

Town of Belmont
Capital Budget Committee
Belmont Town Hall, Room 4
Thursday Evening, May 24, 2007, 7:00 p.m.

Mrs. Brusch called the meeting to order shortly after 7:00 p.m. (7:05). The members of the Committee present at the time the meeting was called to order were John Bowe, M. Patricia Brusch, Mark F. Clark, John Conte, Jennifer M. Fallon, and Anne Marie Mahoney. Also present was Barbara Hagg, Town Accountant and staff liaison to the Capital Budget Committee. Daniel LeClerc joined the meeting during discussion of pick-up trucks for the Department of Public Works and Diane Stafford joined the meeting during discussion of possible recommendations for the balance of the Committee's original allocation and after the vote concerning pick-up trucks.

The Committee had the following material before it:

1. Agenda for the meeting prepared by Mark Clark, Secretary.
2. A one-page sheet from Ms. Hagg's notes of the previous meeting listing tentative capital budget decisions made at the previous meeting.
3. A draft Report to 2007 Annual Town Meeting (dated 5/21/07) prepared by Mr. Clark.

Report from Chairman Concerning Funding of High School HVAC (Item 1 on Committee Agenda)

Mrs. Brush pointed out that the purposes of the meeting were to complete action on the recommendation for the FY08 Capital Budget as well as to review the draft report to Town Meeting. She reported that engineers for the High School had opined in writing that the HVAC units had a life of twenty years. Based on that, the Selectmen will be in a position to authorize bonds for ten years to fund purchase of new HVAC equipment for the High School.

Action on FY08 Capital Budget Recommendations in Light of Revised DPW Request (Item 2 on Committee Agenda)

Mrs. Brusch next turned to matters reported by Peter Castanino, DPW Director, in recent memos received by the Committee. Mrs. Brusch summarized Mr. Castanino's information and request. Work at the pumping station that was originally to be funded by sewer receipts will now be funded by a grant. This frees funding for a Chevy Tahoe and a pick-up truck used by the Department of Public Works for sewer maintenance. The pick-up truck in question had been funded in the prior Committee tentative decisions from general tax. Mr. Castanino now asks that a similar pick-up be funded from general tax for the Parks Division. The Parks Division vehicle is needed within the next fiscal year. The Parks Division vehicle slated to be replaced ('99 Chevy 3/4 ton truck) is suitable to be transferred to Building Services to satisfy its request for a truck. During the ensuing discussion, the Committee reviewed the capital request for FY08 that had found some support among members of the Committee but had not been included in the Committee's tentative list of recommendations. Upon motion by Mr. Clark and due second, it was unanimously voted to substitute a pick-up truck for the Parks Division in place of the pick-up truck previously authorized for the Highway Division.

Mrs. Brusch noted that even assuming the Capital Budget recommendations that the Committee is prepared to make for FY08 and the \$150,000 reserve for the debt service on the HVAC bonds, nearly \$24,000 remains from the amount (\$2,233,000) originally allocated for the Capital Budget. She proposed that the Committee now turn to the issue of making a recommendation for the use of this balance.

Mrs. Brusch again reviewed the capital requests that had received some support from members of the Committee during the preliminary discussion of all capital requests. These included a shift commander vehicle for the Fire Department, a rescue boat with trailer for the Fire Department, a foreign language lab for the School Department and repairs of tennis courts. The rescue boat for the Fire Department would be a Zodiac-type boat that is much more suited to

rescue operations than the Department's current row boat. The Fire Department rescue boat is used in flooding situations as well as on bodies of water existing in Town. It is also used in mutual aid situations in surrounding towns that have bodies of water. After discussion, Ms. Fallon moved that \$16,000 be recommended for purchase of a new rescue boat, a boat trailer and ancillary equipment for the Fire Department. After second, that motion was unanimously adopted.

There was some discussion of what to do with the remaining balance (which should be a bit over \$7,000). A consensus emerged that it should be turned back to the Warrant Committee for application to some of the "orphan" items, most notably the chain link fence repair.

Mrs. Brusch noted that this year's Capital Budget had been feasible because there had been no requirement to spend \$300,000 for roof repair. She noted that the time had come to revisit the roof situation again. Moreover, the Town would be facing building envelope issues next year. She also noted that there were no large fire vehicle requests to be dealt with in the current year. Mrs. Mahoney, who had previously commented on Mr. Clark's draft report, withdrew from the meeting.

Mrs. Brusch delivered to Mr. Bowe background material for the five-year chart he was going to prepare to be a part of the Committee's report to the Annual Town Meeting. In doing so, she commented on the need to obtain or reformat several components of the five-year projections including a plan for IT, Building Services, building security, and the Library.

The Committee turned to its consideration of Article 11 in the Warrant for the Annual Town Meeting. The Capital Budget requests to be funded by water and sewer enterprise receipts will be presented under that Article. Ms. Fallon moved that the requests as made be recommended by this Committee, provided that the Board of Selectmen adjust rates appropriately to fund these requests. Upon that motion being seconded, it was unanimously adopted.

Consideration of Report to June Session of 2007 Annual Town Meeting (Item 3 on Committee Agenda)

The Committee next turned to the draft of its report. Mrs. Fallon presented two paragraphs to be used with regard to pending renovations of the High School, and the Committee went through the existing draft, page by page. Mr. Clark made notes of the comments and agreed that he would incorporate those comments in another draft. The final draft will also include the charts prepared by Mr. Bowe and Ms. Hagg.

Mr. Conte withdrew from the meeting.

Mrs. Brusch pointed out that the minimum figure of \$10,000 for Capital Budget items should be raised in the light of the fact that smaller maintenance items have now been accommodated in the Town operating budget. This is particularly true because the \$10,000 minimum has been in effect since the early '80's. This will be an item to be discussed in the fall for the next budget year. Members of the Committee pointed out that a decision in this matter should be announced early enough so that department directors have ample warning before trying to prepare their budgets for capital FY09.

The question was raised whether the Committee should have some contingency plan in case the Town Meeting declined to fund the Capital Budget as recommended and unallocated funds became available. After discussion of circumstances in which that had happened in the past and a review of candidates, Ms. Fallon moved that funds freed by the failure of Town Meeting to adopt a Capital Budget as recommended be allocated to purchase of radios as requested by the Fire Department. Upon second, the motion was unanimously adopted.

Adjournment
(Item 4 on Committee Agenda)

As the Committee was preparing to adjourn, Mrs. Brusch indicated that she saw no need to meet May 31 unless the process of completing the Committee's report did not progress as planned. She also noted that a meeting was posted for the evening of the adjourned Annual Town Meeting, but she didn't see any need right now for in fact assembling for that meeting.

The meeting adjourned at about 8:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark F. Clark