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**MINUTES
TOWN OF BELMONT
CAPITAL BUDGET COMMITTEE
Town Hall Conference Room 4
Thursday, October 1, 2015
5:00 PM**

CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Capital Budget Committee (CBC) was called to order at 5:04 p.m. by Chair Anne Marie Mahoney.

Members Present: Chair Mahoney, Patricia Brusch, Mark Paolillo (BOS), Jenny Fallon (WC), Susan Burgess-Cox (SC), and Rebecca Vose

David Kale, Town Administrator

Members Absent: Michael Battista (PB)

Chair Mahoney began by reviewing the evening's agenda.

Rink/Field House Proposal

Chair Mahoney noted that there have been two public meetings concerning the Rink proposal. Selectman Paolillo informed the CBC that the School Department is open to the idea of the proposal. Mr. Kale said more specific information is currently being gathered. Ms. Brusch raised the issue of the funding: if it is private, will the Town become involved? Selectman Paolillo expects that the funding will be public/private in nature, given that it is a \$6M project. As such, the Town will be a part of the process. Mr. Kale agreed, noting that the town will oversee the process to ensure it is logical and efficient.

Ms. Brusch noted that the rink has been on the CBC's list for many years. She raised the issue of this project "jumping the list". If it is 100% privately funded (as it has been presented to be), perhaps it can jump the list. But if town funding is involved, a new rink may need to return to its position on the priority list of capital projects established by the CBC.

Selectman Paolillo proffered that a study group may be needed to dig deeper into the issues. He agreed that there may be higher capital priorities, if public funding is being used. Both he and Ms. Fallon raised the issue of looking at the bigger picture – specifically, plans for a new BHS building. Ms. Brusch noted that the new BHS building may actually need to be larger than currently conceived, given enrollment trends. A larger building could impact field space and parking. The size of a new high school becomes a major issue.

This topic was discussed.

Selectman Paolillo suggested that a closer look at the options, given the restrictions of the existing site, may need to occur. Mr. Kale highlighted some other new rink considerations, e.g., eliminating dead space, the White Field House, the concession stand, and changing facilities.

Mr. Kale said he expects more information will be available in the next week or two. Ms. Brusch spoke to the MSBA process. She noted that the CBC does not currently know the programmatic needs of the high school. Program needs and increasing enrollment could impact the size of a renovated BHS.

Next steps: Provide Mr. Kale with the CBC's questions, concerns, and comments.

Minuteman Update

Ms. Brusch informed the CBC that Minuteman is holding a series of public forums with the 16 member towns. The presentation is about 20 minutes long and it is followed by a Q and A session. She summarized which communities have attended the meetings and what concerns were raised. Minuteman did not answer a question concerning the current enrollment, although its representative did acknowledge that enrollment has gone down.

Minuteman is working on cost estimates for the new building (currently estimated to be \$144M). Ms. Brusch noted that some of this cost will be ineligible for MSBA reimbursement. Approval of the new building project will be voted on by the voters of member towns, all casting ballots on the same day. It is not clear how a ballot question would be worded or when a member town would need to start paying for the obligation. Minuteman, she said, will set the guidelines on voting day. Ms. Brusch expects that on the day designated for this vote, polls will be open for the minimal amount of time (4 hours). If the project is approved, each member town will need to figure out how to fund its share of the cost of the new school.

She noted that the member towns will need to pay very close attention to the process and estimated costs.

Selectman Paolillo added that, regrettably, member towns will continue to subsidize non-member communities that send high numbers of students to Minuteman but resist joining the Minuteman District. Furthermore, Minuteman has not right-sized the new school, which makes it difficult for Belmont to support it, as member towns will end up subsidizing even *more* non-member town students. Minuteman is likely to frame the ballot question unfairly, i.e., "*Do you support Vocational Education, or not?*" He added that clarity is needed on what is best for the community, how the district agreement can be improved, and how to let the towns that want to leave, leave.

Chair Mahoney brought the conversation back to Belmont's fiscal obligation. Mr. Kale stated that Belmont is on the hook for roughly \$300-500K every year for 30 years. Ms. Brusch offered clarification on this estimate. Belmont will need to figure out how to fund this obligation.

Next steps: Selectman Paolillo will attend a Minuteman meeting with other members of other Selectmen Boards across the member towns. There may be an opportunity for another public

hearing to inform the residents.

MBTA Update (DPW Impact)

Selectman Paolillo provided a brief summary of the BOS meeting with MBTA representatives. Residents present at the meeting supported the notion of fixing the Waverley Commuter Rail Station. The MBTA seems to favor the “one station” approach, which means creating a single station in a new location to serve Belmont. The MBTA will ultimately make the decision. Mr. Kale explained what could happen, noting that the South Pleasant Street option for the new train station could impact a section of the DPW space.

Impacts on parking and traffic were discussed briefly .

Ms. Brusch raised the issue of access to the DPW across the tracks to Pleasant Street, which would be attractive to the Town. This could be a point of negotiation with the MBTA.

The Board of Selectman will try to arrange more public hearings to explore the topic further.

BOS Long Term Planning Charge/Prioritization

Selectman Paolillo informed the CBC that the Board is in the process of creating an implementation committee for several of the Financial Task Force’s recommendations. Part of this would involve creating a plan for the remaining major capital projects. The staging and the costs would be a part of this plan.

Chair Mahoney agreed that this was a good idea.

Ms. Fallon raised the topic that the Warrant Committee (Member Roy Epstein specifically) requested more regular communication with the CBC. It was suggested that she follow up to find out more specifics on what Mr. Epstein has in mind.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of September 9, 2015 were approved.

Setting of Future Meeting Dates

Thursday, October 15, 2015 at 7:00 p.m.

The CBC moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Vose, Secretary