

**Town of Belmont  
Capital Budget Committee  
Belmont Town Hall, Room 4  
Thursday Evening, April 3, 2008, 7:30 p.m.**

Mrs. Brusch called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. Members of the Committee present at the time of the call to order were: M. Patricia Brusch, Mark F. Clark, John Conte, Jennifer M. Fallon and Anne Marie Mahoney. Also present were Thomas Younger, Town Administrator, and Barbara Hagg, Town Accountant and staff liaison to the Capital Budget Committee. Diane Stafford joined the meeting during the discussion of Article 8 of the Warrant. Daniel Leclerc joined the meeting just prior to the vote of the Committee with respect to Article 20 of the Warrant for the Annual town Meeting (see below).

The Committee had the following material before it:

1. Agenda for the meeting prepared by Mark Clark, Secretary.
2. Drafts of minutes of meeting 3/13/08.
3. Draft dated 4/1/08 of report of this Committee to Town Meeting.
4. Voting tally sheets listing all requests made to Committee for inclusion in FY09 capital budget.
5. Summary of informal poll taken at previous meeting concerning pending requests.
6. Warrant for Annual Town Meeting, April 28, 2008.
7. Summary of Balances in Capital Accounts with notes of agreed reversions.

**Action on Minutes of Previous Meeting**  
*(Item 2 on Committee Agenda)*  
Meeting of 3/13/08

Mrs. Brusch called for consideration of pending minutes, referring to the fact that a draft of the previous meeting's minutes was attached to the Agenda. Upon motion duly made and seconded, the minutes of the meeting of 3/13/08 were approved as presented.

**Action on Warrant Articles**

Mrs. Brusch turned first to the Warrant for the Annual Town Meeting, calling the attention of the Committee to the fact that its opinion would be required for more than Articles 10 (the capital budget) and 11 (enterprise budget). Mrs. Brusch proposed to begin the Committee's deliberation by reviewing the Articles in the Warrant other than Articles 10 & 11.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Committee unanimously voted to recommend favorable action on the transfer for perpetual care under Article 13 .

With respect to Article 14, Mrs. Brusch explained that it was no longer possible to apply proceeds received from the sale of the Harvard Lawn Fire Station towards reduction of the debt issued to pay for the new fire stations but the effect upon the taxpayer would be the same by applying the proceeds toward reduction of the debt issued to pay for a new Senior Center. Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Committee voted unanimously to recommend favorable action under this Article.

Action on Articles 16 & 17 was deferred pending an interview with Ralph Jones. Mrs. Brusch explained that Mr. Jones would attend the Committee's meeting on the evening of Thursday, April 17.

Ms. Fallon explained the background of Article 20. She explained that there is no formal proposal before the Planning Board though there is a would-be developer with a proposal that is widely known of. His proposal includes the municipal parking lot in Cushing Square and he cannot submit his proposal formally unless he owns the parking lot. Sale of the municipal lot requires action by the Board of Selectmen under Town Meeting authority. She emphasized that this is not a Planning Board article and that the Planning Board has not seen a "proposal" (even though a local paper has published one). The would-be developer's plans also incorporate the last block to the east on Horne Road. Action under Article 20 only transfers the municipal parking lot to the Selectmen so that they can negotiate with the developer. Ms. Fallon made clear that the Planning Board has not yet approved the proposal and cannot do so until the Board of Selectmen act. In turn, they cannot act until the Town Meeting gives them the authority to do so.

During the discussion of this Article, Mr. Clark made the point that the parking concerns extend beyond the issue of parking for the residential and commercial occupants of the proposed development. Merchants elsewhere in Cushing Square arrange for long-term parking in the municipal lot on behalf of their employees so that their employees will not occupy space in residential side streets and will not occupy street parking near commercial establishments. Those merchants are concerned that a competitor in control of underground parking in a new development will not make similar arrangements available to the employees of competitors. Mr. Clark was assured that the Selectmen would have parking problems in mind as they negotiate with the developer. Ms. Fallon reminded the Committee that allowing a developer to purchase the municipal parking lot was contemplated at the time the overlay district was approved and that neighbors and the Board of Selectmen had indicated that they favored such a sale being part of an eventual development. Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Committee voted to recommend favorable action under Article 20.

With respect to Article 25, Mrs. Brusch explained that only funds raised from the proposed override would wind up in the special-purpose stabilization fund authorized by Article 25: the appropriation of \$1.01 million appropriated from the FY09 budget cannot be placed in the stabilization fund. A citizens' committee has been formed to advocate

for passage of the override vote proposed to fund this stabilization fund. Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Committee voted unanimously to recommend favorable action under Article 25.

**Action on FY09 Capital Budget Recommendations**  
*(Item 3 on Committee Agenda)*

Next, the Committee turned to the assembly of its own budget recommendations under Article 10. Mrs. Brusch began by calling the attention of the Committee to the tally of the straw poll, previously distributed. In response to a question from Ms. Fallon, Mrs. Brusch explained that the \$2,174,000 allocated for the capital budget was already net of the \$150,000 allocated to debt service on FY08 funding for high school HVAC.

Mr. Younger explained that the solution chosen for the Town’s “reverse 911” system would not involve the purchase of capital equipment. Thus, the request for an allocation for “reverse 911” could be taken off the list of requests of this Committee. Mr. Younger also reported on his negotiations with private schools for payments in lieu of taxes (“PILOT’s”). (Negotiations are not yet concluded but will probably favor tangible items that are easily comprehended when depicted in photographs.)

Next, the Committee considered each individual request that had been made to it for inclusion in the capital budget for FY09. Mrs. Brusch called for an individual vote with regard to any item upon which any member of the Committee wished to vote in the affirmative. During the discussion, Mrs. Brusch asked that the unmet needs of the capital budget be addressed within any override proposal that the Selectmen may put before the voters in the coming year. She observed that this Committee is short of funds within its current allocation needed to meet the Town’s capital requirements. At the conclusion of its consideration of all of the individual requests, the Committee considered the amount allocated to it for FY09’s capital budget and agreed to recommend any funds remaining available to repointing the High School. The result (\$81,000) is less than the amount requested (\$200,000) but ensures that the total amount allocated to this Committee is recommended for some request.

At the conclusion of the Committee’s considerations and votes, the following items had achieved the majority vote required for inclusion in the Committee’s recommendations under Article 10:

<b><u>Department Requesting</u></b>	<b><u>Item</u></b>	<b><u>Amount</u></b>
Bldg Serv	HVAC work - Police Station	35,000
Bldg Serv	Security System continuation - Homer Building	50,000

Bldg Serv	Backup electrical power for IT at Homer & Library (generators)	47,000
Cemetery	Cemetery - Dump Truck (15,000 GVW) - replace 1992 dump truck	56,000
Cemetery	Cemetery - Riding lawnmower - replace 15 year old riding lawnmower	12,000
Comm Dev	Pavement management	1,051,000
Fire	Radio System Upgrade - Phase 2	75,000
Fire	Replacement of 1991 Utility Truck	9,500
Highway	Highway - Dump Truck (15,000 GVW) - replace 1999 dump truck	56,000
Parks	Parks - Resurface & restripe running track	103,500
Police	Motorola XTS 2500 Digital Portable Radios	38,000
Police	Antenna Site Generator	18,000
Fire	Replacement of 1998 staff vehicle/shift commanders vehicle	44,000
School	3rd year of a five year replacement of High School translucent panels	100,000
School	Burbank - front entrance flagstone & steps	55,000
School	Multiple schools - patching masonry walls	55,000
School	High School repointing	81,000
School	School Building Security Access Control & Monitoring	150,000
T/S IT	Data Integration & Recovery - phase 2 (town, phase 1 was school)	80,000
T/S IT	Virtualized backend service - phase 2 (town, phase 1 was school)	30,000
T/S IT	Infrastructure add/update: High School foreign language lab	

		28,000
Total		<b>\$2,174,000</b>

**Edit of Draft Committee Report to Town Meeting**  
*(Item 4 on Committee Agenda)*

The Committee next turned to the editing of its report to the Annual Town Meeting. Mr. Clark had provided a proposed draft. He undertook to edit a new draft, reflecting the comments that were made during the discussion.

Dr. Stafford agreed to ask John Bowe, Chairman of the School Committee and a former member of this Committee, to prepare a chart of future capital requests for inclusion in the report. In the past, Mr. Bowe has performed that task with great success. Dr. Stafford also indicated that she had a plan for producing a chart if Mr. Bowe were unavailable for the project. By consensus, the Committee agreed that the annual capital budget allocation should be \$3,000,000, escalated each year by 2½%. The Committee wishes to emphasize the envelope project and a renewal of the roof project in the text of its report. One of the subcommittees of the “blueprint” project has recommended a formal merger of the school and non-school IT functions. That proposal has been accepted but is awaiting funding for a position that will not be funded before FY10 at the earliest. Mr. Leclerc suggested that the Town consider the leasing of all IT equipment. He had done that in a prior educational employment setting and after three years the equipment was in effect owned outright by the school involved. The Committee reviewed the draft report page by page and made a number of individual suggestions, supplied missing information, and made corrections.

**Adjournment**  
*(Item 5 on Committee Agenda)*

The Committee considered briefly its schedule in the coming weeks. The Committee meets once (on April 17 at 7:30 p.m.) before the Annual Town Meeting. At the April 17 meeting, the Committee will consider the water and sewer capital purchases and any warrant articles that pertain to those purchases and/or the debt proposed by Mr. Jones.

The meeting was adjourned at about 10:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark F. Clark