

**TOWN OF PETERBOROUGH
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS COMMITTEE**

**5:30 P.M. Tuesday
November 13, 2014**

MINUTES

Present: Chairman Leslie Lewis, Leandra MacDonald, Susan Stanbury, Roland Patten, James Kelly, Bob Hanson, and Alan Zeller.

Also Present: Peter Throop, Director, and Laura Norton, Administrative Assistant, Office of Community Development.

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

Opening Comments & Introductions:

Chair Lewis welcomed the members.

Minutes:

A motion was made/seconded (MacDonald /Stanbury) to approve the Minutes of October 28, 2014 with all in favor.

Mr. Throop introduced two scenarios played out on the spreadsheets. One spreadsheet was highlighted in orange and the other in yellow. He proceeded to review the orange one first. He pointed out a change in the Fire Department's Architectural /Engineering study for a new fire station to read *Needs and Site Assessment* and a dollar change from \$200,000.00 to \$40,000.00"

Mr. Throop explained off-setting revenues of \$83,000.00 from the Helen Brown Fund and \$40,000.00 from ambulance transfer fees for the *Site Assessment, Fire Station Upgrades and Renovations*. Ms. Stanbury asked about the Helen Brown Fund with Mr. Throop replying it was a fund established exclusively for fire and ambulance needs. Chair Lewis immediately asked "why has this not been available to us before now?" Mr. Throop replied he was not very familiar with the fund, how its proceeds can be used, and how the decisions to draw on it are made. He went on to say "it was confirmed that fire station renovations are an eligible use the fund."

Chair Lewis asked Mr. Throop about the figures highlighted in red. Mr. Throop replied “they indicate changes to the sheet.” He went on to point out the timing of capital reserve contributions as well as the drawdowns. “We use the timing to smooth out the bottom line from year to year” he said. He also noted the need of future trucks beyond this six year period of the CIP and noted the need to build up the balance. “The trick is determining the amount and timing of each contribution, which is best done with consideration of competing demands for funds. There is often some level of flexibility in the out years.”

The members continued a side-by-side review and comparison and the discussion focused on the breakout of operational capital requests versus items that will require a bond. The members also reviewed the timing of capital reserve fund acquisitions.

Ms. MacDonald brought up the Main Street Bridge and then a brief discussion about the Fire Station architectural study and schedule followed. Getting back to the Fire Department Ms. MacDonald asked if what is sought is appropriate for a town of 6000 people. She noted “it is not helpful to buy a fire truck for mutual aid for towns around us” adding “it is not a *fate accompli*, maybe we should step back and take a look.”

Mr. Throop reminded the members of the revenue offset for the architectural study was not out of the tax base but rather the Brown Fund and the ambulance transfer program. Ms. MacDonald also noted the intent to build a new building when the town has buildings. “Does it really have to happen right now?” she asked adding “I am not against it, I just think we should cool it for a while.” Chair Lewis noted a study of what a town this size needs may be in order, suggesting “an impartial outside person to assess our needs and tell us if, for example, we really do need a Ladder Truck.”

At this time Chief Walker joined the meeting. Chair Lewis thanked him for coming in. Chief Walker reviewed the fire alarm and sprinkler system upgrades as well as the back room “living area” for the overnight responders. “How many beds?” asked Mr. Hanson with Chief Walker replying “five” as he went on to mention the upgrading of the ventilation and HVAC systems and converting the restrooms to the ADA compliancy required by law for public buildings. He concluded by noting repairs in the radio room, the Officer’s area (no windows or ventilation) and securing a washer and dryer for responders to be able to wash their station uniforms.

Chair Lewis noted the committee’s concern that “in the past we may have asked the wrong questions” adding “we need to know what the town of Peterborough needs

are. We get that answer and then is it is easy to take the next steps.” Ms. Stanbury asked “are we talking about apparatus? About the trucks and ambulances when we talk about need?” adding “because there is more to it than that.”

Chief Walker reviewed what his department does. In addition to fire suppression, emergency 911 responses and the critical care transfer program, he noted inspection services, emergency management, special events, details and training.

Chair Lewis interjected “We need to identify the need first and not just for today, but for the next 25 years.” Chief Walker interjected “look at your demographics and make your estimate based on that.” Mr. Kelly asked about a new building for the Fire Department and a brief discussion about the search for a suitable location along with the research that had already been done followed. Chair Lewis noted that the Dispatch Center had fallen off the CIP adding “but any study for a new building would have a dispatch center as part of it.” Chief Walker asked where the Master Plan Steering Committee stood on the issue with Mr. Throop noting the numerous discussions and public hearings that have taken place regarding combined facilities.

A brief discussion about the \$40,000.00 for an engineering study followed. Ms. Lewis interjected “I think Chief Walker has a very specific idea of what the needs assessment should be.” Ms. Stanbury asked if there was any flexibility in terms of how the money was used.

The members went on to briefly discuss a replacement Engine and SCBA (self-contained breathing apparatus) as well as taking advantage of applying for federal grants. She went on to note “if a new facility or building was not built in up to 8-10 years “is \$166,000.00 enough?” she continues “the \$166,000.00 meets your needs now right? And it is not skipping anything?” Chief Walker replied “no, it is not skipping anything.”

Mr. Bartlett joined the group and briefly reviewed the Land & Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP) as a program that provides matching grants to towns to protect their natural and cultural resources. He told the members the Town House (which is listing in the National Register of Historic Places) will be assessed “from the structure to the bricks to the roof” adding “the last assessment was in 1996 so it is going on 20 years.” He also noted the aspiration of how to take more advantage of the upper hall. Ms. MacDonald asked about future renovations with Mr. Bartlett replying “no clue, we’ll have to have the assessment first.”

Mr. Throop continued to review the CIP noting potential totals in revenues and costs after “pushing off” of certain big ticket items. One member interjected “we seem to be proud of kicking the can down the road.”

The members went on to briefly discuss the groundbreaking of the new solar array field at the Waste Water Treatment Plant and the Grove Street Bridge (constructed in 1939-40 Mr. Bartlett noted “this is our last bridge and it will need work someday”).

Mr. Throop concluded with two spreadsheets (one highlighted in yellow, the other in orange) as a visual to show two different scenarios of the CIP. After reviewing both scenarios Mr. Kelly suggested “I think we should get rid of the orange and stick with the yellow.”

The members agreed that the yellow scenario was ultimately the model to get them where they wanted to go with a relatively small increase in the budget but they unanimously agreed that if they kept pushing the increases out eventually they (the taxpayers) would pay for it.

Chair Lewis concluded “so we all agree the orange spreadsheet goes away?” with all of the members replying “yes.”

The meeting adjourned at 7:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Norton
Administrative Assistant