



**Town of Swampscott**  
**Capital Improvements Committee Meeting Minutes**  
Tuesday March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2022 - 7:00 PM  
Virtual Meeting

**CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT**

David Brodsky, Ryan Hale, Jeremiah Sullivan, Kelley Begin

**ABSENT**

Richard Raymond (Chair)

**OTHER TOWN OFFICIALS PRESENT**

MaryEllen Fletcher, Finance Committee Liaison to CIC; Marzie Galazka, Director of Community and Economic Development; Graham Archer, Fire Chief; David Kurz, Interim Police Chief; Patrick Luddy, Treasurer/Collector

7:05 Meeting called to order

**Discuss FY2023-FY2027 Capital Plan – Community Development**

Director of Community and Economic Development Marzie Galazka discussed her proposal for improvements to Abott Park at Clarke School:

Phase 1 - Resurfacing of Basketball Court at Abbott Park/Clarke School

Phase 2 – Playground area

Phase 3 – Play Structure

Phase 4 – Green Space Redesign

The request for FY2023 pertains to Phase 1 above; there are cracks and serious wear on the basketball court and it is unusable at this point. The lowest quote is for \$29,475 total and DPW staff would be able to remove and dispose of the old asphalt as part of the project.

**Discuss FY2023-FY2027 Capital Plan – Fire Department**

**Decommissioning of Municipal Alarm System**

Funds decommissioning of existing telegraph system which is maintenance-intensive (increasingly so) and antiquated. Cellular technology has made much of this equipment obsolete, specifically for street boxes. The municipal wired system is also used by businesses and municipal buildings for a quicker response time when incidents trigger the alarm vs. third party alarm systems that may be routed out of state and reduce response time. The system has become increasingly unreliable. In FY2022, the central receiving point at the fire station was updated. In FY2023, the request for \$96,526 is to begin the decommissioning of all the wired systems in town and replace them with radio-frequency/IoT enabled devices. Existing street boxes would be

replaced with more strategically placed solar-powered systems. The newest section of this system is 75-years old. Funding requested for FY2024 would finish out the project.

Ryan Hale asked if taking care of phase 2 & 3 of this project together achieves any price synergies. Chief Archer commented that he felt the longer time frame is necessary to accomplish this project, to allow for communication to users and an adequate transition period.

Ryan Hale asked if there were any grant funds available to offset the cost of this project. Chief Archer commented that there were no grants he have found which would cover these costs. Specifically, the Assistance to Firefighters (AFG) grant does not fund this project.

Ryan Hale asked if there were any tailings in the FY22 appropriation for phase 1 of the project. Chief Archer responded there were not; the project was on-budget

### **Replacement of Ladder Truck - \$1,650,000 (FY2024)**

Ladder 18 is in need of replacement – it is appx. 20 years old which is beyond expected useful life. It was towed out of the station today in non-running condition for repairs. There is an estimated two-year lead time to obtain a new ladder truck.

MaryEllen Fletcher asked if there were any synergies that could be accomplished by purchasing a ladder truck in a bulk transaction with another community such as Boston. Chief Archer commented that it is possible, but different communities have different needs in terms of equipment and capacity etc., so it is not always possible. Chief Archer discussed the exploration of this leading up to the purchase of the recent fire engine, and stated that he would be looking into it again leading up to the replacement of the ladder truck because he does think it is prudent to leverage the buying power of two communities when possible.

Jay Sullivan discussed the timing of the project; with a two-year lead time and project approval on FY24, we would be planning for a new ladder to come online in FY26, and asked Chief Archer if the existing ladder could reasonably last that long.

Chief Archer responded that he would like to have the ladder truck replaced as soon as possible because his confidence in the existing ladder truck is diminishing.

MaryEllen Fletcher asked the Town Treasurer whether the vendor would require a deposit ahead of time. The Town Treasurer commented that the full borrowing would not be done until delivery was taken of the apparatus. Chief Archer commented that he believed the initial deposit for the order would be appx. 25%, there would be a progress payment, and then a final payment Due on Delivery.

### **Sprinkler System Replacement – Fire Station - \$200,000**

50% of the cost is covered by AFG grant award received of \$100,000. The current living/sleeping quarters of the fire dept has no sprinkler system and is above the apparatus bays. The safety equipment is necessary to mitigate the risk that a fire in the apparatus could pose a safety risk to staff. The remaining \$100,000 of the \$200,000 request would need to be borrowed for.

He has explored an AFG grant for the apparatus; he is hopeful however it cannot be counted on because grant awards for apparatus are highly competitive.

## **Discuss FY2023-FY2027 Capital Plan – Police Department**

### **Radio Infrastructure Upgrades - \$147,100**

Interim Chief Kurz commented that approximately \$82,000 was approved to take care of urgent communications issues using the town's vendor AllComm. The remaining request, in FY2023, addresses updating the entire radio system to eliminate remaining communications issues. This includes updates repeaters, towers, lines, and equipment related to the components of the communications system.

### **Taser Replacement Program – Rescinded**

Interim Chief Kurz commented that there is a need to replace the non-lethal taser technology periodically. The vendor that sells the Taser equipment also sells body camera technology, and Interim Chief recommends eliminating this capital request because the project can be funded in a package deal with the body cameras, a project which was approved previously.

MaryEllen Fletcher asked for clarification regarding whether the implementation of the technology needs to be bargained with the police union and if so an update on status. Director of Administration and Finance Amy Sarro commented that Sean Fitzgerald has been working on this matter for some time and is at the bargaining table with the Police Union currently.

### **Replacement of Telephone System - \$30,000**

Interim Chief Kurz commented that the existing phone system is over 15 years old and that the department would benefit from an updated system.

### **Pickup Truck - \$45,000**

This could be used to tow the harbormaster truck; this would not be a truck equipped as a patrol vehicle but would have other uses and capabilities that the department does not currently have at their disposal.

Ryan Hale asked if a pickup truck could be equipped as a patrol vehicle to increase its utilization. Chief Kurz commented that pickup trucks could be equipped as a patrol vehicle; the cost would be higher however.

### **Firearms Upgrades - \$32,000**

Interim Chief Kurz commented that the current firearms are approximately 8 years old; it is his opinion that with technological advances the department could benefit from replacing firearms approximately every 10 years.

Ryan Hale asked clarification on how many times an officer used their weapon; Chief Kurz commented that there were two incidents where weapons were drawn in the past year, however shots were not fired. The

### **Police Cruisers**

Jay Sullivan commented that there has been a practice of purchasing cruisers on a 2 per yr/1 per yr cycle.

## **Computer Upgrades**

Computer upgrades were accomplished this year in operating budget; Chief Kurz advised that future upgrades need to be kept in mind and addressed regularly, although this request was not included in the plan this year because technology replacements are considered operating expenses and funded through the regular annual operating budget.

## **Animal Control Vehicle - \$30,000**

The current animal control officer is using a personal vehicle to do the work and is being reimbursed for mileage. The cost for a small ranger-type pickup truck would be approximately \$30,000 under a state contract.

MaryEllen Fletcher commented that other communities use a cargo van, and perhaps a used cargo van would be a more affordable and practical option. Interim Chief Kurz commented that the animal control officer recommended a small pickup truck with 4WD because of the amount of hills in town.

## **Workspace Redesign - \$15,000**

Interim Chief Kurz recommends small renovations to the existing police station in order to eliminate some meeting space/common space and activate additional office space for administrative support staff. Specifically, he discussed the potential future need for a second Captain's position and additional support staff for Body Camera program administration/preparation of records requests.

## **3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Renovation of Fire Station - \$50,000**

Chief Archer commented that phase two of the renovation of the fire station is in the list of requests for FY2023; the project is necessary to accomplish

## **Citizen's Petition**

MaryEllen Fletcher commented that there was a citizen's petition for the May Town Meeting's consideration regarding window replacement at the middle school and suggested that the CIC decide whether they would like to discuss the project and/or report on the article.

Jay Sullivan commented that they expect a joint meeting to be held with the finance committee in April and perhaps it would make sense to have that discussion at that time together.

8:30 Meeting Adjourned

The next meeting of the CIC will be held on 3/15/22 at 7pm.

True Attest,

Patrick Luddy  
Treasurer/Collector

*Minutes APPROVED by vote of the Capital Improvements Committee 3/15/2022*