

Comprehensive Capital Budget Committee

MEETING MINUTES

Friday, December 16, 2022

Location – Remote Meeting on Zoom

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TOWN CLERK
BELMONT, MA

DATE: February 7, 2023

TIME: 3:06 PM

Members present: Pat Bruschi, Aaron Pikilingis, Adam Dash, Larry Link, Catherine Bowen, Melinda Huang, Claus Becker, Chris Doyle, Susan Burgess-Cox

Adam Dash joined at 7:50am

Aaron Pikilingis joined at 7:40am

Members absent: None

Other attendees: Jennifer Hewitt, Belmont Assistant Town Administrator

[Chair Chris Doyle called meeting to order at 7:33am]

Agenda

1. Minutes review and approval
 - a. No minutes to review at this meeting
2. Preliminary Review of Project Submissions
 - a. J. Hewitt reviewed the preliminary Belmont FY2024-28 Capital Improvement submission format and examples (File: "Capital Projects to CCBC 12-15-22.PDF")
 - b. These files have been shared with the committee members
 - c. This is a preliminary set of requests
 - d. Now that this template is built it could be released and used by other committees (e.g., the CPC)
 - e. L. Link asks about the framework, timeframe department staff have used when building these requests
 - i. Jennifer has asked them to focus mostly on the next 5 years and begin to think about the longer term
 - ii. This is a new focus (beyond 1 year)
 - iii. The impacts of putting this out in the public sphere are unknown
 - iv. J. Hewitt notes frustration that ARPA funds and free cash are being used for Belmont's operating expenses and that most other towns are using those funds to invest in capital
 1. Starting to talk about the longer-term capital needs is making it harder to ignore the capital needs
 - f. S. Burgess-Cox notes that the individual departments are on individual sheets -- asks if there will be a way to see all
 - i. J. Hewitt has a spreadsheet with all requests together and forgot to include it among the files she shared. **She will share it.**
 - g. C. Bowen asks about the possibility of sharing some of the vehicles requested by the DPW across departments

- i. J. Hewitt: A lot of the vehicles requested are pretty specific to the needs of DPW, but it's hard to know how to provide an answer
 - 1. *E.g.*, the mowers are owned by DPW, but it's in charge of mowing everything anyway
 - ii. Bookmarking this table for a later discussion
- h. C. Bowen asks a clarifying question about requests for fields
 - i. Fields are not currently requested in any of the requests but J. Hewiss would like to add them as we coordinate with CPC on this work
- i. Review of requests by department
 - i. Public works - includes a request for a sidewalk assessment
 - ii. Community development
 - 1. Pavement management program, which is dedicated from prior overrides, is included here
 - 2. Longer-term includes some intersection interventions that are still in development, but the estimates are still very early
 - a. Mill & Concord; Winter & Concord; Grove & Huron
 - 3. L. Link and C. Doyle note the importance of supporting the Departments and staff and the importance of investing in design to improve our chances at state support for projects for construction
 - 4. C. Bowen asks whether the timing of a sidewalk assessment is appropriate -- have we finished the work identified in the previous assessment?
 - a. J. Hewitt suggests that such a study provides an overarching view of the total need (for sidewalks) and provides support for conversations about funding & might identify different/updated priorities
 - iii. Facilities
 - 1. J. Hewitt: The current requests are low because they include mostly the immediate needs
 - 2. A. Pikcilingis question about sale of capital assets (e.g. the modulars at CMS)
 - a. J. Hewitt notes that proceeds from sales like this go into the General Fund. In the future, we might advocate for at least some of the funds be allocated to capital
 - i. This is what happened with the sale of the Cushing Sq. parking lot
 - 3. C. Doyle notes that it would be good to build out a more robust plan around the management and use of modulars
 - iv. Fire department
 - 1. J. Hewitt notes that there is a 22 month lead time on pumper trucks and that some of the large fire capital requests could be paid for through a within-levy debt financing
 - 2. C. Doyle: Do we sell pumper trucks?

- a. J. Hewitt: Yes, but there are considerations about flow of money with a trade-in vs. selling independent of the purchase of a new truck (offsetting the price vs. sale proceeds going into general fund)
 - v. Police
 - 1. Discussion of capital vs. operational budget items (e.g. a server)
 - a. It is up to CCBC to make this suggestion
 - vi. Information Technology (IT)
 - 1. They have only included one request for FY2027
 - 2. We should encourage them to add more
 - j. Discussion: Plan for meeting with departments
 - i. S. Burgess-Cox reviews the process used in the CBC:
 - 1. The whole committee met with the department heads
 - 2. They met weekly and had 1-2 departments come (for departments with more requests, they used the whole hour)
 - 3. Helpful to have questions compiled and shared with department heads ahead of time
 - a. Submitted questions to the chair, who compiled and circulated among all CBC members and the appropriate department chairs
 - ii. Option: We can assign a lead/liaison for each department
 - 1. Kate suggests not spreading the process out over too much time to make it easier to keep the big picture in mind
 - 2. We should also ask department heads to provide at least some information for a longer time horizon
 - iii. Discussion: Scheduling meetings
 - 1. C. Doyle & S. Burgess-Cox will coordinate with Jennifer to figure out specific scheduling
 - 2. C. Doyle suggests these meetings might run a little longer (say, until 9:30am)
 - iv. C. Doyle notes the need to keep alternative funding options (e.g., regional or private funding) in mind as we consider each request
 - v. L. Link asks how comprehensive this list is
 - 1. J. Hewitt says this all the requesting departments
 - 2. Others: Town Clerk (for voting equipment), Schools (for non-facilities), Library
 - 3. Revised Screening/Ranking of Projects Approach
 - a. M. Huang: Reviewed the prioritization framework and weighted scorecard
 - i. Discussion: retaining a criterion for “town priority” or “strategic alignment”
 - 4. Capital Project threshold level
 - a. Not discussed
 - 5. Public Comment
 - a. No members of the public present
 - 6. Scheduling Future meetings

[Meeting adjourned at 8:59am, accepted by unanimous consent]

Scheduled Upcoming meetings:

- 12/23 at 7:30am

Minutes prepared by Aaron Pikcilingis