

SUBJECT TO APPROVAL

MEETING DATE: MONDAY MARCH 1, 2021
6:00 P.M.

MEETING PLACE: ZOOM ONLINE MEETING

BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES

6:00 p.m. Special Session

First Selectwoman Lyons called the Special Session of Monday, March 1, 2021 to order at 6:02 p.m. Also in attendance were Selectwoman Duques, Selectman Goldberg, Selectman Murphy and Selectman Wilson.

1. Pledge of Allegiance.
First Selectwoman Lyons led the Pledge of Allegiance.
2. Review Town Facilities Study with the consultant, DRA Associates.

Jim Barrett Principal in charge of the assessment study introduced the Project Manager Greg Smolley and Ron Paolillo interiors lead. He stated that they had been working for the last six months with an assessment of 36 buildings. The team provided a powerpoint presentation highlighting the findings of the study.

First Selectwoman Lyons thanked everyone on the study team for their work. Selectman Wilson asked if there were any recommendations for rebalancing spaces; he added that he was surprised there wasn't an overview of beach and recreation space and utilization. Mr. Smolley stated that the balancing of the needs of the town departments will be moving forward into a facilities master plan. The next steps would be to complete a program analysis and then determine the space needs for the programs offered. Relative to beach and recreation the use of their meeting space was part of this charge; not their program space. The consultant also stated that the town-wide master plan is where usage for Academy School, Island Avenue School and Library would be analyzed.

Selectman Wilson questioned how the study of the shelter needs would impact the school plan and First Selectwoman Lyons stated that the Board would have to speak to the school system about the timing in the process of moving forward with potentially designating a school building as an emergency shelter. Mr. Smolley said that the Town should consider what

it needs the shelter to be and to determine what upgrades are needed and the associated costs. First Selectwoman Lyons confirmed that there were no emergency investment looming for the Town but rather some items that need to be addressed in the next 2-3 years.

3. Review Madison Youth & Family Services Study with consultant, Loretta Jay/CCM.

Loretta Jay provided an overview of her process of researching the services of Youth & Family Services. She detailed that she began by meeting Town staff and then School staff members that interact or oversee the Youth & Family Services programs within the school buildings. Then, she identified four towns that were similar in population and make-up to compare to Madison; Glastonbury, Avon, Guilford, and Wilton. Avon and Wilton are not providing clinical services to their families; they were outsourcing these services and felt it resulted in some shortcomings. Wilton is in the process of eliminating their Youth Services Bureau and the schools are feeling this blowback. Glastonbury and Guilford both provide clinical services within their school buildings. Glastonbury is almost twice as large as Madison and does not charge for services; Guilford charges for services.

She stated that Madison is doing a terrific job in providing services and in growing the number of families served as well as growing revenue. Overall the department is meeting the communities' needs. Through Madison's programs, the community is benefiting greatly. The Department uses interns to supplement staff and the existing staff is very dedicated and have been with the town for many years. The department is effective in identifying and satisfying needs of the residents and also determining where there are issues that need to be addressed. Also the school system has come to rely on the services offered through the Youth & Family Services Department. She added that services provided by the department are not duplicated by the school team or the special education teams.

Overall the department makes the Town well-positioned for future challenges pertaining to mental health needs for youth in Town. Selectman Murphy stated that he was encouraged that the Town is being proactive and that the department has been confirmed to provide excellent services for the residents. Selectwoman Duques confirmed that Madison's structure is better serving the town than the structure of other towns compared in the study. Ms. Jay said that the services in Madison are comprehensive, helpful and cost-effective.

Selectwoman Duques questioned if the department reaches out to the private schools and Director Cochran stated that the services can only be

rendered to Madison residents. The Department collaborates with the private schools to provide outreach and information, though.

Selectman Wilson stated that Madison recognizes that it has a natural role in supporting the health of the community and the members in crisis; however, there are state and school supports as well as the private sector and local churches. He asked Ms. Jay whether when evaluating the spectrum of resources, many of whom share a common mission, if there were any places of overlapping services? Ms. Jay stated that although she had anticipated finding redundant services especially in the Care Collaborative, she did not see a redundancy. There are only 14 private providers in Madison, and only 10 take insurance and most were not open to new patients. She stated that in calling 2-1-1 to gather more information she was concerned about the lack of availability of private providers in Madison. There is not a strong alternative to fall back on in Madison. Other professional stakeholders also rely upon the services of the Youth & Family Services Department. To outsource services would mean also losing control of the services provided.

Also, the age group of children 10 and younger are showing to need additional services and these services cannot always be provided in the private sector. Also, young adults are 19-24 are trending to need more services. The Board reviewed that children under 3 were receiving services through the State under a much different model. Selectman Goldberg questioned if spacing and office needs were being met and Ms. Jay stated that the department needs more space and also the current physical space lacks some confidentiality needs.

Selectwoman Duques asked Ms. Jay to confirm that the current model was cost-effective and she stated that looking at what it would cost to have the services provided by school personnel, the cost would be greater to the taxpayers. Selectman Wilson provided an overview of ESS (special education) services offered under a contract for intensive services and whether this contract was compared in the department's study. Selectman Murphy stated that the overview provided tonight seemed to indicate Madison's model was "good" or was a "best practice" for the state. He asked if Madison could be more recognized at a state level. Mr. Cochran stated that the department has always tried to provide the right services at the lowest cost to the residents. He stated that First Selectman Banisch had brought the study to fruition and that First Selectwoman Lyons had seen it through. He credited his staff for working extremely hard to pull together the data during a time when direct services, especially during the COVID pandemic, were in demand.

4. Citizens Comments.
None.

5. Adjournment.

There being no objection the Board adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lauren Rhines
Town Svcs. Coordinator / Risk Manager