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Town of Swampscott
Capital Improvements Committee Meeting Minutes
Tuesday October 11th, 2022, 5:00 PM

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Richard Raymond (Chair) Kelley Begin, David Brodsky, Ryan Hale, Jeremiah Sullivan

OTHER TOWN OFFICIALS PRESENT

MaryEllen Fletcher, Select Board Member; JH, Finance Committee Member; AS, Director of Administration & Finance; Gino Cresta, Asst. Town Administrator – Operations and Public Works Director; Graham Archer, Fire Chief; Ruben Quesada, Police Chief; Patrick Luddy, Treasurer/Collector; Heidi Whear, Director of Aging Services; Jonathan Nichols; Public Library Director; Joseph Douillette, PEG Coordinator; Danielle Strauss, Recreation Director

5:00 PM Meeting Called to Order

Waterfront Equipment – Recreation (Special Town Meeting)

DS summarized her request, which includes replacement of three sailboats and acquisition of additional paddleboards for recreation summer programs. The existing sail boats are cracked, taking on water and no longer maintainable.

DS explained that supply chain issues are resulting in at least a six-month lead time for replacement boats. Approval of this project at special town meeting rather than annual town meeting will allow the new boats to go into service in time for next Summer. DS recounted the recreation department's takeover of the Summer Paddleboard program last year after the vendor terminated their contract. The paddleboard program last summer was successful and DS is expecting twice as many kids if not more next Summer. Many went to Marblehead this past Summer due to space limitations. The useful life of paddleboards is appx. five years give-or-take depending on wear and tear. For next year additional boards are needed to allow twenty kids to participate simultaneously.

RH asked for information regarding the utilization of the existing sailboats. DS stated the existing boats were acquired appx. fifteen years ago and have afforded hundreds of children in the community the opportunity to learn to sail. The recreation department offers three summer sailing sessions; beginner sessions generally fill up with 20/30 kids per session. American Sailboats are used for beginner and intermediate-level sailing. The town also has 420 style racing sailboats that can be used; the friends of Swampscott sailing use and maintain these boats in addition to the high school sailing program.

\$45,641 of funding is requested for the project. DS explained this amount reflects an increase of \$5,000 versus original submission due to freight and shipping costs.

Middle School Security Upgrades - Facilities

MK described the project, which includes redesign of the vestibule at the middle school. Specifically, this two-part project includes: 1. Replacement of glass/doors/sidelites 2. Adding a layer. There is a large overhang above the vestibule ahead of the glass doors. Adding a layer would make this space a true vestibule and provide two layers of protection and security at the school. Upgrades to door hardware throughout the interior of the building are also included.

RH asked if this work related to a code upgrade. MK responded that building codes are mostly designed for fire, and this work is not driven by a change in or upgrade to code. However, this investment would add security to the Middle School which is responsive to the current environment.

Town-Wide Traffic Improvements – Facilities/DPW/Community Development

MK summarized that this project would address pedestrian safety in various locations throughout the town, including roadways around the site of the new elementary school. Approval is being requested for this town meeting so that work can begin next Summer. An example of some areas to be improved are Orchard Rd. Forest Ave. Forest Ave Ext. @ Humphrey ST. Humphrey St outdoor dining/permanence of installation, Humphrey St. Fisherman's beach area/fish house, and Blaney Street. MK commented that some federal and state funding may be available to support this initiative as well.

RH asked if design schematics could be provided so the committee can understand the scope of the project better. RH also asked what percentage of the funding requested would be eligible for a grant? MK responded that Marzie Galazka would know better; Safe Roads for Schools is a pretty robust program that may aid this project.

Town & School Phone Improvements

This request is responsive to new E-911 federal requirements. MK explains modern phone systems show a 911 operator your exact room number/location within the building when you dial 911 from a school, and also eliminates the requirement of using a prefix to dial out to 911. The compliance deadline for this upgrade to the phone system is unclear.

RR commented that a \$1 surcharge on every phone utility bill goes to the state 911 fund. RR asked MK if he was aware of any grants available from this funding source for this purpose.

JH commented that there may also be funding available for these upgrades through E-Rate.

MK responded that he will follow-up with the School IT department regarding grant opportunities for this project. The district already uses E-Rate for other capital programs.

DPW Yard - Facilities

Funding is to address immediate facilities issues at the DPW Yard.

RH asked for clarification that this work is to address the bays/breakroom/office area and not the yard itself. MK confirmed.

Funding is predominately construction. RH asked if there are drawings or a punch-list or pictures MK can submit that would help the committee visualize the project better.

Network Upgrades – Facilities

MK summarized this recurring project to upgrade network equipment at the school dept. These upgrades are supported 50% by a federal E-Rate grant.

Detailed questions regarding the specific equipment to be upgraded need to be directed to Lytania Mackey.

Clarke Building Renovation – Facilities

MK summarized proposed renovation of the Clarke Building, which would convey the existing elementary space to an administration building and an expanded integrated preschool. Both of these functions are currently housed at the middle school. Renovation should occur so that both functions can move out of middle school a year after the new elementary school opens.

RR asked if the MSBA would cover any of these project costs. MK responded that the MSBA to his knowledge only funds K-12 educational facilities and they fund projects for administrative buildings or preschools.

MK highlighted that the building has been upgraded over the years; there is an opportunity to address the roof, a PV system, windows/doors, brick façade waterproofing, interior programming, flooring, hvac, drop ceiling, electrical distribution in the building, and the sprinkler system may be required but is not determined yet. The building needs to be fully accessible; having the lift already is a step in the right direction but additional accessibility upgrades will likely be needed.

MK comments the estimate of design cost is a standard percentage of construction. The exact scope of work is intended to be found via the design process. The size of the project would require an OPM per Mass. Procurement Law. The goal is to fund full design of the building, but a possible alternative would be to fund a schematic design first.

RH asked for an explanation on how the Clarke building's use is to be determined vs. the Hadley Re-Use process. MK commented that the reason the Hadley Building Re-Use was sent to a committee for debate is because the Select Board established the committee and steered that process.

RH also asked if the pre-school program was revenue-generating or if it was funded by the district. MK deferred an answer to the Superintendent or the Director of Student Services. RR commented that the pre-school does charge tuition, but he was unsure of the exact revenues.

MK highlighted that the major goal of the project is to relocate the administration and pre-school to the Clarke to free up the space in the Middle School. This will allow for more efficient renovation of the middle school in the future.

DB asked MK if there was any risk that funds could be expended on the design of the renovation of the Clarke school, and then there could be a change in the intended use of the building. MK commented that he is proposing the project based on what has been discussed.

DB asked for clarification regarding who has final authority on the use of the Clarke building.

District Pick-Up with Plow- Facilities

School district has two pick-up trucks; request is to replace older vehicle with a new vehicle that is snowplow ready.

MK commented that he is looking into an electric vehicle, however he has not determined if the vehicle would sustain consistent plowing.

RR asked if the vehicle could be utilized to do other plowing in a snow event if the school department plowing was completed. MK commented that it could be used to aid the other plowing that DPW traditionally supports.

RH asked if the truck is to be used only in winter months. MK commented that the maintenance crew uses these trucks every single day.

RR asked if a dump body would increase the utilization of the vehicle. MK commented that it would not; they typically have a trailer used with the vehicles to move items between schools.

Green Communities Projects – Facilities

Intent is to upgrade new unit ventilator and controls at the middle school. Functionally and operationally beneficial to the facility; allows facilities team to operate and monitor all the school's univents from a central management system. MK commented that this project is fully grant funded and the town has been doing green communities projects for several years as funding is available.

Controls Upgrades at the Police Station - Facilities

Access and HVAC controls. HVAC component upgrades to a modern E-MS system. The system is locally controlled in the attic space at the PD and makes it difficult to operate and adjust the system adequately throughout the year. The Access control system has had internal failures; looking to upgrade the system to the same that is used at the town hall and the school buildings.

RH asked if another year could be squeezed out of either of these systems. MK responded that the access controls are at end of life and need to be upgraded, but the HVAC BMS is not at end of life. There would likely be a payback to upgrading this system because it would add a level of control that would generate energy savings not otherwise attainable.

MK commented the project could be split into two as the controls systems are not dependent upon each other.

Town Hall Exterior Restoration- Facilities

Design for this project was funded last year. This request is to fund the full extent of the work designed.

Library Entries - Facilities

Project encompasses design work to address the front and side entries at the library. RR asked if the Historic Commission would have a say on these renovations. MK said less-so on the library, but Historic Commission would have a say on the town hall exterior restoration project previously discussed.

RH asked for clarification on the accessibility conditions at the library. MK confirmed that the library is accessible, however the layouts are not the best suited for accessibility.

MEF asked if the children's room takes on water when it rains, and if so what plans are in place to fix that. MK confirmed the children's room gets water; some small fixes have already been done, however the front entry renovations would include measures that address the drainage issues that contribute to the water.

MEF asked if the project should be accelerated to special town meeting to advance design six months. MK commented that he cannot say this project is more important compared to all the other projects that are being requested.

High School Media Center Shades - Facilities

Shades in the high school media center are currently inoperable. The shades are proprietary and the vendor that installed them is unresponsive to maintenance calls. The request is to replace the system – pricing is not firm yet as responses to quote solicitations are still being compiled.

Town Hall Kitchenette – Facilities

Proposal includes upgrades to cabinetry, utilities, electrical, plumbing, addition of small stove, and installation. MEF questioned whether a stove was necessary since the space is already equipped with a microwave.

Cruiser Replacement - Police

Existing fleet consists of 14 Cruisers – 3 Investigations, 7 Patrols, 1 Station Car, 1 Animal Control, 2 Other

One cruiser was totaled. \$17,000 of insurance proceeds were received to defray some of the replacement cost of that vehicle.

RR commented that the cost estimate of the proposal submitted seemed high.

RH asked for data on utilization. Specifically, requested mileage records/operating hours for the active vehicles. RH pointed out that the PD has been able to operate for the past year while being down a vehicle.

RQ commented that the new FT ACO is using an existing police vehicle as well.

Firearms upgrades – Police

Proposal is for a phased upgrade of firearms. Acquire 40mm SAGE Guns, replace Bean-Bag shotguns, replace AR-15s ,ammunition, slings, magazines, and simulation rounds for training exercises. The department recently completed active shooting training at the high-school using

simulation rounds. For FY2025, increase less-lethal options by acquiring BOLA-wraps. FY2026, replace 40 handguns including holsters and magazines. Shelf life is approximately 10yrs; looking to the long-term to replace handguns, may be able to defer.

RR asked if the union is okay with bringing in these devices being requested for FY2024. There would be mandated training associated with deploying these weapons in the department. It is cost-prohibitive when the department has to send its staff to training and backfill the shift. The training can become very costly.

RR commented that the Middlesex County Sheriff utilizes a mobile range that is helpful in reducing training costs/overtime/travel.

IA Pro/Blue Team Software - Police

RQ summarized the need for a centralized personnel management system that tracks training, use of force, vehicle accidents, on-duty vehicle systems, reporting, and early warning mechanisms for officers involved in critical incidents. Software could be shared with the Fire Department. Cost estimate is \$18,500 of IA Pro/Blue Team with an ongoing \$3,200 maintenance fee. There are 15 communities using the software in MA including Cambridge, Chelsea, Fall River, Weston, and Haverhill.

RR asked about return on investment; i.e. can definitive data be provided to qualify the town for grant funds for different initiatives.

RQ commented that cost estimate includes implementation and training.

Digitization of Cemetery Records - DPW

RR asked how many people are buried in the town's cemetery; GC responded thousands.

RR asked if there was an ongoing fee associated with the database.

GC discuss fees for burial, perpetual care fees, and flower funds.

DB asked if a price increase on future burials could pay for these improvements.

GC said we historically averaged 100 burials a year/ 90 were full and 10 were cremations. More recently the cemetery is observing 50/50 full burials versus cremations, which conserves space.

RH asked if there are labor savings for digitizing these records; GC said yes he could shift cemetery information requests to the administrative office and free up field labor that gets diverted to review of physical records.

Cemetery Surplus Fill removal – DPW

Surplus Fill from water/sewer operations has accumulated at the Cemetery. Request is for funding to remove the fill. There may be opportunity to sell the fill to a quarry and pay the transporting costs only.

Asked if the trucking costs could come out of the operating budget.

Water Main Replacement- DPW

This request would cover Atlantic Ave to Shepherd road and up Beach Bluff Ave.

0% interest financing is available for this project from the MWRA's clean water trust revolving fund.

Lift Station Upgrades – DPW

Seven remote lift stations; new O&M contractor Watermark environmental. Looking for a couple hundred thousand dollars to upgrade controls. Last year, the state gave us a \$200,000 investment. Heating units for Humphrey St. pumping station; catastrophic failure flooded the station in 2012; sub-floor two and three lost their heating units.

Equipment Replacement - DPW

Proposal is to replace a 2001 Water utility truck with compressor and a 2002 GMC equipped with a Sander. Both are nearing end of life and due for replacement.

RH asked if trucks are used year-round; GC responded that the sander is winter use only.

Delineation Markers – DPW

Per GC, this request can be eliminated as it will be addressed within the scope of the Pedestrian Safety Improvements project.

Level Phillips Park – DPW

The park is built atop a former dump and the ground settles all the time. DPW has been filling in the field as needed but current conditions are not ideal on the field. This request would address repairs to the field area perpendicular to the practice football field and Charlotte Rd.

RR asked if a concession stand at Phillips Park has been considered. GC commented that he would like to have one added but that is not part of this request.

Paving – Non-Chapter 90 funding - DPW

Local appropriation supplemental to Annual Chapter 90 paving projects.

Chapter-90 funding – DPW

Annual paving projects – State-Funded. Request is for expected level of funding.

Water Meter Replacement – DPW

Current meters are approaching twenty years of age. After some time meters begin to under-record.

RH asked if there was a phased-approach option to the replacement of water meters. GC commented that the project could be broken out into 25% increments; last time the meters were replaced was in 2005 by a company called Vanguard based in Virginia. At the time all of the meters were replaced at once and a phased approach was not used.

Joe Douillette – Community Auditorium – PEG/Facilities

JD discussed his proposal, which includes upgrading the auditorium at the high school to serve as true hybrid meeting space, add acoustical treatment to the walls, upgrade speaker systems, digitize audio systems, upgrade lighting package and replace tungsten lights with LEDs.

Total proposal is estimated to cost \$700,000; NGRID incentives for replacing lighting are available and up to an estimated \$150,000 of fundraising from class of 1979 and 1989 is possible, but not committed at this time.

These upgrades would bring the town elevated experiences for both meetings and cultural gatherings. The space could serve as a desirable performance venue. JD commented the project could be broken out into two phases, lighting being the later phase.

True Attest,



Patrick Luddy

Treasurer/Collector

Approved by vote of the finance committee 9/12/2023