

2016 FEB -8 AM 11:03

**MINUTES  
TOWN OF BELMONT  
CAPITAL BUDGET COMMITTEE  
Town Hall Conference Room 4  
Wednesday, January 6, 2016  
7:00 PM**

**CALL TO ORDER**

A regular meeting of the Capital Budget Committee (CBC) was called to order at 7:02 p.m. by Chair Anne Marie Mahoney.

Members Present: Chair Mahoney, M. Patricia Brusch, Mark Paolillo (BOS), Jennifer Fallon (WC), Raffi Manjikian (PB), Susan Burgess-Cox (SC), and Rebecca Vose

Also Present: Mr. David Kale, Town Administrator

Chair Mahoney began by turning to the first item on the agenda.

**Election of CBC Officers for 2016**

Chair Mahoney explained that the election of officers happens at this time of year for the CBC.

*Member Vose moved:* To nominate Anne-Marie Mahoney as Chair of the CBC.

The motion passed unanimously.

*Member Brusch moved:* To nominate Rebecca Vose as Secretary of the CBC.

The motion passed unanimously.

**Approval of Minutes**

The minutes of November 12, 2015 will be approved when the CBC meets next (2/4/2016, 5:00pm).

**Review Status of all Capital Projects**

Chair Mahoney stated that it might be useful to review the status of the major capital projects, given that a lot has happened since the CBC's last meeting.

***Belmont High School (BHS)***

Ms. Fallon asked a question about the process concerning the timing of the feasibility study, the schematic design, the debt exclusion, etc. Ms. Brusch and Mr. Kale provided some insight into the process. The CBC agreed that a timeline will need to be created. Ms. Brusch added that a

building committee will need to be formed. She then referenced the process followed by Minuteman (noting that their process could have been more efficient).

Chair Mahoney highlighted four points concerning the potential BHS renovation:

1. Belmont is not a sure thing with the MSBA, as high schools in other communities could be deemed more needy – the MSBA will decide on January 27.
2. The \$100M cost estimate is strictly a placeholder.
3. The 30% reimbursement is not guaranteed.
4. The nature of the project is not yet determined.

Ms. Brusch provided more detail on the MSBA reimbursement policy. 30% is the maximum of the costs that are reimbursed, but many of the necessary costs are not reimbursable.

Concerning the School Committee, Ms. Burgess-Cox stated that, while the SC hasn't delved into the topic, they remain cautiously optimistic. Mr. Kale noted that the MSBA process is quite regimented.

Ms. Mahoney asked: if the MSBA gives the go-ahead on 1/27, should this be the project that moves forward? Ms. Brusch offered that it (the BHS) will likely be put to a town-wide vote, and, if it passes, it will hold up all the other projects in the queue. The CBC agreed that this will certainly impact people's taxes. They also agreed that the BHS building committee will need to be fiscally prudent.

More will be known after the MSBA meeting on January 27.

### ***Belmont Public Library***

Ms. Kathy Keohane, Library Trustee, joined the meeting to provide a Library update. She began with the recent request for funding from Capital Budget for a feasibility study (\$45K, which is half the fee), which was granted. She noted that the current building site has not been studied in 10 years. Therefore, the existing building needs to be evaluated. She added that the Library could be included in the next grant round.

*The "Pause Point" Plan:* Ms. Brusch added some information about the Mass. Board of Library Commissioners process. She suggested that the process could be *stopped* after the feasibility study and after the public meeting process, and *before* requesting input from TM to allow the project to go forward. She tied this into the BHS approval process. Ms. Keohane referred to this process as a "pause point".

Ms. Keohane reviewed some of the major structural issues facing the Library, e.g., plumbing, infrastructure (elevator), ADA compliance, etc. The feasibility study will serve to inform the decision-making process going forward. A renovation, however, will not be grant-eligible. She noted that she has met with Superintendent Phelan, Selectman Paolillo, as well as with Mr. Kale.

Ms. Brusch explained some of the factors impacting a potential renovation, e.g., meeting a seismic code, ADA compliance, etc.

The CBC discussed that the feasibility study needs to focus on the Library's present site – as another site has not been identified.

### **Plan Potential Sequencing and Funding of Outstanding Capital Projects**

#### ***Police Station / DPW Yard***

The CBC then discussed the Police Station and the DPW Yard. It was noted that the DPW study has probably not changed much. However, the study concerning the Police station may need to be updated. This is because the construction of the new Light Department Substation could make rebuilding on the current Police Station site possible, which was not the case previously.

Chair Mahoney noted that the DPW is the one project that is ready to go (and clearly needs to be done). The CBC discussed how a new DPW Yard would work with the MBTA proposed plan to combine Belmont's two rail stations into one on South Pleasant Street. Mr. Kale offered a brief MBTA update, noting that more news will be forthcoming at the end of the month. Ms. Brusch added that the Architectural Access Board (AAB) can shut down the Waverley station at any point.

Ms. Vose raised the question of combining some of the remaining projects for efficiency. Chair Mahoney suggested that perhaps one project (DPW, for example) could be put on the coattails of the BHS. The CBC discussed this notion.

Ms. Brusch noted that the remaining projects will need to be prioritized at some point.

#### ***Minuteman***

Mr. Kale noted that a Special Town Meeting (STM) will need to be scheduled prior to March 1 in order to vote on the revised amended agreement. The new agreement allows seven towns to leave the district. This will impact the cost of the new building project for the remaining districts. The debt authorization vote could happen at the Annual Town Meeting (ATM).

Many scenarios were then discussed, e.g., if the revised amended agreement does or does not pass, if the debt authorization does or does not pass, and the possibility of a district-wide vote. The many possible outcomes were discussed.

Ms. Brusch suggested that, assuming Belmont receives the go-ahead from the MSBA on January 27, the Selectmen should put an article on the STM warrant authorize the Moderator to put together a building committee for the BHS project. This will help expedite the process.

#### ***Modulars to Relieve School Overcrowding***

Chair Mahoney informed the CBC that a group has been formed to explore the issue of obtaining modulars to relieve school overcrowding. Specifically addressed: where will the modulars go? Ms. Burgess-Cox apprised the CBC of what the SC has been discussing concerning the need for modular units. Chair Mahoney provided additional information concerning the many layers of costs involved in acquiring and installing the modular units as well as potential location sites. Mr. Kale raised several options for financing the modular units. He added that the Chenery Middle School has been deemed the most in need of extra space. Ms. Brusch broached the issue of design costs. She said it was money not well spent during the Wellington project. She suggested Belmont not make the same mistake.

### **Report for Town Meeting**

Chair Mahoney requested that any photos be forwarded to her.

### **Miscellaneous Business**

Mr. Kale noted that the budget requests for capital projects will be submitted to the CBC at the end of February.

### **Setting of Future Meeting Dates**

Thursday, February 4, 2016 at 5:00 p.m. (Please bring calendars to set up a series of future meetings.)

The CBC moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Vose  
Secretary