

MINUTES
TOWN OF BELMONT
CAPITAL BUDGET COMMITTEE
Town Hall Conference Room 4
Thursday, February 7, 2019
8:00 AM

2019 MAR -6 AM 11:30

Call to Order

A regular meeting of the Capital Budget Committee (CBC) was called to order at 8:05 a.m. by Chair Anne Marie Mahoney.

Members Present: Chair Mahoney, M. Patricia Brusch, Mark Paolillo (BOS) (arrived at 8:15), Jenny Fallon (WC), Karl Haglund (PB) (left at 9:18), Susan Burgess-Cox (SC), and Rebecca Vose

Also present: Patrice Garvin, Town Administrator

Chair Mahoney noted that Mr. Haglund will be representing the Planning Board at the CBC going forward. She then reviewed the capital request review process and touched on the upcoming CBC meetings (School Department, for example).

Information Technology

Dave Petto, IT Director, appeared before the CBC to present the IT Department's capital requests. He began with a \$15K request for an IT assessment/study. He explained that the Town has five different IT centers, and an assessment is needed to review efficiencies and to understand priorities. Ms. Fallon said that the WC supports this request – needs related to IT will continue and the assessment will help prioritize funding. Chair Mahoney and Mrs. Brusch said that they support the study, but asked whether this study is a *capital* expense, and whether \$15K is enough money for the study. Ms. Vose asked whether a *portion* of the study could be funded from capital and a portion from another source, possibly operating.

The CBC discussed issues relating to this request: that operating budgets are very tight. The capital budget is also tight, with many demands on it (far more than can be funded) and the possibility that the five impacted departments could chip in to fund the study request, etc.

Mr. Petto then noted that there is some money in his budget allocated for capital (\$50,000 per year). This budget is for technology upgrades, as about 20% of the computers are replaced every year.

Concerning the Fiber Network Construction, Mr. Petto explained that next year is the construction phase (the preliminary design came in last week). This is a multi-year project. Each phase will tie in to each other and will have a cost associated with it. About \$300,000 will be needed in FY20 to do the necessary construction on the fiber network.

Concerning the high school, the existing infrastructure will need to be removed, and there will be

a new fiber installation at the new high school. Mr. Petto explained what will happen at the Library, when it is under construction. The total cost will be upwards of \$870,000. The CBC agreed that this expense is now like a utility – e.g., electricity, water, heat, etc. – in that it is inevitable and recurring. Mr. Paolillo asked if this amount (\$870K) could be bonded? Chair Mahoney noted that the Capital budget is already at its bonding limit.

Mr. Petto then explained the \$95,000 request for fiber equipment, and the network storage request for \$90,000 (for FY23).

The CBC briefly discussed how to fund IT needs. Mr. Paolillo noted that a Capital Budget guideline/policy might be a helpful tool. (Much like the free cash policy.) Perhaps the Financial Task Force will help to create such a policy. It could provide disciplined analysis when making these very difficult decisions. The operating budget, all agreed, will absolutely max out, thus necessitating an operating override in the not-too-distant future.

Library

Peter Struzziero, Library Director, and Elaine Alligood, Member Board of Library Trustees, appeared before the CBC to present the Library's capital requests. Mr. Struzziero noted that he is balancing what absolutely needs to be done against what can wait (given that a new building is being planned for).

He then began with the upper front steps (\$37K). The upper stairs are sinking into the hill and this creates a safety issue. He discussed what could potentially be done to remediate the front steps.

Concerning the gutters (\$45K), Mr. Struzziero explained the history of the gutters' repairs. The Facilities Department installed copper gutters in the front of the building, which material was sanctioned by no department and sends the wrong message to residents. The two side gutters of the library need to be done, as the water overflow creates a safety issue. Chair Mahoney suggested selling the copper gutter to help fund the side gutters. The CBC agreed that selling the copper gutters demonstrates that the choice of this material was a mistake. This option should, at the very least, be investigated.

Mrs. Brusch asked how much money is in the Library's state fund: \$150-200K. Mr. Struzziero said that the state money will *not* be used on gutters and referenced what the law says about what these funds should be used for. The state funds the Library at about \$30-40K per year. At her request, Mr. Struzziero will send the Chair information about these state funds.

Chair Mahoney raised the issue of the sprinkler/fire alarm system, and the letter from Chief Frizzell. Mr. Struzziero explained that the inspections are being passed.

Library Building Project Update

Mr. Struzziero then provided an update on the Library Building project. He reviewed the make-up of building committee membership as well as the actions that it has taken since 2015. The last year has been spent with the OPM (Owner's Project Manager) (Daedalus) and more recently with the Architect (Oudens Ello). He mentioned the schedule for the fundraising efforts and

noted that the debt exclusion vote might be in 2022, or the Spring of 2023. The next significant event is another meeting to elicit input from the community to be scheduled within the month. The CBC briefly discussed the debt exclusion for this project, noting that an operating override will need to be in the mix as well. The potential operating override was briefly explored.

Setting of Future Meeting Dates

Thursday, February 28, 2019 at 8:00 a.m. (review the Capital requests to date)

Thursday, March 7, 2019 at 8:00 a.m. (Schools and Facilities)

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of Jan. 24, 2019 were unanimously approved, as amended.

Update on Building Projects

Police/DPW – Chair Mahoney noted that the bid process is underway. She noted that money will need to be identified for moving (which could possibly come from the Cushing Square parking lot sale). Chair Mahoney noted that construction should start in June.

BHS – Mrs. Brusch provided some information on the project. She noted that design development should be completed in March. The budget will be revisited once the design is done. There are items that will inevitably crop up, that were not planned for (e.g., turf). The geothermal testing is underway. Commissioning, which she explained, is happening on site. She explained the role of the MSBA in the commissioning process.

Miscellany

There was discussion of a new hockey rink either in its existing location or on the incinerator site. There is support in town for expanding the size of the rink to accommodate more than one playing surface. In the short-term, a rink project could have implications for the BHS project construction phase because of the need to provide parking space for construction vehicles.

The CBC moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Vose, Secretary