

Comprehensive Capital Budget Committee

MEETING MINUTES

Friday, November 3, 2023

Location – Remote Meeting on Zoom

RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK
BELMONT, MA

DATE: January 17, 2024

TIME: 2:42 PM

Members Present: Chris Doyle, Deepak Garg, Susan Burgess-Cox, Jung Yueh, Mark Paolillo, Larry Link

Members Absent: Claus Becker

Nonvoting members present: Jennifer Hewitt, David Blazon

Members of the public present: David Coleman, Matt Taylor

Meeting called to order by Chair C. Doyle at 7:46am

P. Brusch and D. Blazon left the meeting at 8am

1. Minutes
 - a. Reviewed minutes of 2023/11/03
 - i. A. Pikilingis moves to approve with small amendments
 - ii. D. Garg second
 - iii. Vote: Approved unanimously (5-0 in favor)
2. Update from fall Town Meeting
 - a. Question & discussion: Should we designate any of the capital stabilization fund toward something specific?
 - i. C. Doyle: Could provide a list of potential projects rather than a specific designation
 - ii. D. Blazon suggests keeping the designation as general as possible
 - iii. J. Hewitt suggests our long-term plan will be a good source of information for this purpose
3. Recommendations to Select Board
 - a. Potential use of free cash and a designation from an override amount
 - i. We suggested for building envelopes
 - ii. Recommendation back was for expanding pavement management
 - iii. J. Hewitt provided background on Warrant Committee (WC) meeting from 11/15
 1. Subset of WC members developed a model. Tom Caputo will come present at a future CCBC meeting
 2. Free cash has been certified at \$11.8m, including opioid settlement, leaving \$11.7m
4. Review & Revision of Project Priority Approach
 - a. Discussion of the committee's project evaluation rubric and scoring system
 - i. P. Brusch commented that the rankings being separate from funding sources introduced a challenge
 1. C. Doyle: Should we add note/instruction: do not consider items with existing funding sources

2. S. Burgess-Cox suggests we might remove items that have known funding sources (e.g. projects funded by the sidewalk designated funds)
 - ii. Discussion: What projects are included on this ranking? Do we need to make any updates to our process?
 1. We only focused on projects that were requested for the short-term, with help from J. Hewitt to identify the projects for FY24
 2. Note: The factors from our evaluation are now included in the finance team's request form and process for town departments
 3. Philosophically, as long as we are each internally consistent in our ranking methodology it's okay if our individual approaches vary across members
 - iii. **Request: Please review the tool and its components (instructions, weighting, etc.) in our project evaluation tool with a critical eye and provide any feedback for improvement**
 - iv. Process: Ranking the current projects separate from future projects (e.g. projects that under consideration for funding for this year vs. projects we *know* won't be funded yet)
 1. And remove the non-discretionary items
 - b. Discussion: Timing of broader capital process
 - i. J. Hewitt provided an overview of when we will meet with department heads
 1. Finance team is meeting with department heads in early December
 2. Therefore it makes sense for us to meet with them in early January
 - a. **If we provide meeting dates, J. Hewitt will coordinate scheduling the department heads participation**
 - c. C. Doyle will work with M. Huang (past member) to update the evaluation tool to accommodate the longer-term forecast of 30 years
5. Meeting dates
 - a. Budget Summit 2023/11/30
 - i. Plan: Re-state our committee recommendations
 1. Some feedback suggests sidewalks might be a good item to prioritize
 - b. Scheduling meetings with Department Heads in January.
Please hold Potential dates:
 - i. **January 10 (7:30 - 9am)**
 - ii. January 11 (7:30 - 9am) (tentative)
 - iii. **January 17 (7:30 - 9am)**
 - iv. January 18 (7:30 - 9am) (tentative)
 - c. **Upcoming scheduled meeting: December 8th at 7:45am**
6. Updates from other committees

- a. L. Link provided an update from Structural Change Implementation Committee
 - i. Presented top 11 suggestions to Town earlier this year
 - 1. None of these suggestions have direct tie-in to capital
 - 2. **L. Link will circulate this list of recommendations to committee members**
 - b. J. Hewitt notes that our AAA bond rating was continued as we went out to bond
 - i. The bonds did get sold. Interest will be due next year (FY25) -- this will be added to tax bills, but principal won't be paid until we convert this into permanent debt. The timing of that process is TBD, depending on the status of the debt exclusion projects.
 - ii. Bonding for the pumper truck will be incorporated next fall when this conversion of debt happens.
 - c. S. Burgess-Cox points out the potential recommendation for a no-override budget item of potentially closing an elementary school (Burbank). As this is a capital asset it may come to our committee to comment on this.
 - i. J. Yueh provided a brief overview of this consideration in the School Committee's override budgeting process
7. Public comment
- a. No comment from members of the public

Upcoming meetings: December 8th at 7:45am

Meeting adjourned at 8:49am

Motion: A. Pikcilingis

Second: D. Garg

Accepted by unanimous consent

Minutes prepared by Aaron Pikcilingis