



FINANCIAL PLANNING COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, February 11, 2020

Selectmen's Meeting Room

6:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: David DeVries
Michael Hodge
William Peterson, Jr.
T. Scott Rogers
Thomas Spataro

ALSO PRESENT: John Coderre, Town Administrator

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – JANUARY 30, 2020 MEETING

Mr. Hodge moved the Committee vote to approve the meeting minutes of the January 30, 2020 meeting as submitted; Mr. Rogers seconded the motion; all members voted in favor.

WHITE CLIFFS PROJECT UPDATE

Mr. Coderre reviewed the February 5, 2020 update from the White Cliffs Committee (WCC). The summary contains information from the WCC meetings regarding progress to date, including the complete roof replacement on the historic portion of the structure. Progress continues to be made with regard to securing the building envelop, despite complications encountered pertaining to the problematic additions off the back.

The WCC is now moving ahead with its reuse assessment and is making progress with the consultants to develop a short list of viable options. Mr. Coderre reviewed the chart attached to the update that summarizes all the potential reuse options, along with the pros and cons of each. The WCC is working with the consultants and has narrowed down its reuse focus to three main categories: 1) Residential (including condominiums, apartments, affordable housing and senior housing); 2) Municipal (including a community center or municipal offices; and 3) Hospitality/Event (including restaurants, hotels, conference center and event space).

The next meeting of the WCC is March 25, 2020 at 3pm, at which time it is anticipated the consultants will provide some financial information to begin assessing the most viable options. Mr. Coderre reminded the Financial Planning Committee members that the WCC page on the Town website contains their meeting minutes and ongoing updates.

Committee members expressed their concerns about minimizing the ongoing financial burden to the taxpayers if a private reuse option is chosen. Mr. Coderre indicated that the project will likely always require some level of subsidy by the Town in order to make any reuse financially viable, but the goal should be to minimize that subsidy, assuming it is not purely a municipal use.

TOWN OFFICES BUILDING ASSESSMENT AND OPTIONS

This Capital request is for a feasibility study that will evaluate the programmatic space needs of the Town Offices operation and assess the pros and cons of the various options, including the possible sale or reuse of existing facilities.

Mr. Coderre reviewed the background of the Town Offices project, which has been in the Capital Improvement Plan for the last six years. He reviewed previous architectural and engineering studies of the Town Offices building that noted many deficiencies, some of which have been addressed over the years, including roof flashing repairs, boiler replacements, emergency generator replacement, re-pointing of the brick exterior, as well as various lighting and safety upgrades.

Mr. Coderre indicated that at this point in time, it is appropriate to determine if significant resources should be invested into the existing building at 63 Main Street, or if it would be more advantageous to relocate or build new. Options include moving back to the old Town Offices building at 4 West Main Street, which returns to the Town in 2022, or building a new facility at the recently acquired White Cliffs site. In addition, the existing Fire Station located at 11 Pierce Street will become available upon construction of a new station.

The Committee discussed the need to obtain real information regarding the various options before the Town can have a discussion regarding the best possible path. Mr. Coderre indicated that the timing of this request had been slightly delayed in order to allow all the options, including 4 West Main Street and the White Cliffs site, to be included in the process. Without conducting a feasibility study using architectural and engineering services it will be impossible to make an informed decision about which option will best serve the Town. Committee members emphasized the project has been in the Capital Improvement Plan for years and appreciated the timing of the proposed study.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee reviewed the presentations and documents associated with the proposed projects in the FY2021 Capital Budget. Mr. Coderre reviewed the revised Capital Budget funding sources, which include:

Free Cash	\$1,475,775
Water Enterprise Funds	\$1,245,000
Sewer Enterprise Funds	\$ 380,000
Community Preservation Funds	\$ 452,225
Grants	\$ 95,000
TOTAL	\$3,648,000

Following a discussion, the Committee felt it had all the requested information and is ready to vote its recommendations on the capital projects, which total \$3,648,000.

The Committee reviewed its priority ratings for the various projects, noting that most are a priority 2, which includes regular replacement of equipment and facility maintenance. The highway garage emergency generator, Assabet Park ADA compliance, the water storage tank rehabilitation and the Melican Middle School parking lot & walkway improvements were given priority 1 rankings.

Project	Priority	Cost	Funding Source
Police: Cruiser Replacements	2	\$98,000	Free Cash
Town Offices: Feasibility Study	2	\$100,000	Free Cash
DPW: Wing Mower Replacement	2	\$75,000	Free Cash
DPW: Loader Replacement	2	\$240,000	Free Cash
DPW: Highway Garage Emergency Generator	1	\$35,000	Free Cash
DPW: Assabet Park ADA Compliance	1	\$102,775	Free Cash
DPW: Culvert & Drainage Replacements	2	\$250,000	Free Cash
DPW: One-Ton Dump Truck w/Plow	2	\$110,000	Free Cash
DPW: One-Ton Pickup Truck w/Plow	2	\$65,000	Free Cash
DPW: Roadway Improvements & Maintenance	2	\$300,000	Free Cash
DPW: Water & Sewer Garage Construction (60/40% split)	2	\$520,000	Water Enterprise Fund
		\$380,000	Sewer Enterprise Fund
DPW: Assabet Hill Water Storage Tank Rehabilitation	1	\$725,000	Water Enterprise Fund
K-8 Public Schools: Melican Middle School Parking Lot & Walkway Improvements	1	\$100,000	Free Cash

Police Department – Police Cruiser Replacements

Mr. Hodge moved the Committee vote to recommend approval of the Police Cruiser Replacements as presented; Mr. Spataro seconded the motion; all members voted in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

Town Administration – Town Offices Feasibility Study

Mr. Hodge moved the Committee vote to recommend approval of the Town Offices Feasibility Study as presented; Mr. Rogers seconded the motion; all members voted in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

DPW Department – Equipment Replacements and Facility Maintenance

Mr. Spataro moved the Committee vote to recommend approval of the following DPW Capital Requests as presented: Wing Mower Replacement, Loader Replacement, Highway Garage Emergency Generator, Assabet Park ADA Compliance, Culvert & Drainage Replacements, One-Ton Dump Truck with Plow, One-Ton Pickup Truck with Plow and Roadway Improvements & Maintenance; Mr. Peterson seconded the motion; all members voted in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

DPW Department – Water & Sewer Garage Construction

Mr. Peterson moved the Committee vote to recommend approval of the DPW Water & Sewer Garage Construction as presented; Mr. Rogers seconded the motion; all members voted in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

DPW Department – Assabet Hill Water Storage Tank Rehabilitation

Mr. Rogers moved the Committee vote to recommend approval of the Assabet Hill Water Storage Tank Rehabilitation as presented; Mr. Peterson seconded the motion; all members voted in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

K-8 Public Schools – Melican Middle School Parking Lot & Walkway Improvements

Mr. Spataro moved the Committee vote to recommend approval of the Melican Middle School Parking Lot & Walkway Improvements as presented; Mr. Rogers seconded the motion; all members voted in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

The Committee commented that the Capital Improvement Plan is working well for the Town and that departments have a reasonable expectation that projects will progress in an orderly fashion. Most of the projects contained in the FY2021 proposed Capital Budget have been in the CIP for years before receiving the Committee's recommendation for funding.

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE CAPITAL PROJECTS

The Committee discussed the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) recommended projects that are going to Town Meeting, acknowledging the presentation by Town Planner Kathy Joubert at their January 30, 2020 meeting. Mr. Hodge indicated that the Financial Planning Committee typically reviews and makes a recommendation on CPC projects that are capital in nature and meet the policy definition of a Capital Project (\$25,000 in value, non-recurring with a useful life of 5 years or more). Following a brief discussion, the Committee voted its recommendations on the following CPC projects.

Project	Cost	Funding Source
CPC: White Cliffs Debt	\$225,300	CPA
CPC: Assabet Park ADA Compliance	\$452,225	CPA
CPC: Library Interior Repairs	\$71,002	CPA

CPC- White Cliffs Debt

Mr. Spataro moved the Committee vote to recommend approval of the White Cliffs Debt as previously presented by Town Planner Kathy Joubert at the January 30th meeting; Mr. Peterson seconded the motion; all members voted in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

CPC – Assabet Park ADA Compliance

Mr. Spataro moved the Committee vote to recommend approval of the Assabet Park ADA Compliance as previously presented by Town Planner Kathy Joubert at the January 30th meeting; Mr. Peterson seconded the motion; all members voted in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

CPC – Library Interior Repairs

The Committee requested additional information regarding the Library project since this request is in addition to the previously approved CPC Library project as approved at the 2019 Annual Town Meeting. Mr. Coderre stated that he will invite the Library Director to the Committee's February 18, 2020 meeting to review this project in more detail.

COMMITTEE DRAFT REPORT

By consensus, the Committee agreed that the Chair will draft the Committee's report, reflecting the recommendations and votes this evening. The Committee will meet to finalize the report at their next meeting on February 18, 2020 at 7pm.

NEXT MEETING DATES

2/18/2020	FY2021 Operating Budget Update; Review of Library Community Preservation Project; Review and Approval of Committee's Report for Town Meeting.
3/23/2020	Joint Meeting with Board of Selectmen and Appropriations Committee – Budget Hearing (Charter 6-5) (FPC Optional)
4/27/2020	6:15 PM Pre-Town Meeting @ ARHS
4/27/2020	7:00 PM Annual Town Meeting @ ARHS

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Hodge moved the Committee vote to adjourn; Mr. Peterson seconded the motion; all members voted in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John W. Coderre
Town Administrator

Documents used during meeting:

1. February 11, 2020 Meeting Agenda
2. January 30, 2020 Meeting Minutes
3. Information packet – White Cliffs Update
4. Town Office Building Assessment Project Detail Sheet
5. Information packet – FY2021 Capital Budget Requests
6. Capital Improvement Priority Scale & Criteria