

Capital Budget Committee

FY 2019 REPORT TO TOWN MEETING MEMBERS

May 30, 2018



FY2019 Capital Budget Committee Report to Belmont 2018 Annual Town Meeting

Introduction

In the Capital Budget Committee (“CBC” or “this Committee”) Annual Town Meeting Report, the CBC deliberately repeats some of the material from its previous reports. This decision is motivated by two considerations. First, every year brings new Town Meeting Members. The Committee believes that some of them may benefit from the background provided. Second, some of this Committee’s recommendations and observations are a work in progress. Although each year we have more developments to report, this Committee believes that it is worthwhile to keep this material in the minds of Town Meeting Members. The report contains captions to assist readers in finding their way through the report.

The report touches on the following topics:

- Who Is the CBC and What Does It Do?
- What is the Difference between the Common Understanding of “Capital Asset” and the CBC Responsibility?
- Some General Remarks
- The Community Preservation Act and Its Interaction with the Capital Budget
- The Town’s Roads and Sidewalks
- Status of Large, Extraordinary Capital Projects
- Belmont High School Building Project
- Policy Adoptions
- Additional Classroom Space
- Financial Task Force Capital Budget Recommendations
- Major Capital Projects Working Group
- Privately Funded Capital Improvements
- Recommendations for FY2019 Capital Budget
- Enterprise Funds
- Five-Year Projection of Belmont’s Capital Needs

As discussed below, only the last three items are required by the Town’s by-laws to be reported to Town Meeting. The Committee believes, however, that the rest of the material is useful.

Who Is the CBC and What Does It Do?

The Capital Budget Committee is established by Article 13 of the Town by-laws. There are seven members: three are appointed by the Moderator for terms of three years; the other four are the chairman (or a member appointed by the chairman) of the Board of Selectmen, the Warrant Committee, the Planning Board, and the School Committee, all of whom serve at the pleasure of the appointing authority. The members of the Committee who acted on the FY2019 Capital Budget recommendations are:

M. Patricia Brusch (Moderator appointee)
Susan Burgess-Cox (School Committee)
Jennifer Fallon (Warrant Committee)
Anne Marie Mahoney (Moderator appointee)
Mark Paolillo (Board of Selectmen)
Stephen Pinkerton (Planning Board)
Rebecca Vose (Moderator appointee)

Mrs. Mahoney serves as the Committee's chairman and Ms. Vose serves as its secretary. Glen Castro, Budget Analyst for the Town, serves as staff liaison to the Committee. Either Patrice Garvin, Town Administrator, or Phyllis Marshall, Assistant Town Administrator attended Committee meetings.

According to Article 13 of the Town's by-laws:

It shall be the duty of the Committee annually to prepare a capital report showing, for each six years hence following a list of those public improvements and non-recurring major equipment needs which, in its opinion, represent the most necessary enhancement projects or purchases to be undertaken by the Town during each such year. The report shall include the probable cost of each such improvement or purchase and the Committee's recommendations as to the method of financing them.

This spring the Committee has devoted its time to review and analyze the FY2019 capital requests from town departments and the schools. The Committee also received and discussed updates on major capital projects which this year included the high school and library along with the efforts to address the police and DPW facilities.

While the CBC has long identified the above major projects as needing to be addressed, in 2015 the Financial Task Force (FTF) sub-group on Capital Projects examined all outstanding capital needs in the Town with a goal of providing a comprehensive plan to deal with them. The efforts of the FTF built on the 2013 work of the CBC to develop criteria for assessing and prioritizing all the Town's potential capital projects, including the Concord Avenue campus and its component parts. Further, the Facilities Manager hired in calendar 2013 presented a refined and coordinated set of capital requests. The most significant development in prioritizing capital projects is the Massachusetts School Building Authority's 2016 decision to move forward with plans to renovate or rebuild Belmont High School. (More detail on this and other building

projects is presented below.) Further action on the major capital projects is discussed in the section Major Capital Projects Working Group.

In an effort to streamline the Capital Budget process, the Committee requested that a preliminary or draft capital budget be formulated through the Town Administrator and then presented to the Capital Budget Committee in the same manner as the current operating budget is formulated each year by the Town Administrator and presented to the Board of Selectmen and then to the Warrant Committee. Items recommended by the School Department, are discussed by the financial sub-committee but not reviewed by the School Committee before coming to the Capital Budget Committee. Their requests, like the other facilities requests, come to the CBC through the Director of Facilities. Requests that are funded by the Town's enterprise funds are submitted directly to the Committee for recommendations to Town Meeting.

In preparing to recommend an annual Capital Budget, the Committee collects requests from Town departments (including the School Department) for capital expenditures to be made from enterprise funds, from state reimbursements, and from general tax. With respect to items to be paid from general tax, the Board of Selectmen proposes to the Warrant Committee and the Capital Budget Committee an amount to be spent in the Capital Budget. (The override vote in April 2015, which approved additional funding for the capital budget in FY16 and FY17, will be discussed in greater detail below.) After receiving requests from Town departments and [a] proposed general tax budget allocation[s] from the Board of Selectmen, the Committee, at its meetings, interviews representatives from those departments that have made requests.

This year continued to be challenging for the Capital Budget Committee. Patrice Garvin, our new Town Administrator came on board in the middle of January and, understandably, needed extra time to review the budget material. Further, the former Director of Facilities retired in December and his assistant left near the same time leaving the department without full time oversight. Phyllis Marshall kept the department running but was not able to give the CBC a fully defined list of requests. Thus, the CBC got a very late start on their review of the department requests, which was further complicated by storm cancellations of important meetings to review those requests. Nonetheless, the individual members of this Committee reviewed copies of the departmental requests and developed individual questions regarding those requests. Those individual questions were then pooled and submitted to the departments in writing. Some of our discussion with department heads this year centered on what did not appear on the list, what they anticipated would appear in future years, and what could they delay for another year.

After interviewing department representatives,¹ the Capital Budget Committee proceeds to assemble a recommended budget for the next fiscal year. The Committee considers each item that has been requested and votes whether that item should be included in its recommended budget. The item is included if it receives a majority vote; unanimity is not required. The requests for capital funds from various departments are, at the request of the Committee, presented by each department in a priority order. This is particularly helpful when the Committee is confronted with requests that are technical and have implications only for the department making the request. When, however, the request is less technical and/or has

¹ In some instances department heads withdraw, add or adjust specific requests as a result of new information that becomes available after budgets have been submitted and sometimes as a result of the interview process itself. This happened in a few instances for FY2019.

implications for others outside the department making the request, the Committee often exercises its own sense of priority.

What Is the Difference between the Common Understanding of “Capital Asset” and the CBC Responsibility?

The definition of capital expenditure for which the Committee is responsible is *not* the common understanding of a capital asset – it is a narrower concept. The common understanding of a capital asset is some asset that can be used and enjoyed for an extended period of time, often taken as more than one year, or that can be used to produce another product. It is often thought of as anything that is not for immediate consumption. This is *not* the definition with which this Committee works.

Note the key words in the by-law responsibility quoted previously – “public improvements and non-recurring major equipment needs.” An example of the differences between the two concepts that is very relevant to the Town’s budgeting process is police cruisers. In common understanding, an automobile is a capital item but a police cruiser is a “recurring” item. (The average front-line cruiser is driven 25,000-30,000 miles in its first year. Cruisers must be replaced on a regular cycle.) In the view of the Committee, replacement of police cruisers belongs in the regular operating budget. As mentioned below, there are other items that should be considered part of the operating budget that have a tendency to find their way into the capital budget process.

In an effort to draw a “bright line” between what it would consider and not, more than twenty-five years ago a previous Capital Budget Committee established a \$10,000-per-item requirement for requests addressed to it. In 1985, it was the intent of the then Capital Budget Committee to raise that amount to \$12,500 but that did not happen.

Although the existing criteria for inclusion in the Town’s Capital Budget could be considered very outdated, the CBC’s review of the criteria recently produced no significant changes. The CBC communicates with the Town departments on a regular basis about what it expects to see in capital requests and what it will not entertain. The Committee ultimately decided that there were no comprehensive criteria that could adequately define what departments should consider capital requests and decided to leave the loose criteria of \$10,000 minimum and at least ten years of useful life, with the exception of technology. The Committee also recommended that the Town should consider establishing a technology fund for computer and other technological purchases. In addition to dealing with technology, the Committee will also explore a recommendation to the Town Administrator on handling the facility manager’s requests so that requested items qualify as capital. Finally, after reviewing requests for pavement work in parking lots and driveways, as well as around school sites, the CBC wonders if all pavement requests should go through the DPW.

Meanwhile, increasing pressure on the Town’s operating budget resulted in the virtual elimination of a line item (“Capital Outlay”) in departmental budgets under which the small or recurring capital items had been purchased. (This line item has now been restored, but for FY2019 the limited funds available do not militate in favor of adequate funding of many requests under this category.) An even more insidious thing began to happen. Maintenance was not pursued. As noted below, the inevitable result of wear, tear, and simple weathering plus

maintenance neglect is the seeming transmutation of a current expense item (maintenance) into a seeming capital expenditure (starting all over again). The current dismaying condition of the Town's streets, some of which have deteriorated so badly that they cannot be repaired but must be rebuilt – literally from the ground up – resulted (unsuccessfully, as noted below) in a targeted, separate funding proposal. This is why the Committee has approved requests for work at the Chenery Middle School, which might be considered maintenance, this year over other worthy requests. The Committee believes that keeping our newer facilities in good repair should be a priority, and in the end, a cheaper option than major renovations in the future.

Confronted by increasing pressure from smaller or recurring requests, previous Capital Budget Committees, loathe to see necessary expenditures unmet, tried to accommodate small items and recurring items within previous Capital Budgets – often by turning a blind eye to the practice of aggregating separate items in order to meet the \$10,000 threshold. As noted below, the current Capital Budget Committee is making a vigorous effort to confine the Capital Budget to items that are truly “public improvements and non-recurring major equipment needs.” As also noted below, however, members of the Committee do not feel that small capital items and recurring capital items are inappropriate expenditures for the Town; indeed, members of the Committee feel that the smaller capital expenditures, recurring expenditures, and maintenance of capital assets are very important and should be funded annually under their own explicit headings in each department's operating budget. The members of the Committee feel, however, that the Capital Budget should be available to meet the needs of the Town that are truly “public improvements and non-recurring major equipment.” If at the end of the review process there is a small amount of money remaining in the capital budget allocation, the Committee has recommended funding maintenance or repairs that should have been included in the regular operating budgets of certain departments when those repairs relate to health and safety issues, e.g., replacement of windows and overhead doors at the DPW building the former for heat conservation and the latter for safety reasons. The Committee is recommending both repairs in the FY19 capital budget.

Some General Remarks

There are some general topics, which the Committee wishes to emphasize to the Town Meeting. They are an envelope study and a coordinated approach.

In 1994, the Town commissioned a study of the roofs of major municipally owned buildings and embarked on a program to ensure that its buildings are weather tight above. (The roof program is further discussed below.) More recently, the School Department completed an envelope study of its buildings with the same objective.² (An envelope study is a study of the material enclosing the interior of a building, exterior walls, windows, doors and roof. These items enclose a building and are referred to as the building envelope.) The approach with respect to the non-School-Department assets of the Town is somewhat different. The facility audit has addressed this.

² The total estimate for work identified by the School Department envelope study was \$6.8 million, originally to be phased over five years. Many of the needs identified by the study might be classified for the operating budget rather than for the allocation to this Committee under the criteria discussed earlier in this report. Nevertheless, the figure indicates the magnitude of the task faced by the Town to protect its investment in capital assets. Much of this work has been completed. It is hoped that the entire project will wrap up over the next few fiscal years.

These studies form the basis of the extraordinary, large capital projects discussed below or for individual current capital budget requests. Over the last several years, the Committee has recommended funding phases of these large on-going projects. This year's very limited capital budget makes impossible the funding of any phase, however, small, of these on-going projects.

The Committee applauds the Town for taking steps toward a coordinated approach to its capital needs and budgeting for those capital needs. Six years ago the School Committee and the Board of Selectmen entered into an agreement to create a single department that will deal with building and grounds maintenance and needs. At the time, the Library Trustees were not signatories to this agreement, however, they benefitted from input on their capital requests from the new director. The Library Trustees last year finalized an agreement to become part of the consolidated facilities department. In the fall of 2013 the Town hired a director for this consolidated facilities department. In FY13, in anticipation of the initial work that will be done by this department, the building managers of the Town and the School Department recommended a facility audit of all buildings that had not been renovated in the last twelve (12) years in order to assess their status and to enable this new department head to begin to prioritize projects. The amount appropriated was \$175,000. The completed audit continues to inform the capital requests for facilities for FY19. The Committee will work with the BOS to ensure that the Facilities Department is adequately funded in the operating budget to handle routine maintenance.

Issues of coordination include acquisition and reuse of replaced equipment. A spirit of cooperation has developed among the departments who now make an effort to offer "hand-me-down" vehicles and equipment to other departments. In the past, this Committee noted examples of this spirit involving vehicles and emergency generators. Issues also arise regarding programs that have application to more than one Town operation. Recent examples include the proposals for building security, police and fire radio system, and a "reverse 911."

Community Preservation Act and Its Interplay with the Capital Budget

As has been reported previously herein, the Capital Budget Committee has long supported additional funding to address the Town's capital budget needs. One relatively new source of funding for certain types of capital projects is the Community Preservation Act (CPA) adopted by the Town in 2011 after voters accepted the act in November 2010. Fiscal 2014 was the first year of funding of projects under the CPA. Eligible projects must fall into the categories of affordable housing, recreation/open space, and historic preservation. This Committee is again pleased to see the range of projects proposed by the CPA Committee for funding. Some, if not most, of these projects would not meet the criteria for funding in the capital budget, not because they lack merit but because the Town has long stopped supporting certain types of projects for lack of money. Further, the projects on which CPA money can be spent, though very worthy, for the most part may not be considered central to the core functions of town government. This year the CPA projects include funds to design a new Town Field playground, build an accessible walking path around the Grove Street playground and design a Gazebo for Payson Park. These would most certainly be CBC requests were they not funded by the CPA. CPA funds may not always lessen the burden on the Town's capital budget but will support worthy projects that enhance the quality of life in Belmont and preserve valuable public assets that would otherwise suffer neglect. It should also be noted that the Committee, which oversees these CPA projects,

requests that project sponsors, where applicable, engage in private fundraising to defray the cost of their project and coordinate their scope and timing of work with the DPW director.

The Town's Roads and Sidewalks

Although the maintenance (including rebuilding, if needed) of the network of streets in Town is (or should be) a recurring item, the funds for providing the Town with its streets have traditionally been included in the Capital Budget. As this Committee has observed previously, since much of the work on the Town's streets must be planned and contracted for in advance and actually accomplished in warm weather over more than one fiscal year, the pavement management program of the Town would greatly benefit from a stable and predictable budgeting atmosphere. An adequate pavement management program could easily use the Town's entire Capital Budget, but this Committee believes that some of the funds available to the Capital Budget should be available for the Town's many other capital needs. In an effort to address as many needs as feasible, this Committee regularly recommends about half its annual allocation (an amount based on the 2001 override) plus the targeted state aid ("Chapter 90") to roads, and the remainder to other capital requests. In order to make the available road funds as effective as possible, until this year the Selectmen instructed the Department of Community Development to expend funds only on the travel surface, omitting almost all curb and sidewalk work. The Selectmen recently adopted a new policy with respect to curbing that will affect pavement work going forward. In 2014 the Committee was able to use \$200,000 in one-time funds for sidewalks and in 2015, the override vote included \$200,000 for sidewalk repair. In the FY19 budget, that sidewalk figure has grown to \$215,000. (The Department includes curbs and handicap accessible sidewalks at intersections. The Trapelo Road/Belmont Street corridor included both sidewalks and curbs because that is a state – and state-funded – project.) Sidewalk and curb construction to enhance safety around schools has traditionally been funded. This year that includes safety improvements at the Winn Brook School. The Committee prefers that all pavement work including those in and around schools be considered and funded through the Pavement Management Program to ensure that the work is appropriately prioritized and executed. This is especially important in a year of very lean capital budget funding such as FY19.

The Committee included extensive discussions of the Town's streets and efforts to maintain them in its 2009 and 2010 reports to the Annual Town Meeting. The reader is referred to those reports for more detailed information.

Status of Large, Extraordinary Capital Projects

Here is a summary of some of the large capital projects the Town is pursuing or faces – projects that cannot be undertaken within this Committee's annual allocations from general tax. This information will give the reader background on these projects. Some of these projects are now being addressed under a small subcommittee of the Capital Budget Committee – Major Capital Projects Working Group.

High School

The Belmont High School building project is well underway. The process directed by the Mass. School Building Authority (MSBA) is somewhat different from the usual town process, making the Feasibility Study section fairly lengthy and then the Schematic Design is a much shorter

process. As of this writing the project is at the end of Feasibility Study and anticipating submitting a Schematic Design to the Authority on July 11.

During the past year the Belmont School Committee voted to change the grade structure of the schools so that the new high school will accommodate grades 7 through 12. The anticipated enrollment (approved by MSBA) is 2215 students, with approximately 360 to 370 students per grade. There will be both a lower school section and an upper school section for the students with all students sharing common facilities such as Field House, cafeteria, music and art classrooms, and the auditorium.

The building committee studied many configurations for the facility, and ended up approving a configuration that allowed the renovation of the current Field House, small gymnasium, swimming pool, and lockers. Other spaces will be new and will be built to both the east and west of these existing spaces. The anticipated size of the new facility will be 445,000 square feet.

At the time of this writing, full cost estimates are not yet certain, that will come mid to late June. However preliminary cost estimates anticipate a cost of \$296,000,000. The MSBA will reimburse the town for 40% of eligible project costs. Many items are not reimbursable including the pool, parts of the Field House, landscaping, legal fees, athletic fields, and a large percentage of site costs. Right now it is anticipated that Belmont's portion of the total cost will be in the 74 to 76% range. The final reimbursement figure will be set by the MSBA in late July, following the Schematic Design submission.

As of May 2018 it is anticipated that the BHS Building Committee will request the Board of Selectmen to place a debt exclusion ballot question on the November 2018 State Ballot. If successful, this will be followed by a Town Meeting vote to proceed with the design and construction of the project. Plans are currently underway for a summer to fall 2019 construction start, with full occupancy in 2023 (current grades 9 to 12 will likely occupy the new and permanent space earlier). The timing of construction is longer than past projects due both to the large size of the new facility, and the fact that the students will need to remain in the current building during the construction, then will move into the new portion, while the current building is demolished and the lower school portion is built and all the work on the fields is performed.

Memorial Library Building

A Feasibility Study for a new Memorial Library was completed in 2017. The Board of Library Trustees approved the recommendation of the Feasibility Study Committee for a new building on the current site. Following that the Trustees put an article before the 2017 Annual Town Meeting requesting the appointment of a Building Committee for a new library. The first step for the Building Committee will be to produce a schematic design, which will serve as the basis for a capital fundraising campaign to make a significant contribution to funding the project.

The Building Committee was formed and began meeting in January 2018. The budget for the Committee is funded half by an appropriation from the town and half by the Belmont Library Foundation, an independent §501(c)(3) organization originally formed to raise funds for a new Library. The Committee expects to hire an OPM for the project by the end of May and hopes to

hire an architect before the fall to begin work on the schematic design. Concurrently, the Library Foundation has begun the early stages of a capital campaign, coinciding with the celebration of the 150th anniversary of the Library's founding.

The Capital Budget Committee expects the design process and the fundraising campaign to continue through at least 2019 and a debt exclusion for the project to come before the voters sometime after 2020.

Police Station

The Belmont Police Station and the Concord Avenue site of both the Police Station and the Belmont Electric Light Building have been studied for many years. In 2007-2008, a feasibility study was done of the Police Station, which explored a renovated facility on the current site and also explored a new facility located at either the current site or at the site of the Belmont Public Library. In the past year the focus for both the Police Station and the Library has shifted and building projects are currently being proposed for both facilities on their existing sites. The construction of a new Electric Light Substation will make that area currently next to the Police Station available space for another project in the not too distant future. Although studies have suggested that the Police require a 30,000 sq. ft. building, which could be located at either the incinerator site or the DPW yard, the current work suggests that a 24,000 sq. ft. facility is appropriate and would be better located on the current site. Please see the section on Major Capital Projects Working Group as well as the separate report from the DPW/Belmont Police Department Building Committee for recommendations on the future of the Police Station.

Department of Public Works Facility

In 2006, a study was done of the needs of the DPW, which includes many departments, among them Cemetery, Water, Parks and Recreation, and Highway. The estimated cost of consolidating and replacing the buildings on site at the Town yard was nearly \$20M (in 2006 dollars). This estimate was updated as part of the facilities audit and is now \$28M. Please see the section on Major Capital Projects Working Group as well as the separate DPW/Belmont Police Department Building Committee report for current recommendations on the future of the DPW. These reports will recommend both short-term, emergency renovations at the DPW as well as a long-term, permanent solution.

Other Projects

There are other, less-well-defined projects that have received some consideration by this or other committees of the Town. They include the White Field House and the Vigliolo skating rink as well as the future use of the incinerator site once it is capped. (In 2015 a group of ice hockey supporters began discussions with School administrators, the School Committee and the BOS about a private/public partnership to construct a new rink. The prospect of a new or renovated high school building has put those discussions on hold.) Also on the horizon are some updating needs at schools that have not been renovated in the past 20 years. These include the Daniel Butler School (renovated in 1979-80), and the Winn Brook and Burbank Schools (renovated in 1987-89). A study to explore the needs for these facilities is among the items covered in the facilities audit. Finally, future plans for a Community Path and affordable housing should also be part of the Town's capital project planning.

Policy Adoptions

Policies Related to Debt Service and Funding of Multi-Year Projects

In 2013, at the urging of the Town Treasurer the Committee developed and adopted a policy on the amount of the Town's Capital Budget that will be spent on debt service. As the Town uses debt or lease/purchase arrangements to acquire large capital items, such a policy satisfies municipal bond rating agencies (e.g., Moody's) of the fiscal soundness of the Town's assumption of debt obligations.

This policy is as follows:

The Capital Projects Discretionary budget will set aside not more than 33% for debt service/lease purchase payments. The request must be greater than \$100,000 with a useful life of 10 years. The Treasurer will provide annually and update the Capital Budget Committee with an amortization schedule of payments. The Capital Budget Committee will review this policy annually by February 1 and forward to the BOS, Warrant Committee, Town Accountant, and Treasurer an update on the review.

The Committee has endorsed a policy with respect to multi-year capital projects that it will not recommend funding the next year of such projects until substantial progress has been made.

Additional Classroom Space

In response to continuing growth in enrollments at all levels of the school system, Superintendent John Phelan formed a Space Study Task Force in the fall of 2015 to advise the School Committee of possible solutions to the burgeoning numbers. This committee (details found in the School Committee Report to Town Meeting) included the chairman of the Capital Budget Committee since expenditures to address growing enrollments would likely come from the Capital Budget. The Space Task Force has met on an as-needed basis to address the space needs of all school buildings.

The Task Force's recommendations have resulted to date in the acquisition of additional modular classrooms at the Burbank, Chenery and High School. Please refer to the FY18 Capital Budget Committee Report for details on funding of these units. To address the space needs of our schools, the School Committee recently approved a plan to reconfigure grades and design the high school building project for 7th through 12th grades. This plan alleviates overcrowding pressure in all of our schools.

In this interim period before the high school building project is completed, the CBC anticipates that future requests to fund modulars and/or to outfit additional classrooms may become more and more difficult to include in our limited budget allocation.

Financial Task Force Capital Budget Recommendations

In the late fall of 2013, the Board of Selectmen formed a Financial Task Force with broad representation from elected and appointed committees and boards as well as citizens with

financial expertise. The purpose of the task force was “to develop a multi-year Financial and Capital Investment Plan; to critically review various programmatic topics for both Town and School Departments; to understand current and future expenditure and revenue issues to support quality municipal and educational services and capital improvements.” The FTF and the various sub-groups met monthly through January 2015 - culminating in the Selectmen’s decision in February 2015 to place a \$4.5 million override on the annual Town election ballot in April, which passed.

For FY17 the CBC received an additional \$120,000, which was used in combination with the FY16 \$120,000 to provide a combined borrowing capability of \$1.0 million to replace the Belmont High School fire alarm system in the summer of 2016. The additional yearly infusion of \$200,000 for sidewalks and \$300,000 for roads, plus 2.5% each year, is reflected in each Capital Budget going forward.

The Capital Projects sub-group of the FTF recognized the four major capital projects that were, at that point, unaddressed: BHS, Police Station, DPW and Memorial Library as well as the incinerator site and skating rink and attempted to define a process for dealing with those projects. (See FTF report to 2015 Annual Town Meeting for further details.) Based on the criteria of need, certain site, updated plan, and current cost estimate the sub-group recommended that the remaining projects be done in the following priority order: Belmont High School, incinerator site, DPW, Library and Police Station.

By spring of 2018, as noted elsewhere in this report, these four major projects have building committees; are engaged in the design process; and will be recommending various actions to to the Town Meeting.

Finally, the CBC continues to request a predictable annual allocation of \$3.0 million for capital requests from the department heads.

Major Capital Projects Working Group (MCPWG)

Belmont has diligently addressed numerous of the capital projects identified in 2000 as being in need of repair, renovation or replacement. The MCPWG picked up the FTF’s recommendations with the four major projects that remain – Belmont High School, the DPW facility, the Police Station and the Library. Lesser projects such as the incinerator site and the rink/field house are also still outstanding.

In January of 2016 the Belmont High School project received approval for funding from the MSBA. This automatically made the high school the first of these big four projects to go forward. Also, in 2016 the Board of Library Trustees partnered with the Capital Budget Committee to do a feasibility study for a future library at its present location. That study is complete and recommends a new building on the existing site.

Special Town Meeting in November 2017 approved the formation of building committees for both the Memorial Library and the DPW/BPD. The Library Building Committee will form a schematic design for a new building on the existing site in order to begin a fundraising campaign. The DPW/BPD BD has a proposal to put before the June session of Annual Town Meeting for funding renovations at the DPW and renovations and new construction at the Police Station. Please see separate building committee reports for details.

Three members of the Capital Budget Committee served on the MCPWG: Mark Paolillo from the BOS, Pat Brusch from the Permanent Building Committee and Anne Marie Mahoney, from the CBC. They worked throughout 2017 along with Roy Epstein, chair of the Warrant Committee, former Town Administrator David Kale, Assistant Town Administrator Phyllis Marshall, Town Treasurer Floyd Carman and new Town Administrator Patrice Garvin.

The MCPWG is pleased that their analysis and advocacy may come to fruition in a plan for completing all four of the major capital projects in the near future. Financing these projects will be a challenge for the Town but to finally have a solution for all four facilities is well worth the work that all parties have contributed to this effort.

Privately Funded Capital Improvements

Each year “private” groups such as the Soccer Association, Little League and Parents of ... groups provide much needed improvements and upgrades to our fields and recreational facilities. Without their generous support in donating irrigation systems for Winn Brook field sprucing up the White Field House, and raising funds to replace playground equipment at the Winn Brook and Butler as examples, this much needed work would fall to the Capital Budget or become a request for CPA funds. In summer 2015 private donations funded the replacement of the varsity basketball court floor at the high school. Recently, a group of ice hockey supporters expressed interest in a private/public partnership to replace the Viglirolo Rink; as the high school project proceeds and the plans for that campus become clear, we eagerly await such a partnership’s becoming reality.

In 2016 the Capital Budget Committee worked with donors to form a creative solution to funding the Press Box at the Harris Field. This final piece of the original 2001 renovation of the field was finally approved for construction. Because the Capital Budget did not have \$240,000 to fund the Press Box the following cumulative funding solution was offered: \$40,000 remaining from the 2001 Harris Field Building Committee; \$125,000 of unused Capital money from the 2014 Harris Field replacement project; \$75,000 pledged by the Belmont Boosters and other donors. This project was completed before the 2017 football season and was well used both for football games and other community events at the field.

The community spirit shown in each of these partnerships is much appreciated by the department heads and the Committee and should be recognized by the citizens of the Town.

Recommendations for FY2019 Capital Budget

For FY2019, the Committee received requests for \$3.3 million in capital expenditures. This does not include requests that will be covered in separate Warrant articles for water and sewer equipment and projects funded by enterprise funds, which are generated from user fees. Nor does it include Chapter 90 funds. The total available funding for the Capital Budget for FY2019 is the same amount. The funds for discretionary spending are \$1,400,765; Pavement Management funds are \$1.68 million as a result of the 2001 and 2015 overrides; Chapter 90 money is \$542,433 or a total Pavement Management budget of \$2.21 million; sidewalk repair is \$215,000 In contrast, for FY2018, the Committee initially received requests for more than \$3.2

million dollars in capital expenditures and had roughly \$1.318 million in discretionary funds to meet those needs.

Traditionally, the amount requested for projects that this Committee believes are appropriate and important is far less than the available funds. This year the process was delayed by the vacancy in the Town Administrator position until January, although the CBC cannot say enough about how ably Phyllis Marshall managed the duties of Acting Town Administrator and did the job of Facilities Director while that position remained unfilled. Historically, the Committee received an unedited list of capital requests from department heads. Through the interview process members made decisions about what items to support using their judgment informed by a broader perspective of competing Town needs and priorities. For the last five years the Committee was given a heavily scrubbed list and saw only certain capital requests from department heads thereby undermining the ability of the CBC to exercise discretion in what capital items to recommend to Town Meeting. The Committee looks forward to a return to an unedited capital budget from the new Town Administrator that restores to the CBC its critical role in a comprehensive assessment of the Town's capital needs.

Overall, the CBC is usually presented with a large number of requests and limited funds with which to address only the most pressing requests each year. As reported to past Town Meetings, the Committee believes that the Town's allocation to the Capital Budget each year should be at least \$3.0 million (exclusive of money devoted to roads) and that that amount should increase each year by the same 2½% allowed to other aspects of the Town's general tax budget. One positive aspect of capital funding is that both the 2001 and the 2015 overrides, plus the 2½% annual growth has boosted the Pavement Management Program to the maximum level that the departments can manage in a construction season. While our roads and sidewalks are still in desperate condition in many areas of town, we are spending all we can reasonably spend in a season without tying the town up in road closure knots. However, a study of the five-year chart at the end of this report indicates that, even with an increased allocation for the Capital Budget, some years will present a challenge. Without increased allocations, further creative financing is inevitable. In addition, the Committee has gone on record as strongly supporting the efforts of the Warrant Committee to establish a system whereby the condition of the Town's large capital assets can be assessed, indexed, and tracked from year to year.

Article 22 in the warrant will contain the Committee's FY2019 recommendations. In addition to the annual Capital allocation, this Committee routinely recommends reallocation of funds previously appropriated for capital projects that are now complete.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Police Domain Controller Servers: The existing servers are at the end of their useful life. They are no longer eligible for maintenance or updating.

Ambulance and Cardiac Monitor Replacement: This is the first year of the Fire Department's five-year program to fund a replacement for the cardiac monitor in the ambulance. Each year the Committee sets aside \$7000 for this monitor, which costs \$35,000. The cardiac monitor was replaced this past year so this is the first year of contributing to its replacement fund.

Similarly, each year the Committee sets aside money for the purchase of a new ambulance. Since a new ambulance was purchased in FY17, this is year two of the five-

year program and the set aside is now \$65,000 to reflect the increased cost of a new ambulance.

PUBLIC FACILITIES

Envelope Repairs to Leonard Street Fire Station: These repairs are necessary to correct the original, improper installation of windows and to prevent further deterioration of the building.

Replace Winn Brook Fire Alarm System: This system is on the verge of obsolescence and needs to be replaced.

Replace Butler Emergency Generator: The existing generator is at the end of its useful life.

Refinish Chenery Auditorium Stage Floor: The floor is 20 years old and needs to be refinished.

Upgrade Chenery Auditorium Lighting Control System: The existing system is original to the school and requires an upgrade.

Chenery Stage Equipment Risk Assessment: This will provide information about the safe, efficient functioning of 20-year-old equipment and recommendations for its upgrade or replacement.

Replace DPW Overhead Doors: These doors are very old creating a dangerous situation.

Remove and Replace DPW Windows: Broken windows interfere with heating the building as well as pose security risks to the building.

LIBRARY

Install Automatic Door Locking System: This is to enhance security at the Library and is recommended by the Police Department as a result of its security assessment of that building.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

Replace Truck (#116): This is a 2008 F550 Dump Truck in heavy use by the Cemetery Division. The old one will be traded-in.

SCHOOLS

Upgrade Network Wiring: This project replaces existing wiring at Burbank, Butler and Winn Brook that is 20 years old and is brittle and breaking down due to age. The new wiring will have greater capacity and will improve system speed and reliability.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Fiber Network Engineering and Design: This is the second phase in updating the Town and School's fiber network. The project is related to the repurposing of the Belmont Municipal Light Building where one of the two main hubs for the network is located. It will create a plan to meet the future networks needs in town in view of future building projects.

Add Data Storage Network: This funds an upgrade of the Storage Area Network, which will reach full capacity within 12-18 months

OFFICE OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Pavement Management: This continues the yearly infusion of money into the Town's Pavement Management program, which is discussed in greater detail in the narrative of the report. The Director of Community Development will report at Town Meeting on the specific streets to be paved with the FY 2019 funds. Of particular note is the project for pedestrian safety upgrades at the Winn Brook School, which will include the installation of raised elements to slow down vehicular traffic in the school zone.

ENTERPRISE FUNDS

The Director of Community Development who is responsible for the management of these programs reports annually to the Committee on the status of these undertakings and funding mechanisms. They are described here but are not part of the annual capital budget allocation.

Water Main Replacement Program: This is the continuation of the 30-year project to replace all the unlined cast iron pipe in the town's water distribution system (approximately 40% of the system) to ensure a continued reliable supply of clean water. The project was originally approved by Town Meeting in 1995.

Water Main Bond Repayment: The Water Main Replacement Program (described above) is funded in part by taking advantage of no-interest loans from the MWRA through the Local Pipeline Assistance Program (LPAP). This is an integral part of the capital finance plan for the upgrade of the Town's water system.

Replace 1 Ton Pick-up Truck (#82): This truck is used daily for a variety of needs of the Water Division. The retired truck will be traded-in.

Sewer and Drain Repair: This funds the Town's ongoing program to repair infrastructure and alleviate flooding. Primarily on roads programmed for reconstruction under the Pavement Management Program.

Sewer Permit Compliance: This will pay for consulting services to ensure compliance with new federal storm water permitting requirements [going](#) into effect July 1, 2018. (The implementation date was pushed to July 1, 2018. This money instead helped fund the EPA investigate work also funded by the item below).

Sewer and Drain Investigation, Evaluation and Repair: As required by federal EPA, this project will address potential problem areas where sewer lines could leak into stormwater lines. The State DEP will provide a loan at a very low interest rate to defray the cost of potential sewer and stormwater rehabilitation work.

Replace ½ Ton Pick-up Truck (#10): This replaces a 2006 Pick-up Truck in daily use by the Highway Division for the sanitary sewer maintenance program.

Replace 3 Cubic Yard Trailer Mounted Hotbox (#48): This replaces a 2009 mounted box in use seasonally by the Highway Division for the sanitary sewer maintenance program.

Smart Meter Replacement Program (Phase III): This is upgrades an Advanced Meter Infrastructure system and allows for instant consumption reads, leak detection and efficiencies in billing and customer access to their accounts.

The Committee's recommendations for FY2019 are set forth in the motions that correspond to Article 22 in the warrant. Water and sewer rates have been set appropriately to finance the expenditures recommended under Article 16. Chapter 90 Highway Funds from the State are covered in Article 21.

Five-Year Projection of Belmont's Capital Needs

It is the responsibility of the Capital Budget Committee to present to the Town Meeting, in addition to the items to be funded in the upcoming fiscal year, a list of the expected projects for the following five years. (The available data, however, is often not precisely five years: the implications of some entries go beyond five years and, in a few instances, only four years projections are available. FY2019, dealt with above, is sometimes taken as year one.) In the past, it has been the practice of the Capital Budget Committee to compile this five-year list from requests from department heads and to present it largely unaltered.³ For this year, we will continue with this practice. In particular, we have not deleted items that are to us not within our mandate (see second section, above). The appearance of an item in the chart should not be taken as a decision on our part that an item is properly within this Committee's jurisdiction. We might later screen out some items as more appropriate for the operating budget. This chart is a raw document for planning purposes only. The items in the chart have not been "vetted" either by the Town Administrator or the Capital Budget Committee. The chart is attached to this report.

One will note in the chart that there are items requested for buildings that may receive major renovation or replacement in the future. We are uncertain of the timing of any of these projects, and so have included repairs that have been identified in the year that it appears such a need will

³ Some changes have been made, however, for editorial consistency. Another change is that the requests for FY2019 that could not be recommended have been added to the appropriate year (usually FY2020). The later change is somewhat arbitrary because many of these requests will in fact be modified before the departments make them (or substitute requests) again. This is because it often seemingly puts two years of a multi-year project into one year and because of "work arounds" that departments may have devised in the meantime. These workarounds may involve grants, gifts, funds diverted from operations, help from other departments, different approaches to the underlying problem, combination with other projects, and so forth. The Committee, however, believes it is best to keep these matters in mind.

occur. It is expected that any expenditures of a capital nature will be carefully thought out in terms of the expected future of the facility. However, the buildings do have to function, and be safe and comfortable, for as long as they are being used.

This Committee asked that departments submit costs estimated for the year matching the effective date of the request, thus requiring an adjustment for the economy in future years. Some departments tried to comply with this request; others did not. Moreover, unmet capital requests from the past that we have tried to carry forward are shown at the values originally submitted (without adjustment). Finally, most of the capital items are subject to a bidding process before they are actually purchased. Therefore, these cost values should be treated as only roughly comparable orders of magnitude.

Because the Pavement Management Program must be executed on a seasonal basis, the Committee has not attempted to cast the full planning for roads by the Community Development Department in this fiscal year chart form. The Committee has met in past years with the Director of Community Development, has reviewed his planning and is satisfied that the Pavement Program will make good use of any funds that this Committee is able to allocate to that Program for the indefinite future. A more extensive discussion of the roads situation is available in the previously cited reports of the Belmont Pavement Management Committee.

This chart contains some expenditures for sewer and water enterprise funds. The Director of Community Development is responsible for some of those projects in his capacity as Town Engineer. (As a general matter, the Director of Community Development is responsible for sewer capital projects and those items are in the Community Development Department budget; the Director of the Public Works Department is responsible for water capital expenditures and those items are in the DPW budget. The Committee has been assured that planning for water and sewer projects is coordinated between the departments.) Some water and sewer projects are funded or to be funded from the proceeds of borrowing previously authorized or which the Town Engineer hopes will be authorized. The debt service for that borrowing will be included in the operating budgets of the enterprise funds.

The Parks Division and the Cemetery Division have been combined but are still carried separately for budgeting purposes.

The request by non-school Town Technology for Phase II of a multi-year project to relocate fiber optic hubs (see 2014), and related requests in subsequent years, anticipates the disposition of the current main library and the former Municipal Light Department headquarters on Concord Avenue. These buildings house the two main hubs for the Town's fiber network, without which the Town's computer, telephone, security and radio systems would not work. Any sale or reconstruction of these buildings will require moving the hubs, a multi-year process that needs to start no fewer than three years before sale or reconstruction.

As the five-year chart demonstrates, it is doubtful that the Town can fund all worthy capital requests in coming years from the current, annual allocation to the capital budget. The Committee recommended financing some acquisitions (lease/purchasing of Police and Fire equipment) in previous years. Two years ago the override vote allowed the Town to move ahead with two projects deemed of vital importance and urgency through the Committee's increased borrowing capability. Among other possible financing approaches the Committee may consider in future are so-called BANS (bond anticipation notes), leasing, capital outlay exclusions, and

debt exclusions. It is very likely that the Committee will make further recommendations in this regard in coming years.

Anne Marie Mahoney, Chairman
Rebecca Vose, Secretary
M. Patricia Brusch
Susan Burgess-Cox
Jennifer Fallon
Mark Paolillo
Stephen Pinkerton