

Capital Planning Committee
Longmeadow, Massachusetts
Meeting Minutes
December 20, 2007

Members attending: Mark Gold, Stephen Gelling, Nicholas Katsoulis, Stephen Metz, Ned Steiger, Roger Wojcik.

Invited guests: Eric Madison, Chief, Fire Department; Robert Siano, Captain, Police Department; Michael Wrabel, Director, Department of Public Works; and Tom Ambrossio, New England Communications representative.

The minutes of the November 29th meeting were approved as written.

Item One

The Committee reviewed those proposed projects from the current proposed project list which fall into the domain of Messrs Madison, Sanio and Wrabel.. The following are highlights of this review...

Fire Safety EMS

The point was made that in this coming fiscal year the Capital Planning Committee must reimburse the ambulance fund with 35,000\$ which was borrowed in FY2007 for fire truck funding.

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The proposed town wide communications system (396,000\$) was discussed. This project, three or four years in development, consists of a single console call system and groups of portable, mobile and desktop phones potentially tying together the Police, Fire, Emergency Management, School, DPW, Parks & Recreation and Board of Health. Any phone will be able to communicate with any other phone within the system. Today, no integrated system exists. Current equipment, where it exists at all, is up to 20 years old, does not allow inter-department communications and is not FCC compliant. As the school district is not a part of any existing system, to call for and communicate with help for security problems, upsets and emergencies, it must use the conventional telephone. In addition to increasing the response to safety and security issues, purchase of the entire system will reduce staff attendance at console panels and reduce maintenance costs of existing equipment. The core system (including engineering, training and documentation) costs 253.4k; Fire Department equipment 70k; School District equipment 33.9k; DPW equipment 29.6k; Park and Rec. equipment 7.2k; Board of Health equipment 1k and the Building Department equipment 1.4k. State funding for this system is not available.

The point was made that the proposed package amounts to a business communications system for the town versus the current arrangement which can be likened to a separate house phone for each service unit.

A concern was expressed over whether the life cycle of the newly purchased hardware and software was sufficient to justify a wholesale replacement of existing equipment. The supplier rep could give no guarantees regards life cycle or service life.

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Should the proposed town-wide communications system not be recommended for town approval, the Fire Department is requesting 173,000\$ (now quoted 173k, this number is up from the original 110k) to replace its own communications system; parts of which are 20 years old, are costly to maintain and can be hazardous to the firemen on the job as they are not reliable.

The proposed emergency generator for the high school (245,000\$) was discussed. What is proposed is the installation of a stand-alone diesel powered electric generator which would provide sufficient electricity to power the high school in the event of a total power failure. By doing so, the high school would become a shelter for town residents in the event of a major and lengthy power outage in town. (The Red Cross would provide food, beds, clothing etc to such a shelter if electric power was provided.) About 1500 residents could be accommodated.

A suggestion was made that the town consider the use of a stand alone (off the grid) full time electric power generator for the high school, rather than purchase a unit for use as an idle standby.

A concern was expressed over the cost of maintaining a standby unit.

DPW

The purchase of a Sewer Jet at 255,000\$ was discussed. This Jet is a device which opens plugged sanitary sewer lines, removes the clogging materials and inspects the lines for condition (using a camera monitor). Plugs occur at least every week, year around. This unit will replace a seven or eight year old unit which cannot remove clogging material or inspect lines for condition; the existing equipment often simply relocates the line plug and results in callbacks. Contract inspection camera work costs 1200\$/day. The existing equipment has a market value of about 15,000\$.

A suggestion was made to consider sharing this new equipment with other towns.

Two maintenance vehicles were requested, one replacing a truck/plow which is 10 years old and one a service van which is 22 years old and not functional. The service van will be set up and provisioned for one of the full time professional craftsmen employed by the DPW. The existing vehicles will be scrapped when replaced.

A portable (towable) wood chipper is requested, at a cost of 45,000\$, to be used to grind the numerous tree branches (and all of the Christmas trees) which are found throughout the town; currently these branches and trees must be picked up and carted to the town yard for grinding in the stationary unit.

A GIS system costing 30,000\$ was requested to replace the existing unit which is non-functional. This device, a geographical information system, will allow the development of drawing sets which will provide the viewer quickly with detailed specific locations for individual sewer lines, water lines, manholes, and eventually for sidewalks, roads and gas lines, thus allowing the labor force to do better and faster work planning. This device will take its data from the GPS unit which was purchased last year.

A request for 50,000\$ to handle numerous drainage problems. The requested funds would compliment available department monies and those which are difficult to obtain from the Chapter 90.

A request is made for 150,000\$ to repair or replace about one (1) mile of town sidewalks. The 2006 fiscal budget sets aside about 2500\$ for such repairs and is totally inadequate. The town has about 70 miles of sidewalks and after extensive sampling (by actual count); about 60% of these (42 miles worth!) are in need of replacement or repair. Costing 150,000\$ per mile, full renovation of these walks would cost about 6,300,000\$!

A new front end loader (168,000\$) is requested to replace the 33 year old unit which is failing and not worth repairing again.

25,000\$ is requested to repair the sprinkler system in Russell Field and the upper practice field at the High School. The requested money is mostly for parts. The Russell Field system is vintage 1971; a total replacement would cost 150-175,000\$.

20,000\$ is requested to start a replacement program for the town's street signs; about 150\$/sign... this is a federally mandated change. (Total job cost is expected to be 60,000\$)

Non-School Buildings

17,500\$ is requested to replace the worn and rotting Greenwood Pool service building roof.

375,000\$ is requested to replace the worn and leaking Greenwood Center roof.

30,000\$ is requested to replace four rooms of carpeting in the Greenwood Center and that in the Town Clerks office area. An additional 16,000\$ will be needed in the next four years to complete this work.

35,000\$ is requested to add snowguards to the Community House and Town Hall roofs to prevent a potential disastrous snow slide from burying a person entering or leaving these buildings.

The Committee agreed to meet next on January 23, January 30 and February 6 to continue its reviews and discussion of project priorities

The meeting was adjourned at 9:40pm.

Minutes submitted on January 5th

Roger Wojcik, Secretary