

**TOWN OF BELMONT  
MEETING OF THE  
CAPITAL BUDGET COMMITTEE  
MEETING BY AUDIO AND VISUAL REMOTE ACCESS AND BY  
Thursday, February 17, 2022  
8:01 AM**

<p style="text-align:center"><b>RECEIVED TOWN CLERK BELMONT, MA</b></p> <p>DATE: March 14, 2022 TIME: 9:13 AM</p>
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**Call to Order**

A regular meeting of the Capital Budget Committee (CBC) was called to order at 8:03 a.m. by Chair Anne Marie Mahoney.

CBC Members Present by Audio and Video Remote Access: Chair Mahoney, M. Patricia Brusch, Susan Burgess Cox, Roy Epstein (SB), Jenny Fallon (WC), Meg Moriarty (SC) and Rebecca Vose

Also Present: Patrice Garvin, Town Administrator (TA); Glen Clancy, Acting Assistant TA; Matthew Haskell, Budget Analyst, Office of the TA; Floyd Carmen, Town Treasurer; Chris Doyle, Chair of Long-Term Capital Planning Committee (LTCPC) and members of the LTCPC; Peter Struzziero, Library Director; Kathy Keohane, Chair of Library Trustees

**Discussion of Proposed Bylaw Change to Create Comprehensive Capital Budget Committee (CCBC)**

Ms. Doyle reviewed the latest iteration of the proposed CCBC Bylaw, including membership, preparation of a Long-Term Capital Improvement Plan (CIC), and current capital budget requests. Members of both groups discussed various issues, with CBC members insisting that an updated capital inventory that is kept current is a critical foundation for the work of a CCBC. Ms. Fallon, who is a member of both committees, suggested that language should be added to require that the capital inventory be “updated annually.” She also noted that the 30-year Capital Plan would include the timing of debt exclusions for large projects. Mrs. Brusch expressed concern that attention to and analysis of the annual capital budget will be less rigorous by the proposed new committee. The Bylaw language once in final form will be brought to the CBC before annual town meeting.

**Presentation of FY23 Belmont Public Library Capital Budget Request**

Ms. Keohane stated that considering the deteriorated condition of the building, the tremendous expense of fixing it and the plan to seek money for a new library in a debt exclusion in the near future, the Library is not making capital budget requests for FY23 for repairs to the building’s physical plant. The long list of these needed repairs is well-known to members of the CBC. She also reminded the Committee that both the \$250K allocated in the State Budget and any money raised by the Library Foundation are allocable only for a new building.

Mr. Struzziero explained that the Library’s only FY23 request is for a Radio Frequency Identification system (RFID), which streamlines the speed and accuracy of circulation and

shelving functions. This system is used by many members of the Minuteman Library Network and many libraries across the country as it is state-of-the-art for circulation. Each library item is tagged. At check-out several items can be checked out simultaneously using a reader that is about the size of a tablet. This speeds up the process, saving time for the user and staff. It will also allow for self-checkout by patrons at a kiosk. Mr. Struzziero reminded the CBC that despite the pandemic Belmont's Library is the 10<sup>th</sup> busiest in the Commonwealth.

The cost of the system is \$32,000. Staff will need to affix a tag to each item, which could consume a fair amount of time. That said, in anticipation of relocating the collection for construction of a new library, Mr. Struzziero will conduct a massive weed out of materials. Out-of-date materials and ones that haven't circulated in a long will be removed, reducing the number of items tagged. Mrs. Bruschi suggested recruiting volunteers to help with the tagging project. This system is completely portable. If installed before the move, it will transfer to the new building without a hitch.

### **Additional Capital Funds Available for FY23**

Ms. Garvin presented information about roughly \$1M in the Account for Town Owned Property that must be spent on capital or borrowing for capital purposes pursuant to state law. The bulk of the money comes from the sale of the Cushing Square parking lot. Ms. Garvin suggested that the CBC could allocate it all for the FY23 capital budget; allocate some to the current budget and put some in the Capital Stabilization Fund (CSF); or use it to decrease funds spent on FY23 capital requests and increase borrowing to pay for capital requests.

The CBC debated the merits of each approach, with most members inclined to allocate these funds in FY23 for some big-ticket requests that otherwise cannot be paid for out of this year's capital allocation. Members discussed the relative merits of funding the CSF versus using this money for current projects or borrowing for current projects. If the Library debt exclusion fails, the \$1M could be available to address the several large repair jobs the old building would need. Mr. Carmen shared that he has some tax title cases that are on track to be resolved in the near-term. The funds netted, he suggested, could be used for the Town's next big capital project. Ms. Fallon proposed that funding the CSF is more appropriately the subject of an over-ride vote.

Chair Mahoney suggested one way to use the \$1M:

Butler Masonry Repair	\$487K
Windows at the Butler	\$235K
Wellington Heat Exchange.	\$175K
Winn Brook Alarm & PA System	<u>\$ 75K</u>
	\$972K

She asked Ms. Moriarty to seek clarity from the School Committee on its plans for the Butler School, which will inform the CBC's decision about using the \$1M. The CBC will revisit the topic when it meets with David Blazon, Director of Facilities, again on March 3.

Chair Mahoney also reported that there is \$177K in turn backs from modular units.

**Approval of Minutes**

*Mrs. Brusch moved:* That the minutes of February 3, 2002, be approved as amended.

Ms. Fallon seconded.

Chair Mahoney called the Roll with Members Brusch, Fallon, Mahoney and Vose voting in favor. Member Epstein abstained.

**Next Meetings:** Thursday, March 3, at 8:00 a.m. with DPW, Community Development and Facilities.

The CBC moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:43 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Vose, Secretary