

West Newbury Capital Improvements Committee Meeting Minutes

Meeting date & place: 7:15 pm, February 24, 2021, Remote Participation via Zoom.

<https://zoom.us/j/98776694748?pwd=RjZ2MlVTcmYxWnF0SlJ2dG1ZWkhtQT09>

Members Present: Via remote participation Chair Nathan Kelly, Julia Boria, Rick Parker, Elisa Grammer, Patrick McCoy, and Judy Mizner. Also participating remotely: Department of Public Works (DPW) Director Wayne Amaral, and Town Manager Angus Jennings, ex officio.

At the outset, Chair Kelly read the following statement: “Pursuant to Governor Baker’s March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and the Governor’s March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitation on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the West Newbury Capital Improvements Committee (CIC) will be conducted via remote participation to the greatest extent possible.”

Call to order

7:20 pm

Public Comment

None

Approval of Minutes From 2/3/2021

By unanimous roll call vote, the Committee approved the draft minutes of February 3, 2021, as revised.

Late File Items

Ms. Grammer said that her notes indicated that the Committee should keep in mind issues deferred to future meetings, including the Page School evaluation, whether and how to replace the Litmus Test, and the Committee bylaws. Messrs. Kelly and Parker agreed that the Committee will be meeting about this issues in the future.

Review Litmus Test Vote/Ranking

Mr. Kelly showed onscreen the results of the Litmus Test rankings of each of the proposed projects, and explained his use of an average as opposed to simple total calculation of cumulative results:

	Recoating roofs	Town Hall Exterior Paint & Repairs	Middle St. Bridge	Fire Dept. Tanker Truck	Jaws of Life	Page School Fire Alarm Panel	Water Tank Improvements	Water Stabilization Transfer
Boria	1400	1050	1600	1250	1550	1400	1500	1650
Grammer	1545	1495	1635	1215	1200	1700	1565	1280
Kelly	1445	1000	1680	1430	1275	1475	1390	1200
McCoy	1050	1000	1800	1650	1500	1400	1450	1200
McDowell	1800	950	1750	1525	1100	1625	1225	1325
Mizner	1350	1125	1575	1325	1300	1375	1300	NR
Parker	1550	1650	1700	1550	1400	1450	1700	1500
AVERAGE	1448.6	1181.4	1677.1	1420.7	1332.1	1489.3	1447.1	1359.2
RANK	3	8	1	5	7	2	4	6

It was generally agreed that Town Hall painting should be removed from the list because it has received approved for Community Preservation Act funding. By unanimous roll call vote, the Committee determined that the Water Department transfer of \$500K to the Water Stabilization fund should be removed from the list because it does not fall within the [bylaw's definition of a capital improvement](#) (the planning for and the improvement, preservation and creation of tangible assets and projects which have a useful life of at least five years, cost over \$20,000 and/or for which the town is authorized to borrow funds.) With that, the capital improvement rankings were agreed upon.

Recommend Stabilization Transfer Amount

	FY21	FY22
TOTAL CAPITAL COSTS	\$1,574,000	\$923,000
PAID FROM FREE CASH	\$98,000	???
PAID FROM CPA FUNDS	\$463,000	\$105,000
PAID FROM DEBT		
PAID FROM CAPITAL OUTLAY		
PAID FROM REVOLVING FUND		
PAID FROM OTHER STABILIZTN		
PAID FROM CAPITAL STABILIZTN	\$573,020	\$635,000
FREE CASH	???	\$1,954,878
Certified July 1		
STABILIZATION FUND	\$1,318,461	\$1,386,377
Jan before spring mtg		
STABILIZATION FUND AMOUNTS	\$1,745,441	\$1,481,377
STABILIZTN FUNDING FREE CASH	\$300,000	???
STABILIZTN FUNDING OPERATG BUDGET	\$500,000	\$500,000
TOTAL STABILIZTN FUNDING	\$800,000	\$500,000

With Mr. Jennings not yet present at the meeting, and no other data provided, Ms. Grammer (who had prepared a draft summary spreadsheet that lacks some data and that is now pending Town staff review), verbally outlined the adjacent information about FY21 and FY22 non-Water capital costs and resources

She pointed out that \$635K is proposed to be taken out of Stabilization this year, and a number of large capital costs are coming up in future years. She also said that a total of \$800K was put into the Stabilization Fund in FY21—\$300K from Free Cash and \$500K from the Operating Budget.

Mr. Kelly noted that with large upcoming capital improvements, larger investment in the Stabilization Fund will be the new normal. It was also noted that roughly \$800K to \$1M left in Free Cash would reflect healthy levels. After consideration of varying amounts of Free Cash contributions, and with the understanding that \$500K would

come from the Operating Budget, the Committee determined to recommend \$200K in Free Cash for the Stabilization Fund, making a total of \$700K to replenish the Stabilization Fund.

Discuss FY22 CIC Report

The Committee reviewed past reports and *determined to use the existing formats*. Mr. Parker noted that it is useful to include a Capital Improvements Committee in the Annual Town Report because it can help explain to future decision makers what actions were taken and why. Ms. Grammer agreed and noted that the Annual Report is retrospective: it concerns action and decisions made in the prior fiscal year, so that this year the information reported would have the end date of July 1, 2020. She advised that the [Finance Committee booklets](#) are a very useful source of information.

It was agreed that Mr. Kelly will prepare the Committee's report to the Selectmen (required in the bylaws) and the Committee's input to the Finance Committee booklet. Mr. Parker will prepare the Committee's contribution to the FY2021 Annual Town Report—which is due as soon as possible.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:09 pm

Meeting Documents

[Meeting Packet provided by Town Manager 2/23/2021](#)

Respectfully submitted

Elisa Grammer