DEPT./BOARD: Capital Budget Committee

DATE: March 10, 2020

TIME: 7:00 P.M.

PLACE: Town Hall Annex Room B

AGENDA

1. Police Dept. capital request for Fiscal 2021 and Ten Year Capital Plan review

2. 7:30 P.M. DPW capital projects for Fiscal 2021 and Ten Year Capital Plan review

3. Approval of Feb. 18, 2020 meeting minutes

4. Citizens time
1. Ernest Zabolotny called the March 10, 2020 Capital Budget Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Annex basement, 25 Center Street.

Members Present: Ernest Zabolotny, Myrna Saltman, Adam Senesi, Gary Mercier, Gary Kaske, Mark Woods and Salvana Shakib

2. Review of Police Department capital budget request for FY 2021

Chief Kent and Deputy Chief Browne presented a brief discussion of the request of $89,580 for the purchase of Ballistic vests and carriers including the manner in which they are used, what they might have as additional equipment storage and typical lifetime. The service viability of the protective vests deteriorates over time and typically last for about 5 years. This request is to replace vests purchased five years ago when a Federal assistance program was accessed by Grant request that covered approximately 50% of the total cost. It is planned that the Department will prepare a request to that same Federal assistance program to cover the cost of the vests this April and it is hoped that some, or as much as all of the cost, will be reimbursed to the Town.

There will also be a request for the replacement of three police cruisers as has been the practice for a number of years. The vehicles to be replaced all have extensive mileage and engine running time and have become difficult to maintain as safe operating vehicles.

There was a brief discussion of staffing levels as a function of the ratio of police to populace and a comparison to staffing levels in other similar communities with a suggestion that such information be included in presentation to TM. The staffing discussion arose from the fact that the number of vests originally did not include vests for seven newly hired officers which were, in effect, replacement staff.

There was also a brief discussion of a possible planning study for a new Police facility which is an element of our long term Capital Plan.

A vote was called for in support of the request which was unanimous approval(7-0-0) to recommend in favor of the request to TM.

3. Review of DPW FY 2021 capital requests
J. Sanchez and T. Hayes presented a list of DPW projects and costs to the committee all of which are elements of the Ten Year Capital plan. Most are annual maintenance activities and scheduled equipment replacements that have been previously discussed in detail. Vehicle replacements include 3 pickup trucks and one sedan which have extensive mileage and age/maintenance issues that preclude continued use. They will be replaced by new trucks equipped with plows to aid in reducing snow removal duty. In answer to a question related to current snow removal costs, J. Sanchez estimated that as of March 10 the current seasonal cost of snow removal was about $400,000 or about half of the average cost experienced by Burlington in the recent past for full season snow removal. The bulk of the vehicle replacement costs, in effect, could be seen as being paid for by the savings experienced this year.

A 27 year old back hoe will be replaced by a mini excavator which is expected to have broader application especially considering expected sidewalk construction activity. A 19 year old Heavy Duty dump truck with heavy corrosion of body and frame will be replace by a sander truck which also will have ability to be used in snow removal service. CBC members identified no issues related to these planned purchases other than questions related to State authorized vehicle purchases and general maintenance practice with fleet vehicles of different manufacturers.

Eleven separate projects were identified as individual warrant requests. Of these the largest outlay will be $3,000,000 for Road and parking lot repair and reconstruction. This amount has been an annual constant for some time and the question of whether this is sufficient to maintain a generally good record for road condition in the Town was posed to T. Hayes who stated that, in his judgement, the funding level was adequate to support the road maintenance program.

As part of the plan to complete joining the MWRA, the second phase interconnection design has been moved up a year in order to maintain the scheduled completion date for the project. There were no other issues identified related to the overall project that would have an impact on the timing of integration into the MWRA water supply system.

Facility upgrades at the Library are projected to cost $250,000 for new heating units. Discussion included the design merits of the equipment to be purchased. It is expected that the primary energy conservation impact of the new units will be as a result of using programmable thermostats (based on the results of actions taken at other town buildings) and not of energy efficiency improvements in the heating equipment itself.

Sewer system projects include general pump station maintenance at a cost of $120,000, as has been the practice for the last several years and design of the Francis Wyman Pump Station renovation/replacement project at a cost of $300,000. Considering the importance to the community of these pumping stations and their age of about 50 years, CBC members consider these expenditures to be critical. Other projects such as replacement for the Town Hall Generator, sprinkler systems improvements for several town buildings, roof repairs at the Pine Haven cemetery, and an allowance for filter repair at the Vine Brook treatment plant, should it be needed, are considered to be necessary maintenance actions to assure continued and safe municipal services delivery.
Votes on the items discussed were not taken. Although no issues of concern were presented by committee members, it was deemed useful to allow time for additional deliberation. J. Sanchez agreed that any other questions that might arise could be sent to his attention by the Chair for resolution.

Subjects of other planned meeting were briefly discussed.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 PM