



TOWN of HATFIELD
Massachusetts

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Capital Improvement Planning Committee

Minutes

Date and Time of Meeting: January 27, 2020 – 6:00 PM

Location of Meeting: Town Hall

Members in Attendance:

Jill Robinson, David Keir, Diana Szynal and Sean Barry. Francis Spellacy absent.

The meeting opened at 6:07 p.m. by David Keir.

Motion made Mrs. Szynal and seconded by Mrs. Robinson to approve the minutes of the January 6, 2020 meeting. Unanimous.

Reviewed the final draft of the Capital Plan for the next five years. Discussion held about many of the requests and clarification was provided regarding many of the requests.

There was much discussion about how many projects might be funded in a way other than using "free cash." The likelihood of having significant "free cash" to fund projects that cost \$150,000 to \$500,000 is unrealistic. Many of these are what could be termed "deferred maintenance" and/or "safety issues." The Town may be able to borrow at a very low interest rate right now so that some of these projects can move forward. There is also a chance that a "Debt Exclusion" article could be included on Town Meeting Warrant and on the Ballot in May. Sean Barry gave his input on behalf of the Finance Committee.

The first priority for the Town is that funding for the West Street Sewer and Water extension be taken care of in order to take advantage of the MassWorks Grant of \$2,000,000 to offset a total cost of \$3,600,000.

Mrs. Robinson relayed that the priorities for the schools would be replacing the Walk-In Freezer, Technology Upgrades and Step 1 of refurbishing classrooms to support project-based learning. Total of approximately \$96,000.

The Committee identified that the Communication Equipment and the Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus request are a priority for the Fire Department as both of these are Safety Issues for both Firefighters and Residents. Total of approximately \$210,000.

The projects that are priorities for the DPW are replacement of the Culvert on Pantry Road, replacement of Fire Hydrants and the engineering study for the replacement of the Route 5 Water Main from C&S to the Whately line which is more than 100 years old and has had 2 major breaks in the last few years which has cost considerable money to fix. Total of approximately \$580,000.

There was considerable discussion regarding the state of the parking lots at the Schools. Both lots are in very bad shape and in dire need of replacement. It will take

approximately \$500,000 to replace. It is a safety hazard (trip and fall) for people walking through the lots. There are also a number of parking lot lights at Smith Academy that do not work and need to be repaired and done prior to any work being done on the parking lots as there may need to be new wiring placed underground in order to repair. The lack of adequate lighting only adds to the safety issues.

Discussion was held regarding the COA Van issues that have come up the last few years. The PVTA has offered a used van to the Town. The DPW director and COA director and in process of evaluating whether this would be a prudent plan or not. Awaiting maintenance records for the vehicle in order to make an informed decision. There was also discussion about the Library requests of new carpeting which they have been in need of for a few years as well as window replacement.

The likelihood of many of these projects waiting for enough "Free Cash" to get accomplished is very remote. One thought would be to "Bundle" some of these projects and suggest to the Finance Committee and BOS to either borrow the funds necessary or to put a Debt Exclusion on the TM Warrant and at Annual Town Election so that we can "catch-up" with some of the items on this list and take care of some of the very needed infrastructure issues.

For Example, we could bundle the following:

Fire Department – Replace outdated and obsolete Communications Equipment and Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA's) \$200,000

DPW – Replace culvert Pantry Road and designated fire hydrants \$80,000.
Engineering study and Final Design for Rte. 5 Water Main (from C&S to the Whately town line – pipe is more than 100 years old – 2 major breaks in the last few years) \$700,000. Sewer Plant Replace 2 clarifiers. \$500,000.

Schools – Replace parking lots at Hatfield Elementary and Smith Academy. \$500,000

FD Requests	\$200,000
DPW Requests	\$1,280,000
Schools	<u>\$500,000</u>
Total	\$1,980,00

The Committee agrees that continuing to defer many of these issues will only put the Town further behind on necessary projects and we will continue to play "catch-up" and never get ahead. Doing Preventative maintenance vs. Reactive maintenance is the best plan.

Next Meeting is February 10, 2020 at 6 pm.

Motion to adjourn at 7:10 pm by Mrs. Szynal seconded by Mr. Barry. Unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted,

David Keir

David Keir, Clerk