

**MINUTES
TOWN OF BELMONT
CAPITAL BUDGET COMMITTEE
MEETING BY AUDIO AND VISUAL REMOTE ACCESS AND BY TELEPHONE
Thursday, April 2, 2020
8:00 AM**

DATE: April 16, 2020
TIME: 2:01 PM

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 by Audio and Video Remote Access: Chair Mahoney, Susan Burgess-Cox (SC), Adam Dash (SB), Jenny Fallon (WC), Karl Haglund (PB) and Rebecca Vose

Members Present by Telephone: M. Patricia Brush

Also Present by Audio and Video Remote Access: Jon Marshall, Assistant Town Administrator, Steve Dorrance, Director of Facilities, John Phelan, Superintendent of Schools

Also Present by Telephone: Steve Mazzola, IT Director of Schools

The Chair began by acknowledging the extraordinary circumstances under which the Committee is meeting and the unprecedented fiscal crisis facing the Town because of the Covid-19 global pandemic. She explained that in keeping with Governor Baker's Executive Order of March 12, 2020 certain provisions of the State's Open Meeting Law are suspended and require all participation by Committee and Town Residents to be by remote access.

Operating and Capital Budgets Update

Chair Mahoney asked Mr. Dash to provide an up-to-date report on the status of the FY21 capital and operating budgets from the Select Board's perspective. His update was as follows:

- The Select Board has been extremely busy dealing with the fiscal fall-out from the pandemic.
- The Town is starting from scratch with FY21 budget.
- Tax revenues are down, and state aid will be lower.
- The question of re-allocating money within FY20 budget is under consideration.
- The Select Board will discuss a hiring freeze at its next meeting on Monday.
- The SB will also look at furloughing some Town employees.
- The State is allowing municipalities to run deficits.
- The SB is looking at developing a 3-year budget for FY20-FY22.
- Town Meeting is put-off until June and may be held virtually with a reduced quorum required.
- There is a real question whether there will even be a discretionary capital budget for FY21.

Mr. Dash proposed that the Committee look at the three or more top capital requests for systems that are in danger of failure or are critical for its recommendations to Town Meeting.

Members then talked about other ramifications for the Town, including cash flow problems if property owners are unable to pay their real estate taxes. Ms. Fallon expressed the urgency of getting the word out to residents about how dire things are. She and others agreed that the Town has to assess its ability to continue providing essential services. It was noted that the Town still has to go out to borrow for both the BHS and DPW building projects. Thus far work on all Town building projects continue, but Governor Baker may order all construction projects in the state shut down.

Ms. Fallon further noted that CPA money cannot be used for the Town's operating budget, which also has to be made clear to residents. Mr. Dash agreed with Ms. Fallon but noted that CPA money may be used for rental assistance.

Update on Warrant Committee Reserve Fund Requests

Chair Mahoney reported that the DPW/BPD Building Committee is planning to request from Warrant a reserve fund transfer for the police station project for some of the funds for removal and remediation of contaminated soil as well as removal of the existing two chamber underground gas and oil tank. The total request will be \$65,000. There are other issues the Building Committee is tackling including the Town antenna located on the site and the conversion of an underground tank to gas use only. It was noted that on the operating side of the budget there will be other requests to Warrant for police and fire overtime.

Facilities Department Requests for FY21

Chair Mahoney proposed that the CBC hear the FY21 Facilities requests although it is unclear which if any of them will be funded. It will be important for members to know what projects entail and if any involve life safety or failing systems. She turned to Mr. Dorrance to hear his report. He explained that he would present his requests in order of priority from highest to lowest.

1. Fuel Tank Replacement at the DPW. \$650,000
There are two underground tanks both of which are single single-wall fiberglass. They are no longer insurable due to age and construction. The situation is further complicated by the location of the tanks over an underground stream. The tanks need to be replaced with ones that meet current environmental standards.
2. Electric vehicles end of lease buy-out. \$18,000
They are used by Facilities and Health. They are low-maintenance and have another 8 to 10 years of useful life.
3. Building Management System (BMS) upgrades. \$81,000
This would upgrade BMS system at Burbank, Butler and Winn Brook. This system allows for remote management of heating systems and other operations. It results in Mr. Dorrance's estimation in roughly \$100K in fuel savings annually for Schools. This

request also pays to install a BMS at Town Hall where currently heat and A/C systems run simultaneously.

4. Winn Brook PA System Replacement. \$50,000
This system has failed. The amount requested would be added to the \$45,000 allocated in FY20 for repairs to replace the system.
5. Wellington Exterior Paint Project. \$50,000
The exterior paint is in bad shape. The building's architect has offered to share some of the cost of solving the problem so this request could be knocked down to \$20,000. If the Town does not attend to the problem soon Mr. Dorrance warned that it will be necessary to replace all the wood on the exterior because mold is already growing.
6. Carpet Replacement at Three Elementary Schools. \$98,006
The carpets have outlived their useful lives. Mr. Dorrance expressed concern that there may be asbestos present in the existing carpet at Winn Brook in a common hallway. (Ms. Brusch assured the Committee that all asbestos carpeting was removed and replaced when the WB was renovated in the early 1990s.) At Burbank the partial carpeting in 21 rooms will be replaced with carpet tiles. The Wellington Library carpet would also be replaced with carpet tiles.

There was then discussion of the building inventory assessment conducted in 2014 to identify the capital repairs required in each Town and School building. That assessment revealed \$2.6M to \$3M at the Butler. At Chenery, the elevator needs \$160,000 in upgrades, roof top units need replacing, other work totaling \$240,000 was identified and the now 23-year-old roof will need replacing in the near future. Committee members were in agreement that it is imperative that the Town maintains the Chenery.

7. Butler Phase VI Window Replacement. \$213,232
This continues the window replacement and related envelope work. Seventy-two windows remain to be replaced. Mr. Dorrance suggested that as an interim measure Facilities can use a filter to reduce the overheating caused by the sun for \$10,000.
8. New Work Truck. \$53,000
It is likely that Facilities will be getting a hand-me-down truck from DPW in which case the department can manage. With a second truck, however, Mr. Dorrance is highly confident that his staff could increase productivity by 80%. This is because his skilled repair/maintenance crew of two share a truck, which hobbles the department's ability to send each of them off to jobs in different locations.
9. Radio Upgrades at Schools. \$95,000
This would upgrade three more school buildings. There would be a single radio system across all school buildings allowing for a much smoother process for contacting police and fire/ambulance services.

Mr. Dorrance concluded his presentation making a few additional points. He is (as noted above) expecting to receive a hand-me-down truck from DPW. That said, he proposes reducing the \$53K requested for a new work truck to \$35K for a simple stripped-down work van to achieve increased productivity of his skilled employees described above. Finally, he made a pitch for at least buying out the lease of one of the electric vehicles the Town has been leasing for \$9K.

Chair Mahoney added to this list a request for Fixtures, Furniture and Equipment (FF&E) for the renovated Police Station. This would also cover the security system for the building. The amount requested is \$135,000. New lockers for employees, including ones for evidence and gear, totals about \$155,000. The Chair is preparing to request a grant from the Belmont Savings Bank Foundation to cover this expense. There is also a small amount needed for technology, but this will be covered by another source of funding.

Fiber Network Firewall Request for Town and Schools

Mr. Mazzola was asked to explain the \$30,800 request to replace the firewall. This is, it should be noted, described as a Schools request but it is for the Town network as well. He reported that the current firewall is 7 years old. The system has two firewalls of the same age. If one fails, our back-up is as old as the one that failed. His plan is to replace one firewall for \$30,800 to prevent a complete system failure. Mr. Mazzola has applied for a discount of 40% of the cost from a federal grant program. Given current circumstances he is unsure of the timing of grant announcements and Belmont may have to replace the firewall before the discount is available to use.

Discussion of Re-Allocating Funds from Previous Fiscal Years to FY21 Capital Projects

Mr. Dorrance reported that money remains in the amount allocated by Town Meeting a few years ago for town-wide security. There has been discussion among Town leaders of re-allocating just under \$170K of this money for Police Station Building (PSB) purposes, specifically a new security system. There is urgency in this matter because the PSB security system has to be installed now, given the stage of construction the project is at. The Chair proposed that the CBC take a contingency vote permitting the re-appropriation of roughly \$170,000 for the PSB project until the FY21 capital budget is settled.

Members of the Committee expressed support for this approach. Significant among members' reasons was that the use of the money for this purpose falls within the intent of the original appropriation. It was also noted that the CBC has a tradition of allowing intra-office re-allocation of capital budget appropriations for a different capital budget purpose.

Mr. Dorrance said that he needs to clarify the amount that remains in this account to ensure that it is unencumbered before moving it elsewhere.

Further discussion ensued about the best wording of a motion to accept this plan. Chair Mahoney explained that it is necessary to conduct a roll call vote for all Committee votes under the Governor's Executive Order of March 12, 2020.

Ms. Fallon moved: That the Capital Budget Committee re-allocate the money now held for town-wide security camera upgrade to include security system upgrade/installation on all town buildings.

Ms. Bruschi seconded.

The Chair called the Roll and members responded as follows:

Karl Haglund	Yes
Jenny Fallon	Yes
Adam Dash.	Yes
Rebecca Vose	Yes
Susan Burgess-Cox	Yes
M. Patricia Brusch	Yes
Anne-Marie Mahoney	Yes

The motion carried unanimously.

Next Steps

Members discussed how best to approach the work of the Committee in recommending projects for the FY21 capital budget. There was agreement to create a mission critical list. Mr. Marshall was tasked with making a list of all requested FY21 projects and sending it to members to priority rank each either high, medium or low. Members will then email their rank listing to the Chair only. These results will form the basis of discussion at the next CBC meeting. By then it may be clearer what amount of money, if any, is available for capital expenditures in FY21.

Approval of Minutes

Ms. Fallon moved: That the minutes of March 5, 2020 as written be approved

Ms. Burgess-Cox seconded.

The Chair called the Roll and members responded as follows:

Karl Haglund	Abstained
Jenny Fallon	Yes
Adam Dash.	Yes
Rebecca Vose	Yes
Susan Burgess-Cox	Yes
M. Patricia Brusch	Abstained
Anne-Marie Mahoney	Yes

Next Meeting

The CBC will next meet on Thursday, April 16 at 8:00 a.m.

The CBC moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:20 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Vose, Secretary