

TOWN OF PETERBOROUGH
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS COMMITTEE

5:30 P.M. Tuesday
October 8, 2013

MINUTES

Present: Chairman Leslie Lewis, Susan Stanbury, Roland Patten, James Kelly 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:

Chair Lewis began with thanking the members for coming as well as taking care of being sworn in for duty. She noted several large projects that in the future “are going to limit the amount that we can contribute to other CIP projects.” She spoke briefly about the importance of public safety and the town infrastructure. “We need to keep our eyes on the prize and not just the bottom line” she said. She recognized and identified *the big elephant* in the Master Plan as being the Municipal Facilities Complex and noted the targeted “sweet spot” bottom line was \$1,000,000.00 to \$1,500,000.00 for Budget Committee submission.

Chair Lewis told the members “there are creative ways to talk to the department heads about shaving their budgets without shorting anyone too much.” She stressed the importance of maintaining the goals of safety and infrastructure while also maintaining reasonable numbers on the CIP. She looked to Mr. Kelly and said “James is going to ask *what is that number*” adding “so I will tell you I think it is around \$1,000,000 dollars.”

The members briefly discussed the numbers from last year’s CIP. Chair Lewis noted the Budget Committee had cut GIS noting “which I think is a shame as it is part of the infrastructure but may seem nonessential.” She added the study for the Police Dispatch Center and the Open Space Land Acquisition requests were also cut. She concluded by noting a good example of creative funding was done by the Town Administrator and the Recreation Director to secure funds for a recreation mini bus without spending additional taxpayer money.

Election of Officers:

A motion was made/seconded (Patten/Stanbury) to re-elect Ms. Lewis as Chairman with all in favor. A motion was made/seconded (Lewis/Patten) to re-elect Mr. Zeller as Vice Chairman with all in favor.

Review Meeting Schedule:

Chair Lewis noted “one thing, I did not see the Library on the schedule.” Mr. Throop replied “right, that is because they have not submitted anything.” Mr. Throop also clarified a couple of

changes in the schedule noting he was optimistic about the timeline. “We should get through it in good shape” he said.

Review Status of FY 2014 CIP:

Mr. Throop began with a refresher on the highlights of FY 2014-2019. He projected a graphic that showed what was proposed as well as what was funded. He reviewed several examples of ongoing projects as well as the creative thinking that secured the Recreation Department’s bus.

Mr. Throop also reviewed the significant projects on the horizon which included the Main Street, Union Street and North Peterborough dam, road repaving, fleet management, tax and utility software packages, an established capital reserve fund for the Fire Department and a capital reserve fund for replacing the pool in 2043. He also reviewed the current and upcoming challenges of maintaining the infrastructure and equipment during a difficult economic time, trying to level fund a steadily increasing debt (bonded and balancing deferred expenditures) against increased future costs.

Mr. Throop concluded his presentation with “that is the picture of what got funded and what changed at the Budget Committee as I understand it.”

First Draft FY 2015 CIP Spreadsheets:

Mr. Throop began with “I added three new columns.” He pointed out the additions CIP Approved, Budget Committee Approved and FY 2014 Town Meeting. The members responded positively to the addition. Mr. Throop also noted he had moved the Capital Reserve contributions to the bottom of the list “but the rest is the same” he said. He noted he could move the department revenues up with the departments themselves “but I did not want too many changes on a spreadsheet you are familiar with” he said. The members again responded positively and suggested they try that to be able to see where the funds come from. “I think that would be handy” interjected Ms. Stanbury. Chair Lewis agreed noting “if they want to try it I am willing to give it a shot.”

Mr. Patten interjected “it makes sense; people assume money going into a capital reserve comes out of taxes but that is not necessarily true.” He noted the Main Street Bridge project as an example saying “we are responsible for 20% the rest is revenue. We should be able to see the revenue as well as the costs.” Chair Lewis also asked Mr. Throop to find a way to make the Net Totals (currently under Debt Services) more accessible. Mr. Throop replied he would and noted he had also added the Net Totals to all of the out years. Chair Lewis replied “more information is not always better as it often generates more questions” adding “the simpler and clearer the better.”

Mr. Kelly looked around and said “one million nine hundred thousand is quite different from the \$842,000.00 of last year.” Mr. Throop replied “part of it is the increasing Debt Service.” Mr. Kelly again noted the budget differences from last year and said “we *really* better attack this.” Chair Lewis interjected “historically we have been in the 1.2 million dollar range. Taking out Debt Services we are left with 600 to 700 thousand dollars to serve everyone else and 400 thousand of that is for the roads so you do the math.” Mr. Throop replied “that is the reality” as he pointed out FY 2017 “when the Main Street Bridge kicks in.” Chair Lewis replied “that is

going to be our challenge” adding “we need to get the Departments to find offsetting revenues as often as possible to get them to lower their own tax impact.” She also noted other forms of revenue (like the opening of the Village at RiverMead, the potential of the Granite Block and other dream projects) to help increase the bottom line.

Mr. Throop also noted the challenge of deferred maintenance. “That is coming home to roost” he said. In reference to the town pool Mr. Patten agreed noting “we started a capital reserve for the pool and the tennis courts 15 years ago. There was \$100,000.00 in the fund, \$80,000.00 went to the tennis courts and \$20,000.00 went to the pool, then nothing (no more contributions to the fund). If we had continued with that we would not have the bond we have now. We kicked that can down the road and this is what you have.”

A brief discussion about the economy and the school taxes followed. Mr. Patten concluded “we have to be judicious. We have to pick and choose, that is why we are here.”

Before the meeting adjourned several of the members pointed out corrections on the spreadsheet which included a calculation error in FY 2014 BC where two cells were added together instead of one subtracted from the other. They also pointed out corrections to the 2014 binder including the fact that the paving in West Peterborough went from Wilder Street to Robbe Farm Road (a block *less* than reported), that OCD was missing \$15,000.00 in the comparison and that the request for Open Space Land Acquisition should be \$10,000.00

The meeting adjourned at 6:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Norton,
Administrative Assistant