

Capital Improvements Program Committee (CIP)

MINUTES

August 10, 2023

APPROVED: August 24, 2023

AGENDA: ELECTION OF OFFICERS – CHAIR/VICE CHAIR
2024 DEPARTMENT REQUESTS – WATER/SEWER DEPARTMENT AND FIRE DEPARTMENT
COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

ATTENDING: Donald Milbrand (Elected Chair and Planning Board Representative), Steve Favorite, Joe Lukeman, Paul Regan and Daniel (Buz) Kenney (Elected Vice Chair)

OTHERS: Christina Goodwin (Town Administrator) via ZOOM, and Donna Sullivan (Land Use Administrative Assistant)

PUBLIC: Jeff Chartier (Water/Sewer Superintendent) and Ben Laroche (Fire Chief)

Vice Chair Donald Milbrand as Acting Chair called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm with quorum present.

NEW BUSINESS:

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Acting Chair Milbrand opened discussion for nominations for the Chair position. After discussion about experience and time commitments for each of the members, Mr. Lukeman nominated Donald Milbrand as Chair. Mr. Kenney seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0. Chair Milbrand then asked for nominations for Vice Chair. A similar discussion followed about the responsibilities, time, and the experience necessary. Following this, Mr. Regan nominated Daniel Kenney as Vice Chair. Mr. Favorite seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.

2024 DEPARTMENT REQUESTS REVIEW

WATER/SEWER- Superintendent Jeff Chartier

Superintendent Chartier was present to discuss upcoming projects planned and the equipment replacement schedule for CIP. He talked about the Lake Street Sewerage Extension and Central Street Pumping Station Upgrade project. This included the plans for financing the project and the intention for a warrant article to split some of the costs with taxpayer support. Ms. Goodwin shared the estimated breakdown and information regarding specific percentages for the funding sources and indicated a specified amount was to be requested as a 50/50 split between all taxpayers and user rate payers. Mr. Milbrand stated that when the numbers are finalized for the sources, information will be included in the debt service lines.

The Committee and Mr. Chartier reviewed the CIP Spreadsheet and replacement schedules for vehicles and equipment. He indicated that the schedule would remain as is regarding the timing for replacement and he did not have any new items to be included at this time.

Mr. Regan asked for clarification on the use of capital expenditure accounts and decision makers. He was concerned for taxpayer approvals. It was confirmed that the establishment of these funds by previous taxpayer approvals gives the Select Board or designated agents the right to expend the funds. Mr. Milbrand also explained the Water/Sewer enterprise fund and its use for Mr. Regan.

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FIRE DEPARTMENT – Chief Ben Laroche

Chair Milbrand welcomed Chief Laroche and stated that the CIP worksheet numbers needed updating for the Fire Department. Chief Laroche asked if any updates were made to the capital reserve funds after last year's discussions and his review of the cash flow with Mr. Milbrand. Chair Milbrand did not recall if there were updates but felt there was a need discuss market increases to estimates to be sure this was done for this year.

He then went on to explain the cash flow projection report he developed and updated annually to ensure deposits to the capital reserve funds never go below zero. Mr. Regan asked if the reserve accounts were interest bearing accounts. There was discussion about economic changes and the possibility of moving all of these to interest bearing accounts. Chair Milbrand stated that this was for a discussion with the Finance Officer and Select Board. Mr. Regan stated he was also a Trustee of the Trust Fund so this is something he would investigate.

Chief Laroche reviewed the vehicle list and the numbers listed with the Committee. He stated based on price increases anticipated for the next eight years, these should be adjusted with to possibly double the cost listed now. He is hopeful that the Fire Truck market will come to the realization that the municipalities cannot pay the prices or manage the replacement timetables based on the current life expectancies of vehicles and costs. He suggested price estimates for the ladder truck replacement in 2034 might be more like 1.2 million or 1.3 million and it might last about 20 years instead 28 of to 30 years with repairs. Chair Milbrand stated that the CIP spreadsheet is a living document so estimates can be adjusted annually if warranted.

There was more discussion about specific vehicles, the schedule of replacement, and any issues with current vehicles. Mr. Regan asked for clarification regarding the use of vehicles and specifically of the need for Bristol to have a ladder truck. Chief Laroche stated that the ladder truck was more for reach than height and indicated that having a ladder truck helps them from additional pumper trucks especially with Mutual Aid situations that can happen in the area. Mr. Kenney asked if the Town having a ladder truck helped with resident's insurance policy premium rates. Chief Laroche stated that it may help commercial more than residential residents but that there is some insurance benefit for this.

Mr. Regan then asked how increases to the estimated cost for anticipated replacement vehicles affect the deposits to the capital reserve funds. Mr. Milbrand stated that the cost is spread out for capital reserve and that his cash flow projection helps with this management.

More discussion followed about the timing of purchases from order and payment to delivery of the vehicle and having it fully equipped. Chief Laroche used the 2024 ambulance replacement ordered and the expectation to receive it in 2025. Downpayments were discussed and Chief Laroche spoke of purchases of equipment for vehicles like stretchers as part of downpayment to save money because there are usually price increases between time of order and time of delivery. The timeline increase from order to delivery is partly the parts/materials issues caused by pandemic, but Chief Laroche said it is also skilled labor issues that are present now as well.

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FIRE DEPARTMENT – Chief Ben Laroche - continued

More discussion followed with new estimated replacement numbers predicted for Engines 4 and 2 to update the CIP spreadsheet. Chief Laroche recommended a simple step-down approach for the fire trucks using the numbers of 1.1 million, 1 million, and nine hundred thousand.

Chief Laroche stated he is watching what other towns are doing for replacement and how these decisions work out with rehab and other options prior to his having to make decisions about Bristol's vehicles. He updated the Committee about state bid processes coming back and fuel figures that may change. Other equipment such as packs and radios will be watched to see if technology or replacement periods change, and any prices need updates. He discussed the other small equipment purchases and the need to have a plan for these as well. He indicated he has an internal system to anticipate timing and costs for these.

There was some discussion about the Ambulance Revolving Fund and how that works. This is a number that could also increase for annual deposits based on watching the market pricing and charges made to other towns using ambulance service.

Chair Milbrand asked what the cost of the 2022 pick-up truck purchase was. Chief Laroche stated it was \$39,000 and with outfitted equipment added it ended up around \$45,000. He asked the Chief if the figure in the worksheet was still good for the command vehicle and the Chief replied that it was, but he would continue watching the market.

The CIP worksheet will be updated based on discussions.

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

Planning Board Representative to the Board - It was determined that Donald Milbrand will be the Planning Board Representative as he now serves on the Planning Board.

CIP Narrative Writer – It was determined that Joe Lukeman should continue to write the annual narrative.

MINUTES:

The minutes of April 24, 2023, were reviewed. Mr. Kenney moved to accept the minutes as written. Mr. Favorite seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.

COMMUNICATIONS:

Ms. Sullivan updated the Committee about communications and responses from other department heads for remaining meetings of the Committee. It was noted that the Police and Highway Department will be topics for the next meeting.

NEXT MEETING: August 24, 2023 - 7 pm

ADJOURNMENT: With no other business, Mr. Regan motioned to adjourn. Mr. Lukeman seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0 and the meeting adjourned at 8:17 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Janet Cote
Land Use Associate