

Capital Outlay Committee Meeting

Remote Meeting

October 3, 2023, 6:30pm

MINUTES OF MEETING

**COC Members Present:** Myev Bodenhofer, Eric Fleming, Anne Marie Mazzola, Gerry Miller, Sarah Sullivan, Tim McDonough, Bob Donnelly, Ernie Paciorkowski (in person), Kevin Connolly (in person)

**Ex-Officio Members Present:** Alex Haggerty, Clayton Cheever, Molly Ahearn

**Guests present:** Mark Ryan, Kevin Rutherford, Anne Haley, John Kinney, Mark Raymond, Saadia Lone, Samuel White, Suzanne Bartlett, William Brooks, Byron Kuth

Capital Outlay meeting called to order by Chair Donnelly at 6:30pm

**Meeting Minutes for approval of the Committee**

Approval of September 6, 2023, minutes, Mr. Connolly motioned to approve, Mr. McDonough seconded, and the minutes were approved unanimously by roll call.

**Updates on Past Capital Projects**

Mr. Donnelly asked if there were any questions regarding Mr. Cianciarulo's updates. No questions received.

**Vote to approve FY'24 Capital Improvement Plan**

Mr. Donnelly opened with a discussion of various 2024 capital projects and how they are being funded. Mr. Donnelly stated that there are various projects that need a vote for the General, Water, and Stormwater Funds. This includes the ones that are on the operating budget not needing a vote, because they were approved at the Annual Town Meeting.

Mr. Donnelly discussed the recent receipt of \$12.9 million in cash. The roads project has been moved from a combination of borrowing and cash to just cash for a total of \$2.8 million. Mr. Fleming asked for a point of clarification, as the document stated that it is both borrowing and free cash. Mr. Donnelly stated that this is an error.

Mr. Donnelly discussed more information about the Forbes Estate sale and its relation to the General Fund. Combined with free cash, \$4.7 million is destined for next year's Capital Plan. Mr. Paciorkowski asked about \$2 million being utilized from Forbes, and sought thoughts on this number, because it could become a slippery slope regarding appropriations and repeatedly dipping into this fund. Mr. Paciorkowski continued and asked if we could use more of the funds from free cash. Mr. Donnelly stated that utilizing \$2 million from Capital Plan would not affect the ability of the bulk of Forbes money to be used for other purposes.

Ms. Bodenhofer mentioned that the Finance Commission is looking at the long-term plan, including engaging a 5-year plan with Budget Balancing. If the Town needs money to support the operating budget in future, then the cash could be easily used within that period. Ms. Bodenhofer also added that the Finance Commission would like more of a conversation about the 5-Year Plan before using free cash, and she would like to use the Finance Commission to strengthen the Town's financial position.

Ms. Bodenhofer stated that she Mr. Paciorkowski's concern about using Forbes money to spend on other projects and suggested that the Town move \$2 million to the Override Stabilization Fund and not use that for roads. Further, Ms. Bodenhofer stated that she is unsure if Capital Outlay should be the decision maker for this. Mr. Paciorkowski stated that the reason that he brought this up is to suggest what Town Meeting members might ask.

Mr. Donnelly stated that the Capital Outlay Committee is responsible for recommending a plan for Town Meeting, along with the Finance Commission and Board of Selectmen. Mr. Donnelly will ask for department head input if the Committee so desires. Ms. Sullivan asked if we are voting for Fiscal Year 2024 or the Five-Year Plan. Mr. Donnelly stated that they talked about the latter last year, with focus from last year on the Special Town Meeting. Ms. Mazzola concurred, not because they wanted to, but because they felt like they had no choice. Mr. Donnelly concurred. Mr. Donnelly stated that they can focus on this year, not the future. Consensus amongst members for this idea.

Discussion on Fire Department Floor. Mr. McDonough stated that this historically been on the Fiscal Year 24 plan, based on what has been done in the past. Ms. Sullivan asked why we are planning to do a \$75,000 floor study at the Public Safety Building if we are not looking to replace it in the next five years, as there is the risk that the study will become out of date. Further discussion ensues, as there is no placeholder in the future for this project. Ms. Bodenhofer asked if we want to fund the study this year or next. Mr. Donnelly stated that the study is only here to know what it will cost in the future.

Mr. Donnelly asked if there is a motion to remove the study from the Capital Plan. Mr. Fleming stated that if we do study with no plan to do it, then we should place the study on the plan the year before we plan on doing the floor. Mr. Miller stated if we do not do it now, we will be pushing it off for another year. Mr. Fleming stated that the study will need to be updated if it is not done immediately. Ms. Sullivan stated that there might be pushback because we keep doing studies, echoing concerns brought up previously at previous Town Meetings. Discussion ensued regarding unknowns of cost and availability of cash for Fiscal Year 2025 by Mr. Donnelly, who supported the design study. Mr. Donnelly was also concerned about pushback over design studies and does not want to do it the wrong way.

Ms. Bodenhofer made a motion to add \$500,000 for FY25 for the fire safety floor so that the study has a plan to be paid for. Mr. Fleming seconded. Roll call vote. Unanimous approval.

Mr. Kinney discussed the importance of the Hawes Pool project. The splash pad is being taken out of the plan because it currently works. While it is not the most up to date, removing it could save \$500,000 on the overall project. There has also been a PARC Grant that has been applied for, if we received this it would pay for the splash pad. Discussion ensued on splash pad or improving aspects of it until we are ready to improve the entire thing if we do not receive the grant.

Mr. Miller asked if we work on the pool, would it be subject to controls regarding using the water that the splash pad uses. Mr. Donnelly stated that the recirculation system is included in the design. Mr. Kuth concurred, as if it is kept as is, there is no need for a recycling system. If we do work on it, it would need to include a recycling system, although this could easily be designed to be upgraded further. It would be better to deal with it now, but there is planned flexibility for this.

Mr. Miller asked if we could make a motion to make \$500,000 contingent on PARC Grant receipt. Mr. Paciorkowski asked Mr. Kinney what the chances of receiving the full amount are high based on discussion with grant administrators, and that it would be prudent to do everything at once. Mr. Kinney stated that he would rather keep the splash pad separate if it risked delaying the entire project. Mr.

Donnelly asked for an award date. Mr. Kinney stated that this would occur in the next week or so, and that before the Town Meeting is a high possibility.

Mr. Miller made a motion. Mr. McDonough seconded. Roll call vote. Ms. Bodenhofer interrupted to ask if Mr. Kinney had something as his hand was raised. Confirmed. Sent to Ms. Sullivan. Asked for clarification on whether this is for splash park or entire project. Mr. Miller confirms that not receiving the grant would not delay the project. Mr. Kinney stated that he was also asking for clarification about this. Moved back to roll call. Ms. Bodenhofer stated that she is going to vote against this motion. Mr. Donnelly asked if there is any further discussion. Mr. Miller stated that he liked his proposal. Mr. Donnelly offered Mr. Miller the opportunity to withdraw his motion. Mr. McDonough seconded.

### **Vote to approve FY'24 Capital Improvement Plan**

Ms. Bodenhofer asked for prioritization of projects, including bigger ones, and postponing smaller projects. Mr. McDonough stated that there has been enough discussion, and that the Committee has been talking over this for nine months and made a motion to approve the Fiscal Year 2024 Capital Outlay Plan. Mr. Miller seconded. Ms. Sullivan stated that there is no will to prioritize projects. Roll call. Mr. Fleming voted yes. Ms. Mazzola voted yes. Mr. Miller voted yes. Mr. Donnelly voted yes. Ms. Bodenhofer voted no. Ms. Sullivan voted no. Mr. McDonough voted yes. Mr. Paciorkowski voted no. Mr. Connolly voted yes. Motion passed on 6-3 vote.

Mr. Donnelly started a discussion about stormwater. Meadowbrook and Hennessey Field projects that have been funded by the American Rescue Plan and asked if there is further discussion. Seeing none, Mr. McDonough made a motion to approve, Mr. Miller seconded. Unanimous approval by roll call.

### **Discussion of fall meeting presentation**

Mr. Donnelly stated that he has not given much thought to this and is looking to recycle last year's presentation for this year, working with the General Manager's Office to segregate water and sewer projects from general fund projects. Ms. Bodenhofer talked about previous presentations before Covid. Mr. Donnelly stated that he will use last year's template and update it.

### **Future Meetings**

Mr. Donnelly suggested that the Committee meet once more before the Fall Town Meeting, once the Finance Commission and the Board of Selectmen have a chance to review the Capital Outlay Plan. No meeting date was set.

### **Adjournment**

Motion made by Mr. Fleming. Seconded by Mr. McDonough. Affirmed unanimously by roll call. Meeting adjourned at 7:24pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin T. Rutherford