

West Newbury Capital Improvements Committee Meeting Minutes

Meeting date & place: 7:30 PM, February 9, 2023, 1st Floor Hearing Room 1910 Building

Members Present: Rick Parker, Elisa Grammer, Ross Capolupo and Chair Judy Mizner. Department of Public Works (DPW) Director Wayne Amaral, Fire Chief Mike Dwyer, and Town Manager Angus Jennings were also present.

Call to order

7:30 PM

Review capital projects proposed for FY24 funding; designate Committee member(s) to take lead on review for each proposed project

Fire Department Forestry Truck \$117K

Fire Chief Mike Dwyer said that a new truck is intended to replace the old hand-me-down truck that the Department received from DPW and retrofitted with a pump and other fire-related items. The current truck is past its useful life and now requires two people to start the pumping system. The truck, kept at the Garden Street station, is used for off-road fires and to bring personnel and medical equipment in medical emergencies until an ambulance arrives.

The new truck will be designed for off-road use and will come in a complete package with a pump and a plastic tank for 250-300 gallons that slides into the truck bed. The tank and pump assembly can be transferred to another truck. The old truck will be surplused and sold, except that medical equipment, tools, etc. will be kept and transferred to the new truck.

The new truck will have a better ability to pump from local water bodies (provided the pond or other water source is nearby) and will have a better pump start up system. In response to Mr. Parker, Mr. Dwyer explained that the truck and pump will be gas-fueled (and not electric) because that is what is needed given the weight the truck will be carrying and the extra torque needed for off-road service.

Ms. Mizner and Ms. Grammer inquired about the large cost for small items such as painting signage on the truck and cup holders. Mr. Amaral said that the state gets a discount and some items, like the pre-installed snowplow prep package, come whether you want it or not.

Ms. Mizner is the Committee member assigned to gather more information for this item.

Sidewalk snowplow \$172K

DPW Director Amaral explained that the Department had had a track-propelled Bombardier sidewalk snow plow/blower and still keeps it as a backup, but replaced the initial Bombardier with a lower quality Holder machine with rubber tires in 2007. He said that there are concerns with the Holder tipping, and that the Holder has become old and less powerful—and thus less able to manage tightly packed and piled snow left by state snow clearing on Rte 113.

In response to Mr. Capolupo (who has professional expertise with large equipment), Mr. Amaral explained that the Town now clears the sidewalk on Main Street from the Training Field on down toward Groveland. It is also used for the parking lot at the daycare renting the back of Town Hall. Mr. Amaral noted that paths around Pipestave Hill and Mill Pond could be cleared with the new

Bombardier machine. He said that the Bombardier would not be transported on a trailer, but rather can drive (slowly) on Main Street.

Mr. Capolupo noted that this is a very costly item in view of the fact it would not be used for 8-9 months out of the year. He added that a gently used large John Deere tractor with many attachments costs considerably less. Mr. Amaral said that the narrow width of the sidewalks (especially with the utility poles) is a limiting factor—the equipment must be small. The new Bombardier would be 46” wide, and no piece of equipment the Town now has could be adapted for this purpose.

Mr. Capolupo is the Committee member assigned to gather more information for this item.

HVAC unit Page School \$40K

Mr. Amaral explained that the current Samsung minisplit unit was installed in 2014 and has failed. The vendor is unable to fix it. This unit provides heat and cooling to school offices, some of which have no windows.

Mr. Amaral noted that he is waiting for the Pentucket Regional School District to provide information about quotes for the replacement unit. The school will make the initial recommendation then DPW will do research and vet the proposal to avoid problems such as those experienced with the current failed system. The school maintains the unit but the Town has to pay to buy the new one. Mr. Amaral said that vendors can be slow in responding with quotes and Mr. Parker said that he has heard that the demand for heat pumps has soared. Mr. Amaral said that in view of the problem of extreme heat in those offices in summer, it is in the school’s interest to get the quote as soon as possible.

Mr. Parker is the Committee member assigned to gather more information for this item.

Water well building \$??

Mr. Amaral explained that the exterior of the building needs refurbishing. In-house the DPW fixed the roof, fascia, and soffit, at a considerable cost savings. The stucco exterior walls (covering concrete block construction) are cracking and need repair and painting. Mr. Amaral said that they considered using some other siding but learned that by far the simplest and least costly option is to fix the stucco, seal up cracks, and paint it. If this is put off, the stucco will lose integrity, spall, and need to be removed and completely replaced. He stated that this repair is mainly a labor cost. Additionally, DPW can do work on the door trim of the building. Once done, this should last 15 years or so. The Water Department will be putting out bids and contracting for this.

Ms. Grammer is the Committee member assigned to gather more information for this item.

Water main Church & Prospect \$??

Mr. Jennings explained that the Town and Water Department sought a low interest state loan for the water main replacement project, but this was not granted. He said that in fall 2021, the Town appropriated \$100K from the Water Enterprise Fund for a study of the project to replace 7,700

linear feet of water mains on Church and Prospect Street and that the Conservation Commission has approved the project. The only cost estimate now available is a per linear foot cost about \$2.7M combined that was updated last January. The only way to get a more realistic cost is to get bids.

An idea under consideration is to have the Town first purchase the pipe and hardware and then later put out a bid for the installation labor. The pipe and hardware are standard products and Merrimac successfully used this approach. The advantages of doing this include avoiding a contractor markup for the pipe materials, avoiding having the contractor need to front the cost for these materials (thus broadening the pool of bidders), and addressing the issues associated with a 30-week lead time to obtain the materials (which is problematic when bidders place a time-limit on the duration of the bid). The drawbacks involve finding a laydown yard to store the pipe.

Ms. Mizner said that before voting to buy the pipe and hardware, townspeople will want to know roughly how much it will cost to have this installed. Mr. Jennings agreed that a ballpark labor cost estimate will be needed for Town Meeting.

Another factor is that the Town has \$1.4M ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act of 2021) money available to it and the Select Board is considering using some of that for the installation work. That allocation, said Mr. Jennings, could be done by the Select Board without going through Town Meeting. Mr. Jennings noted that the Treasury Department has many complex rules concerning ARPA expenditures and the Town has hired a consultant to ensure compliance. The Town has also hired a new special counsel who specializes in water matters, and who can help set up a subgrantee agreement so the Town can have control to ensure ARPA compliance.

Ms. Grammer is the Committee member assigned to gather more information for this item.

Review narrative and updates to CIC webpage

The Committee approved the updates to the Capital Improvements Committee webpage and the content of the narrative description that was posted.

Mr. Jennings will provide Ms. Grammer a .pdf version of the most recent CIP spreadsheet and she will include links to that on the website.

Review schedule for upcoming Capital Improvement Committee meeting(s)

The next meeting will be held on March 9. By the end of that week the Committee members will provide their Litmus Test rankings to Ms. Grammer, who will then circulate a completed Committee ranking. The CIC report to the Select Board is due on March 13. The Finance Committee booklet will need to be completed by April 10 and Ms. Mizner will work on the CIC's narrative report for that.

Review and approve Minutes from previous CIC meeting

The Committee unanimously approved the minutes of January 12, 2023 as amended.

Other business

Adjournment

9:00 pm

Meeting Documents

Meeting packet provided by Town Manager
Litmus Test

Respectfully submitted

Elisa Grammer