuff

Chairman Luddy said looking at the PowerPoint page by page, some of the things that Ms. Bovee mentioned and Mr. Cyr brought can be added in somewhere, like the pros and cons list and change to the YMCA. Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services Ochoa said it is important to know, I like how Mr. Cyr put in his report where you guys came from, what committees. I thought that was really important and kept that in. The last list was what Chairman Luddy had put in the PowerPoint, basically our Attachment A. Chairman Luddy said we are just trying to pick out some of the easy stuff, we visited some places and the things that we were asked to do. Just



to put them out there and pull them all off to try and fit everything on the page. Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services Ochoa said Chairman Luddy's rough draft that he had sent out that is in the minutes, it said pictures of the sites. I don't know if you want to include that because we don't have them from every town, so I just included the ones that I had. Ms. Bovee said what we could do is reference the online because most of these are online, pictures of the sites, within the presentation. If the Town Councilor wanted to go online to see it they could.

Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services Ochoa said she did not have all of the membership rates and asked Ms. Bovee to send them. Also, not sure if she wanted to put notes for each page, or how to showcase the other sites. Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services Ochoa did one per page, but we could always group it. Ms. Bovee said another thing to consider is you have operating costs and then have revenue that you want to estimate, however you want to do that. The rates, the way Mr. Cyr had it, where he had facilities listed and going across was the membership rates. The numbers have to be filled in, but it is a comparison chart of all the facilities that we visited with the rates which is important. It is hard to compare when you have to flip back and forth to different pages. Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services Ochoa said that is fine, I can open it to one page. Not all of them have rates, like Rocky Hill Senior Center. Ms. Bovee said maybe the ones with the pools. Chairman Luddy said that is a good idea to get it all on one page. Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services Ochoa added and list the facilities and the rates. Chairman Luddy said and say there are some membership fees. Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services Ochoa said plus any notes you want to put about the facilities can be included in there too.

Chairman Luddy said and we have some of the financial stuff that we just talked about and Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services Ochoa filled it out. Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services Ochoa said that she added what she had. Mr. Urrunaga asked about when adding the numbers, would it be helpful if we put somewhere in here the size of the community that centers serve? That way you can also compare and contrast to the size of Berlin, as compared to say Branford, or if the Putnum YMCA serves a certain amount of population with that. Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services Ochoa asked so just the population of each town? Mr. Urrunaga said not necessarily that, I think that you kind of want to look at for the town community centers, yes. The first one that we went to they pointed out there were several communities that sort of use it. Maybe an average or something like that. I know that when it comes to the YMCA's they were going to be servicing, I believe it was something like 13 communities. Mr. Grady said he thinks it was Mansfield YMCA. Mr. Urrunaga said yes. Mr. Grady said they service quite a few towns. Mr. Urrunaga said he sees that as an easy comparison when you are looking at operating budgets as there is one number, but then community size as well can be compared and contrast what could be our best option.

Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services Ochoa asked Chairman Luddy what expenses he wants for the pools? Chairman Luddy said it is within your numbers anyways. Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services Ochoa said it is within all the operating budgets. Chairman Luddy said we could cut that out. Ms. Bovee said maybe what we have is potential savings because that is why we did the work on the pools that we currently have is to understand if people wanted to close one of the pools. Because you are adding a pool that is town funded. This is what you could save and it is not really 100% of pool costs because there are some fixed costs that are going to remain. Staff is used in other places, but there is overtime from the pool side, so that is why we did all of that work. That could go with the potential savings. It is up to the Town Council to decide, but at least we are giving them factual information for them to determine. Mr. Luddy asked if you wanted to put operational costs in the chart of other projects that is in the budget, so you can see it. Then the pros and cons was a good idea to put in here and some of Mr. Cyr's stuff. Ms. Bovee said how about the recommendations that we have here, but they will change. How about changes to the current design based on lessons learned from the other facilities. We have the Statement of Needs and can't change the Statement of Needs. The current design gives us more than what we asked for. We have got to take a look, in other words, 3 pools, we asked for 2 pools. A competitive pool and a therapy pool. Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services Ochoa said she thinks that is fine. Ms. Bovee said we put the 3<sup>rd</sup> pool in. Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services Ochoa said that is what Chairman Luddy's first thing is, to review gathered information, review with Town Architect Arcari and Public Building Commission and send it back to Commission on Aging and Parks and Recreation. Ms. Bovee said, but don't send it



back to us, speaking for Parks and Recreation. We didn't ask for it, so take it out. Why are you sending it back to me, why waste his time? Ms. Bovee thinks a recommendation to the Town Council should be that the Town Council works with the Architect. The Architect identifies things that he put in that are beyond the Statement of Needs. Take those out and get another drawing. Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services Ochoa said which is also Social and Youth Services and the Food Pantry. Ms. Bovee said because you have done services for them. Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services Ochoa said, but that is not in the Statement of Needs to be asked for it. Town Architect Arcari put it in because he thought it made sense in the design. So you would remove Social and Youth Services. Ms. Bovee asked what are they going to do with the room if they are using a Town Hall, if that is not part of the plan, it shouldn't be in here. Town Architect Arcari took the Statement of Needs and he added to it based on discussions and based on what he saw happening in the future that other towns are doing, which is great. We all know if we want a town funded facility, it is going to have to be cut.

Ms. Bovee said that she really wants a facility that meets the Statement of Needs and it combines this community and senior center, based on the Statement of Needs that were presented and even with that, to think about Statement of Needs. Ms. Bovee said she has talked to Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services Ochoa and Superintendent of Recreation Dennis in the past, if the library is taking over that bottom of the community center and in our Statement of Need we have all these community rooms. If the library is going to use those for community rooms, which they do upstairs. They have a big facility upstairs and use it for meetings and if the plan is to keep some of those community rooms, we don't need as many in the new facility. That is a recommendation to consider. Just like Mr. Cyr had pointed out going to digital, does the library need that? Mr. Cyr said no, I don't know that. Mr. Grady said those questions should have been asked a long time ago. Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services Ochoa said with the library taking over the bottom of the building, that is part of the task, they need to renovate some of it. That wouldn't be an immediate move at all, that would probably take years.

Ms. Bovee said the other thing is we have the senior meeting rooms, the thought was for the most part that seniors will use those rooms during the day for their activities. Later in the day, night time, the community comes in and uses them. Town Architect Arcari set up too many rooms. The kitchen is a great kitchen because other towns are doing this, but they are putting in bells and whistles in their kitchen and renting it out to other organizations. We didn't ask for that. If we want to just provide meals for seniors, you don't need the bells and whistles in the kitchen. Town Architect Arcari is doing the right thing by showing us the ways of other towns, but we are not at that point. Ms. Bovee said all of those recommendations and others, the committee needs to include. Chairman Luddy said he wants to make sure we follow the process because it is like you said, we can't change the Statement of Needs, but if it has to go back, you are going to follow how it has to go back. If it goes to the Town Council, then maybe they send it back to the Public Building Commission and they ask for your input and then they change it. Ms. Bovee said exactly. Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services Ochoa said and that is still just a recommendation that the committee is giving. Mr. Grady said we just recommend in general. Ms. Bovee said she would give them specific examples. Mr. Grady said why not scrap that 70 sq. ft. building and try again, because obviously it is too big. Ms. Bovee said we have 70k and have everything as is, we need another option. If I were a Town Councilor, I'd say you guys have seen other places, what do you think? First step is take out everything that we didn't ask for.

Mr. Cyr said on page 22 of my report, under future additional analysis I said to consider reducing facility size to lower project costs, it is right in there. If you want to say, remove 3<sup>rd</sup> pool, I will add it. For example, list the items you think might be potentially removable, I will put it right there. Mr. Grady said it is in excess of the Statement of Needs. Chairman Luddy said he has seen the Statement of Needs, but it is hard to pick out what we put in the Statement of Needs and what Town Architect Arcari added. Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services Ochoa said the only two things that come to mind are the 3<sup>rd</sup> pool and Social and Youth Services. Mr. Urrunaga added that if you talk to the architect, he might have a list readily accessible. You guys can use this, but it is not in your Statement of Needs, so ask the architect as well. The one thing that I picked up on along the way, with the visits that we made to a lot of these places is office space. There is always savings to be made when you cut office space. Obviously, you don't want to cut offices per se, but making offices smaller. I know people complained about the size of their offices were smaller, but they were still functional, so there is always something there. Also,



the things they said that were cut, that shouldn't be cut. Like spaces around the pool equipment. The pool purification, water purification stuff and other things as well that we need to be mindful of.

Mr. Cyr said the problem is, we don't have enough time to do another re-analysis, so if the committee just tells me a few things that were over designed and I will put it there. If the Town Council says okay, 70k sq. ft. might be pushing it, we might consider something else. If they want to go that route. Tell me a few items that you think should be bye-bye and I'll put them in there. I already have Social and Youth Services and the department, food pantry and the 3<sup>rd</sup> pool. There are a couple of other items, but the problem is we don't have time to go through a whole new assessment, we don't. Ms. Bovee said she realizes that, but that is part of our job from the lessons learned, we all have good ideas. Mr. Cyr said they can reduce the size of the facility if they so desire to lower the cost and these are some items that you can look at when you figure it out. Mr. Urrunaga said we are all saying the same thing. Ms. Bovee said based on our last meeting, Town Architect Arcari, they went back and talked to the building and planning commission and he is all-set to do another rendition. They already talked to him about doing another rendition. They are just waiting.

Chairman Luddy said that was his idea with at least getting something down and Mr. Cyr started it and had a lot of information and I threw some stuff together and Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services Ochoa threw on some points, we have some other things we have to hunt down, get some real numbers in there soon. People are going to ask questions and we ought to know what some of those answers are. Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services Ochoa asked if as a committee, we can come up with specific questions that can be sent to Facilities Director Solek? As to what exactly we are looking for. Ms. Bovee said just like you did for the new facility. Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services Ochoa said the 70k sq. ft. facility. Ms. Bovee said in Newtown there is a facilities person, they did not put a full time person, I think it is 60% if you look in there. They had to add a person. Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services Ochoa said also how many custodians they would need. Ms. Bovee said because of this new facility, they had to add a person to consider 100% of their costs, if that is what Facilities Director Solek feels he needs. Same thing that you just went through. Chairman Luddy added is it a non-permeable surface? Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services Ochoa added they will need another vehicle and I have no idea. Ms. Bovee added outside maintenance, most of the towns that have the pool, they decided to go with outside maintenance for the day-to-day stuff. Because they found it to be cheaper, so cleaning, things like that. Don't use your existing town staff. It is cheaper to use outside. That is a question for it. Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services Ochoa said that is a union question, not for Facilities Director Solek. They would add more staff before they hired outside help.

Ms. Bovee said Rocky Hill and Newtown, those two actually changed staff days for their Public Grounds people. Some work Tuesday through Saturday and others work Wednesday to Sunday. They did that so they don't pay overtime costs, the work week is different for people. They were able to get it through. Also, for the outside maintenance costs for this new facility, any new employee and not sure how this is going to work with Berlin, but any new employee, even though they have unions. They were either non-union or union, in the case of Newtown I believe. Or they were a different classification for Rocky Hill. There are ways, our Public Grounds people share staff between the towns to avoid unemployment and things like that so.

Chairman Luddy said he would go around the room to ask everyone's ideas, starting with Ms. Gombotz. Ms. Gombotz said she thinks the committee came up with a good plan. There were some things that Ms. Gombotz could see, like the lobby of the center, was too large. Some of the hallways were too big. Chairman Luddy added that some of them were using the wider hallways to do functions. The Town of Berlin has other places to do that, maybe we don't. So that is something that could be added. Ms. Gombotz added there are things you should not do away with like the kitchen, because you are going to have congregate meals, so you have to have a decent kitchen. Ms. Gombotz said she thinks the kitchen should be available to outside town's people and charge them for it. We are going to have this beautiful facility, why not let people use it and I'm sure they would be willing to pay for it. Ms. Bovee said she doesn't disagree, you need a kitchen, but not sure that we need the elaborate kitchen that is being put into other facilities. That is kind of how it is configured. Chairman Luddy said not everything was being used in the Bloomfield kitchen. They were outsourced. Ms. Bovee said Rocky Hill has a huge kitchen, Viking range, but don't even turn the gas on because they decided to use outside services for meals. Ms.



Bovee said if they rent it out, the person has to bring in outside services from certain caterers. Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services Ochoa said according to the Statement of Need, they asked for a large commercial grade kitchen. That was in the Statement of Needs. Ms. Bovee said if you look at these kitchens, they are beyond what we need. It is a whole catering venture, they have the racks coming in with all the silver. Not sure if that is what the seniors meant by large commercial kitchen. Ms. Gombotz said or how much they would use that. How much the town would use it. Ms. Bovee said certainly it should be used by the town if it is available. I don't disagree. Mr. Grady said it would be used half a dozen times a year. Ms. Bovee said the seniors have the lunches and the meals and everything so you need a kitchen for that. What is designed based on the pictures that Town Architect Arcari showed us, is a kitchen like they have in Newtown and Rocky Hill and they are huge. Ms. Gombotz said for the meals, they are not actually cooking there. They are bringing in the food. Ms. Bovee added that maybe that is something seniors need to look at, do you need a large commercial kitchen. Is the intent to cook?

Ms. Bovee said she agrees with Mr. Cyr, the committee has a lot of work to get done. I don't know if we can meet at all next week. Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services Ochoa said we are meeting on March 24 and March 31. The committee is originally scheduled for April 7 because we do the first Thursday of every month. There is a conflict because that is the night with Parks and Rec. Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services Ochoa cannot be staff liaison for two places at once. So we would have to reschedule April 7. Ms. Bovee said that Mayor Kaczynski spoke about making the report to the public and the Town Council at the same time. He was talking about April 19. I asked to check vacation schedules for schools and things. If they are going to set a date and we know what that date is, we know what we have for time. I know we want to push for April 1 and I'm okay with that, but April 19 is coming very quickly too. If we are going to do a presentation from this, then we need to know that. Mr. Cyr said we don't know when we are going to be done with it and if we know like a week out that we only need to make 2 more tweaks to it and we will be done. Then I think at that time we tell Mayor Kaczynski that we are going to deliver this to you on April 5. That is when it is going to be done, when do you want us to make the pitch? We should give them a couple of weeks to review all the information, so the night that you make the pitch, they may have questions. We can't just pitch it to them, because we will be back in their lap in another couple of weeks, or three weeks answering questions. So we should deliver our report to them, and sort of a week before we know our report is going to be done, tell Mayor Kaczynski we are going to be done on April 4. When do you believe it would be appropriate for us to give it to you? If they come up with a date we will do it. The committee might not be done until mid-April. I don't know, we have a lot of work. I'm all for reaching out to Mayor Kaczynski when we are a little bit closer.

Chairman Luddy said he does not have the Town Council dates. Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services Ochoa said April 5 and April 19. April 19 is Board of Finance as well. Ms. Bovee said that is what Mayor Kaczynski said. Mr. Cyr said April 19 we could put as a question mark. Mr. Grady said I don't think we are solid for that date. Mr. Cyr said Mayor Kaczynski said he would call a special meeting just for this. He would invite the public and there will be one at the senior center. Ms. Bovee said for the report, is it going to be narrative? Mr. Cyr has done this and there are certain things on certain pages. How do you want to do it? Mr. Cyr said just use bullets. Then they can ask us questions about the bullets, because narrative will add 5 pages. We said they can consider a reduced size facility if they want. The 3<sup>rd</sup> pool can go, some services. If we give this to them roughly 2 weeks before our pitch, they will go through and say I have a question about this. The night of the pitch, when we are done, say okay ask us questions. We have to give them an opportunity to be prepared to ask us. Because we might of missed something. Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services Ochoa said we have to narrow down what else is missing from this. We know we want to add a pros and cons list. We are not going to expect Mr. Cyr to come up with it, so let's spend 10-15 right now and come up with a list that Mr. Cyr can start to input. Mr. Cyr said or you can do it between now and March 24 and give it to me on the 24<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Bovee said if it is bullets, that is what a PowerPoint does, so why not make the PowerPoint. It is the PowerPoint, the bullets, the table of contents like you have and put it in your PowerPoint. Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services Ochoa said Mr. Cyr's report is going to have more detail, like look at his bonding page. They can go to any Board of Finance meeting and listen to Finance Director Delaney talk about this for a hour. During a PowerPoint presentation, you are not going to talk about all of this for a long period of time. Ms. Bovee said all of the details such as trip visits, is the committee giving those? Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services Ochoa said



she thinks that is what we condense into a pro/con list. Ms. Bovee said in a large business such as where she works, you would do an executive summary PowerPoint and then behind it is an appendix, which is the last table of contents and the appendix is all the detail. There are things in here that we don't bring up to the PowerPoint. It is an attached appendix. The meeting notes could be in the report as lessons learned from the sites. Somehow we have to summarize all of the work. Because that is where we are getting all of our information. So that is the appendix. I think this is great and suggest putting it into a PowerPoint and everything else is in the appendix.

Mr. Grady said he thinks we made some good progress. We need to look at the scale of this project, that is going to make the rest of this project go much easier. Mr. Urrunaga said a lot of this is what we were saying, the presentation is good. We were talking about the kitchen, there might be something that we could talk to Senior Center Director Doyle about. Nobody wants to change the Statement of Needs, but it is trying to boil down what they are looking to use the kitchen for. Whether it is using it every day, or for lunch and dinner, that would facilitate a commercial kitchen. If they plan to use other services we could pare down the scope a little bit. Everything we were talking about, whether we do an appendix or a report, we have the report and pick out certain things to use as the PowerPoint. Use it as an overview of what we were doing. Get all of the work done as fast as we can.

Chairman Luddy said we should come up with the pros and cons list. Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services Ochoa will send those details to Mr. Cyr and anything else we think is missing. Ms. Bovee said also potential grants, the YMCA will do their fundraising, but should the town hire someone for fundraising? Ms. Bovee put in a call to Representative John Larsen's office and called U.S. Senator Richard Blumenthal's office and spoke with the office staff. There are earmarks once a year in late spring and towns or groups would come to the congressman and pitch their view. That is an option if the town wants to fund the facility. They decide in the summer time which to earmark and go after and in the fall they go through it. The project either gets approval for it or not. We are not ready to do anything this spring, but that is one thing next spring depending on how Town Council goes about. They may want to pursue on the federal side. Representative John Larsen's staff thought this would fit in for the earmark.

Mr. Grady said approve the information on the senior community center spreadsheets and use Mr. Cyr's report as an informational thing.

## 6. Open Discussion

Next meeting is March 24 at 6:00 p.m. and Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services Ochoa will use the same agenda.

## 7. Adjournment

Mr. Cyr moved to adjourn at 7:20 p.m.

Seconded by Mr. Grady.

Vote being 6-0. MOTION CARRIED

Submitted by,  
Alina Brown

Received on 3/21/2022  
at 8:40:10 AM by Town Clerk  
Kathryn J Wall

John

Appreciate your call and our discussion. I summarized the key points you and I discussed to each of the questions below, but before we would share this with the entire committee, please review my summary and correct anything that I may have misstated. Once final we can provide to our committee. Again thank you and have a great weekend!

1. We would like to obtain the audited statements - perhaps 2018-2020. If you have financials for 2021 we would like to obtain as well, even if only quarterly information (perhaps audit is not complete). Will provide.
2. I did go on line and reviewed the 990's posted. 2020 was not posted. We would like a copy of that as well. Will provide
3. What is CrossFit and is this something that would be offered in Berlin? Crossfit is a 20 min high energy/intensity workout . Meriden runs it out of its gymnastic facility. It is part of the Y and not something that would necessarily be offered at a Berlin Y.
4. Given your thought that A Berlin Y would be similar in size to Meriden, can you send us an operating statement (profit and loss) for Meriden? Will provide
5. Approx \$5 million of your revenue is from grants. Can you provide a breakdown by grantor (maybe in notes of audit, not sure). Very difficult to do . There are various grants of all sizes . If the audit notes do not provide and the Committee would still like the information we can discuss at that time.
6. Assume for the building costs if grants are secured for the Berlin facility , they will remain financially assigned to Berlin ? Absolutely
7. Last one- why has the Y not built a Y on Berlin previously? We realize there have been past discussions and it was mentioned that there was some type of feasibility study was done 6 or so years ago that indicates a Y would work in Berlin. What has changed that makes you want to do so now and it will work? New Britain Y is the only Y that could build a Y in Berlin due to preassigned areas by the National Y. New Britain had a feasibility study done 6/7 years ago and that is the one John referenced in his remarks at our meeting. It wasn't a slam-dunk, but it did indicate that it was feasible. Meriden merged with New Britain and has noted previously New Britain had been losing significant sums of money and with the Meriden merger and leadership New Britain's finances turned around. The focus has been to straighten out New Britain first before proceeding with any new relationship.
8. Additional Question – is the joiner fee a one time fee? Yes, but frankly 50-80% of time the joiner fee is waived, for example in April (Healthy Heart Month) the joiner fee will be waived for all new members.

I mentioned to John that last night I asked all members to forward any additional questions to Brenden or bring to our next meeting so we can accumulate and forward to John as well. In addition John reiterated that a new feasibility study would be done, discussions with town and legal docs/agreements, then fundraising, finalize plans and build.

Donna