

DATE: January 28, 2022
TIME: 11:21 AM

**TOWN OF BELMONT
JOINT MEETING OF THE
CAPITAL BUDGET COMMITTEE
AND LONG-TERM CAPITAL PLANNING COMMITTEE
MEETING BY AUDIO AND VISUAL REMOTE ACCESS AND BY TELEPHONE
Wednesday, October 13, 2021
8:00 AM**

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, Roy Epstein (SB), Jenny Fallon (WC), Meg Moriarty (SC), Rebecca Vose and Susan Burgess Cox

Also Present: Jon Marshall, Assistant Town Administrator

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Epstein moved: That the minutes of September 29, 2021, be approved as written.

Mrs. Brusch seconded.

Ms. Mahoney called the Roll with all members voting in favor.

Discussion with Members of the Long-Term Capital Planning Committee (LTCPC)

The discussion began with background on developing the charge for a new comprehensive planning committee. The driving force for this is that our capital needs, long-term, middle-term and immediate, exceed available funds. How can the Town reasonably and effectively handle all these needs? It is crucial that whatever the process, it cannot create excessive demand on staff time. Consensus within the LTCPC is one committee composed of representatives of various boards and committees and a critical mass of residents, to carry the burden of all the work, meets these needs best. This model could produce deeper understanding among Town Meeting members and residents of the need for greater capital investment. It would lay out clearly future capital projects and enable better long-range financial planning. A single capital committee is the strong preference of our current Town Administrator and Assistant Town Administrator.

There was some skepticism expressed that the annual capital budget may not be well-served if handled as part of a larger planning committee. And a sub-committee of the new, larger committee devoted just to annual capital expenditures did not make sense to some CBC members. It was pointed out that the entire comprehensive planning committee could deal with

the annual capital budget, and because that work is calendar specific (January to April typically), that leaves the remainder of the year free for this group's other work.

Further discussion touched on the actual language of the by-law creating the new committee. Mr. Epstein wants to look at how to integrate the new committee into the Town's Financial Policies, because there are two (2) kinds of capital projects – those financed within the tax levy and those requiring a debt exclusion. Other concerns mentioned were the need for explicit language in the by-law (1) related to funding planning and (2) a definition of discretionary funding. The LTCPC plans to have the proposed by-law on the next Annual Town Meeting warrant.

Membership composition elicited views about the desirability of having the Town Treasurer, School Superintendent and Town Administrator serve. This would be a tremendous time-drain on the people in those positions. The Superintendent and Town Administrator, it was noted, are responsible for identifying our capital needs so they should be on this committee. This prompted a discussion of the role of an *ex officio* appointee.

The LTCPC's next meeting is October 27. CBC members were asked to send their revisions, edits, and comments to Ms. Fallon in time to be distributed ahead of the 27th. If there are substantial changes to the draft by-law, the CBC wants to meet again with the LTCPC in early to mid-November to discuss.

Update on C. 90 Funds

The amount of reimbursement of c. 90 Highway Funds was not known at the time of the 2021 Annual Town meeting. Chair Mahoney reported that Town Counsel has advised that Town Meeting does not need to vote to accept these funds, although it had been the practice for the last several years. Going forward there will be no c.90 warrant article.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, November 9, 2021, at 7:00 p.m. with the School Committee

The CBC moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:23 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Vose, Secretary