

TOWN OF PETERBOROUGH
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS COMMITTEE

5:30 P.M. Tuesday
October 18, 2011

MINUTES

Present: Chairman Leo Smith, Vice Chairman Leslie Lewis, Sue Chollet, Leandra MacDonald, Susan Stanbury, Roland Patten, James Kelly and Bertha Harris.

Also Present: Carol Ogilvie, Director, and Laura Norton, Administrative Assistant, Office of Community Development.

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m.

Welcome and Opening Comments:

Chair Smith began by noting “a couple of things.” He reminded the members they need to be sworn in and said that the town clerk would be at their next meeting to do that for them for their convenience.

Minutes:

A motion was made/seconded (Patten/Lewis) to approve the Minutes of October 11, 2011 as written with correction of a typo. Ms. Chollet and Ms. Sudbury abstained with all other members in favor.

Chair Smith noted that Pam Brenner the Town Administrator was present and would like to say a few words. He then turned the floor over to Ms. Brenner who began with “first let me say thank you for all the work that you do.” She went on to acknowledge “in the realm of town groups and boards your committee is not well known but it is one of the most important ones.” In reference to the budget process she went on to add “we are cognizant that you may be frustrated that you work hard only to have much of your plans decimated by the budget process and town meeting.” Ms. Brenner noted the obvious economic restraints the town is facing but told the members “I talked to the Board of Selectmen and they have no arbitrary goal for you.” She went on to note “so for example, you won’t *get keep it flat or keep it under 3%*”

Ms. Brenner explained “instead they want you to continue to look at what the community needs” adding “these needs are for the next 6 years, some things may get cut but we want to keep the things you think are important for the future front and center.” She briefly described the last budget process as “the nights of the massacre” but added “we do value what you do and want to keep the message out there that the infrastructure is a very important part of what we do.”

Mr. Kelly asked about working out priorities when there is no money with Ms. Brenner replying “we do not expect to see a 20% increase but the Board of Selectmen does want to see what

should be spent once everything is pulled into the operating budget because things change. The work this Board does is not irrelevant.”

Ms. Chollet interjected “so think about the big picture.” Ms. Brenner replied “yes, and come back with what you think is right for the town.” With reference to the budget cuts Ms. MacDonald noted they understood why (cuts happen) “but that doesn’t mean we are not going to recommend something” adding “we just do have to soldier on and see what happens.”

Ms. Brenner briefly reiterated that the committee’s job was not irrelevant in any way. She used the Fire Station parking lot as an example. “I recommended it” she said “and it just about killed me to put it on the chopping block but it had to go.”

Chair Smith summarized by noting “so we will approach the items as they relate to the CIP, we will look at the schedules and reports and assign a level of priorities given the times.” Ms. Chollet asked about any other budget direction from the Board of Selectmen with Ms. Brenner replying “nothing other than the justification sheet that states what the (departments) need or want” adding “that is in the eye of the beholder sometimes and we are under a strong fiscal restraint but put forward what you think they need to keep the community strong.”

5:45 p.m.

Peterborough Fire & Rescue

Ambulance 2

Chief Lenox thanked the Committee “I appreciate the opportunity to be here” he said. Chief Lenox noted he had three CIP items this year, the first being the replacement of the 2003 ambulance with an associated cost of \$230,000.00. Chief Lenox told the members “we are closing in on the 10-year mark for replacement.” He also noted \$200,000.00 in the Ambulance Fund that could be put towards that purchase. “And we hope to make up the additional \$20,000.00 to \$30,000.00 in the transfer program.”

Ms. Lewis asked if the new transfer program would accelerate the ambulance replacement schedule with the Chief replying “it is possible, it could end up being an 8-year replacement versus a 10-year one” adding “but we are seeing that travelling (longer distances) is actually a little bit better for them, (versus the stop and go). That decision will take time, we will have to see.”

Chief Lenox went on to give a brief but descript review of the new transfer program and the revenue it will generate. There was also some discussion and definition of the Ambulance Fund. Ms. Brenner explained the difference between that fund and the Capital Reserve Fund. Mr. Kelly asked if a list of dedicated account funds was available with Ms. Brenner noting it could be made available.

Ms. Chollet asked about the call volume for the department with Chief Lenox replying “we are fairly steady with about 1200 transports a year and that will only increase with the transfers.” Ms. MacDonald noted the new RiverMead addition and asked if the Chief expected an increase

when that facility is done. A brief discussion about the call volume followed with Chief Lenox concluding “where we will really see a spike is the transfers (anticipated 700/year).

Car 2

Chief Lenox noted the current vehicle is “12 years old with just over 100,000 miles on it.” He went on to explain the vehicle was used by the Duty Officers for fire prevention activities and inspections. “We also use it to send people to trainings and as an ALS Intercept vehicle. It is a fairly busy vehicle and we would like to replace it this year if possible.”

Lease purchase for Engine 1

Chair Smith noted “that is like a debt payment, there is no maneuverability on that.” Chief Lenox replied “and that is it for this year.”

Mr. Kelly asked about the Fire Station parking lot reconfiguration and a brief discussion about the plan to “flip-flop” the municipal parking with the fire department member’s parking. A brief discussion about the reconfiguration, amount of parking spots gained (as well as the introduction of handicapped-accessible spaces) and how the lots (public/fire) will be separated followed.

Chair Smith asked if the work would be done by town employee or be contracted out. Chief Lenox replied “both” adding “we will have the DPW do as much as they can but the paving will be contracted.” Ms. MacDonald noted “the Town regulations include trees, just mentioning that,” with a chuckle. Ms. Lewis interjected “well you can see a tree from the parking Lot” and Chief Lenox was quick to point out all the trees in the station’s backyard.

“What else?” asked Chair Smith with Chief Lenox replying “that is it.” Chair Smith pointed out some other items in future fiscal years. He noted “I see a station generator in 2014; that has been on here a *long* time. Chief Lenox reported on the condition of the current generator noting “as long as it keeps running we will keep pushing it” but also noted that while it still works “it does not handle the entire station. At some point we need to get one that covers the whole station with emergency lights and heat.” The pursuance of a Homeland Security grant was brought up with the Chief replying he could look into it “but grant money is going down the drain.” Ms. Lewis asked how many times a year the generator was used with Chief Lenox replying “notwithstanding an ice storm scenario, a half dozen times a year.” Ms. Chollet concluded “you need it when you need it.”

Ms. Lewis asked “why don’t you have a fleet management program?” Chief Lenox replied “we have talked about it but then we started getting into the height of the depression. Ms. Lewis replied “we like to call it a recession to make ourselves feel better.” Chair Smith interjected “politicians like to call it a recovery!”

Mr. Patten reiterated the job of the committee is to eliminate the “peaks and valleys” adding “we need to take a harder look at some point. He pointed out FY 2014 and FY 2015 “do not look like they have enough put in them.” Chief Lenox noted “that would be the benefit of a fleet management program.” Ms. Lewis replied “let’s put it in so we can see. Ms. Chollet agreed, adding “put it in now as a placeholder.” Mr. Patten recapped by noting “so put fleet management in starting in FY 2014 at \$150,000.00?” with the members in agreement.

Ms. Chollet asked the Chief “if you had to sacrifice something in FY 2013 what would it be?” adding “if we are going to prioritize then let’s do it.” Chief Lenox reviewed the status of the items in the fiscal year and replied “it comes back to the parking lot.” Ms. Lewis asked about perhaps approaching the hotel people. “They will need the parking and as a good will gesture they may contribute a portion of the cost of the project.” A brief discussion about overnight parking and winter parking bans followed. It was also noted that should the Downtown TIF be revived and expanded at the May Town Meeting “a goal of that committee is to do the reconfiguration and pave the lot.” Ms. Brenner also explained that while smaller projects can be managed and paid for by the TIF Committee larger ticket items “are taken to Town Meeting.”

Peterborough Police Department

Cruiser

Chief Guinard thanked the committee members and began with the replacement of the 2010 marked police cruiser. The Chief briefly explained the fleet plan they put together 14 years ago. He noted the vehicle “is used 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.” He noted the drive-train warranty expires at 100,000 miles, adding “and once they hit 100,000 they experience significant increases in repair problems” resulting in being “nickled and dimed” by them. He told the members the vehicles are sold; “taxies in the city buy them” he said.

A brief discussion about the make and model of the vehicle followed (Crown Victorias are no longer being manufactured). Chief Guinard noted the new vehicle is being called a “police interceptor” and that he had a commitment through Erwin Motors to purchase it at the state bid price. He also noted an advantage of the new vehicle is that “it has been designed to be retro-fitted and will adapt to our older equipment. We are fortunate there.”

Dispatch Study

Chief Guinard gave a brief history of how the current emergency services in town are dispatched. He noted that for the past four or five years the idea of a stand-alone dispatch center for Police, Fire & Rescue and DPW had been on the table. He noted dispatching calls during the day was done from the station “but at night” he said “the dispatch gets turned over to the Hillsborough County Sheriff’s Department.” “And they don’t know who you are, Scott, they have no idea of what you are talking about. That is just the way it is” interjected Ms. Chollet.

Chief Guinard presented a PowerPoint presentation that showed all details and expenses of the current versus proposed dispatch systems. At the end of the presentation he told the members he, the Fire Chief and the Town Administrator felt a consultant should be hired to conduct a feasibility study on whether or not the departments should continue to use the existing outside dispatch services.

Chief Guinard summarized several positive points (including greater control and a better level of service to the town, better use of records, improved interoperability, enhanced 24/7 communication, and allowance for growth as needed) to name a few.

Ms. MacDonald noted the Mutual Aid system and how “the ripple effect” gets put into action as towns start to mobilize to give assistance to other towns in an emergency. Chief Guinard noted

that the same system would be put into effect with the local dispatch center. Chief Lenox briefly described the 911 and dispatch service as it exists today noting “with our own dispatch there would be less of a delay, the middle man is cut out, your emergency is dispatched right out of the gate.”

Chief Guinard concluded “that is a thumbnail sketch of what we would like to do so having a feasibility study is important.” Ms. Stanbury asked if other area towns have a similar set up with Chief Guinard replying “we have reached out to other communities that have done this.” “Who?” asked Ms. Stanbury with the chief replying “the towns of Bedford, Amherst, Moultonborough and Hollis” adding “and what we have found is that everyone is doing it differently.”

At 7:00 p.m. Board of Selectmen members began arriving for their meeting. “We are out of time” said Chair Smith and asked if the group wanted to reschedule or go upstairs. The members moved upstairs to the Kitchen Meeting Room to hear the Recreation Department.

Recreation Department

In reviewing the justification sheets for Recreation Ms. Stanbury noted “oh, another parking lot.” Ms. Chollet added “yeah, but the pool and splash pad are gone!” Mr. King introduced Paula Stewart, Chairman of the Recreation Committee. Mr. King updated the members by noting “the pool project is getting under way soon” adding “and the Armory is almost done with the Phase 1 renovation.” Mr. King added the renovation funds were provided by the Isabelle Miller and Goyette grants. Mr. King also gave a brief update on the status of the multi-purpose athletic field fund. He noted “you guys approved it last year but it got cut in the budget process.” Chair Smith interjected with a smile “it is better to say we *recommended* it.” Mr. King replied “we put it back in hopes you recommend it again, the need has not gone away.” A brief discussion about the status of the town-owned lagoons followed with Mr. King describing what he called a collaborative effort to be established with the school district. He described the reciprocal relationship the department and district shared now but looked at a closer relationship with sharing of maintenance personnel and equipment. Ms. Chollet asked if he had met with the School Board at all with Mr. King replying “no, not yet but I keep trying to put a bug in their ear.” A brief discussion about the cost of rehabilitating an athletic field followed. It was noted that depending on what is done and what the goals are when the rehab is done, an average field cost about \$100,000.00 “to bring up to snuff.”

Ms. Stewart reiterated the importance of having a Capital Reserve line item for the athletic fields. Referring to the Athletic Field CIP Ms. Lewis noted a striking resemblance to the situation with the public pool where capital reserve funds could not accumulate “because they were constantly being used for repairs.” Mr. King assured her and the other members that “this was not the case; this is a different animal that will be treated like a true capital reserve.” Ms. Chollet interjected “until a catastrophic event happens and you have to nickel and dime the reserve.” Ms. Chollet asked Ms. Ogilvie “if it is set up can it be restricted?” Ms. Ogilvie replied “yes you can.”

Parking Lot

Mr. King began with “our parking lot has a lot of issues” adding “it is a mess and it is getting worse.” He went onto report improper drainage as being a major problem “after all” he said “we are on a filled in wetland.” A brief discussion about the problem on Union Street as a whole followed with some discussion about the DPW’s long term (CIP) plans.

Bleacher Replacement

Mr. King noted “they need to be replaced.” Mr. King explained how he could replace one set a year for the next eight years “or I could buy multiple sets together, three sets as a part of CIP and the rest from the revolving fund.”

User fees from the leagues were briefly discussed with Chair Smith suggesting Mr. King might approach them for a contribution. Mrs. Harris asked about the Isabelle Miller fund with Ms. Stewart explaining a constraint of the fund “is that the money can only be used for expanding programming not replacing things.” Ms. MacDonald asked if something like the “Friends of the Library” existed for the Recreation Department. Mr. King explained there was a “Friends of the Community Center” in existence but “nothing like that for the Rec Department.” Ms. Chollet asked about the cost of the bleachers with Mr. King replying “13,000.00” adding “that is a discounted price with shipping included.”

Capital Reserve Fund for Equipment Replacement

Mr. King began by noting “there is no dire need for anything this year.” He reviewed the items on the list (including a dump truck, mini busses, tractor, groomer, utility vehicle and mowers). Mr. King reviewed the anticipated replacement costs and life spans of the items. He noted “the biggest items are the mini busses.” He explained the busses were purchased with funds from the Isabelle Miller fund and their maintenance and repair costs have come out of the revolving fund. Mr. King noted “2 mini busses give us the flexibility we need but we don’t have handicapped accessibility.” He noted a third bus with wheelchair capacity would be something they would be looking to acquire.” “So your aim is to have three busses over the next few years?” asked Ms. Lewis with Mr. King replying “yes, with handicapped capability.” Mr. King explained that he often transports recreation participants to special programs (for instance skiing at Crotched Mountain) in his own 12-seat van. He also explained a 15-seat bus is optimal because it does not require a CDL license to operate it.

Chair Smith asked about the status of the playground equipment with Mr. King noting that the playground equipment they bought and installed a few years ago is holding up well. “It is 25-30 year playground” he said. He also noted the basketball and tennis courts were in good shape “but there is an issue with the lights on the tennis courts.” He explained that not only were the lights in the wrong place, they were old and inefficient “they cost a lot to run” he said.

Chair Smith thanked Mr. King for coming in and the meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Norton,
Administrative Assistant