

**Capital Improvements Committee Meeting
First Floor Conference Room**

**One Avenue A, Turners Falls MA 01376
Wednesday, January 18, 2017**

Meeting was opened at 3:00 PM in the Town Hall First Floor Conference Room. Present were Capital Improvement Committee (CIC) members Fred Bowman and Don Valley, Town Administrator Steven Ellis. Absent was CIC member Greg Garrison. Also in attendance were Tom Bergeron, Montague DPW, and Joanne Blier and Jim Huber, Gill-Montague Regional School District.

Review and discussion of DPW Capital Requests

1. **One Ton Dump Truck:** Mr Bergeron stated the truck will cost \$76,000 rather than the previously submitted \$60,000. In response to questions, he shared that this truck is an F550 4WD with 19,000 GWV, hydraulics and a dump body. There is no need to purchase a new sander bed as they can re-use the old one. This truck replaces the current one-ton diesel, which is a 2005 but has a failing motor. The 4WD will allow access to areas of Millers Falls and Wendell Mountain. It is gas rather than diesel, which has been found to be problematic due to the amount of time the vehicle sits idle over the course of the year.
2. **DPW Discretionary:** This request is for \$100,000 and is needed. Mr Bergeron reported that there is \$51,042 in the FY17 discretionary account, which is the balance of a \$75,000 appropriation. While this is a good balance, there are significant planned expenditures and other needs always emerge. He needs to replace the cables on the wing plow and has a truck body replacement to do that will cost another \$22,000. His bottom line figure for funding this account is \$75,000, but he feels \$100,000 is more appropriate.
3. **Flail Mower:** The flail mower request is for \$110,000. In explanation Mr Bergeron noted that this price is for the tractor, boom, and flail deck. Present unit is a 1998 and the boom is failing. That unit alone costs \$30,000 to replace and this would be the second time. The tractor clutch is also failing and he described that as a very extensive process that would cost \$40-50,000. The retail price for a new flail mower from John Deere is \$156,000 but his quote included a 20% discount. He hopes to sell the old mower for \$10,000 or so and Jim Huber said the GMRSD might be interested.
4. **Building project:** Plan to get the building project to Town Meeting this May. Mr. Valley noted that this \$11M project would double the debt the town is carrying, about \$600,000-700,000/year.
5. **Other Capital Expenses:** No other large expenses are anticipated at this time. Described the sewer relining project as more of a WPCF project. We will discuss that with Bob McDonald next week.

Review and discussion of GMRSD Capital Requests

1. **Hillcrest Electrical Upgrades:** Mr. Huber explained that this \$80,000 request would replace main electrical service panels at the Hillcrest School. The current service is original to the building (1955) and is out of compliance with the modern electrical code. You can't even get breakers for this box any more. This is a serious safety hazard that needs to be addressed. There are 12000 volts coming in to this panel and it is a sub-basement room that has flooded to above the panel level in the past. The project includes tunneling from the pole outside in to the building. The new ducting will include a second, empty conduit for future expansion. It was noted that present interior power distribution is adequate, but that the building is difficult to work on because there is no crawl space.
2. **Sheffield Water Heaters:** This \$25,000 request would replace two water heaters in the Sheffield (Montague) Elementary School. One of these is far worse than the other. The one serving the kitchen requires a restart a couple times per week. Looked at high efficiency models from four vendors and considered whether a single replacement unit or two separate units would be best. Two units strong preferred for reason that they can install a bypass that would ensure both hot water circuits remain served in the event that one unit fails. Lochinvar is the preferred vendor of these commercial/industrial units and these 90 gallon units cost about \$10,000 each to install. Committee members encouraged Mr. Huber and

Ms. Blier to prepare a clear rationale for why these units are so much more expensive than what town meeting members might expect. What is the justification for such expensive water heaters?

3. **Priorities:** Mr. Bowman asked which of these projects would be the greater priority for the schools. Weighing things, the response was that work on the electrical system at Hillcrest would perhaps be the higher priority due to safety concerns, but the water heaters are also needed.
4. **Underground Storage Tanks:** Do not expect a request this year. Mr. Huber explained that the underground fuel oil storage tanks do not need to be replaced in August as was thought because they are not connected to a generator. A contractor came in today and believes the tanks by Hillcrest and the Administrative offices may in fact be original to those building's construction. Tighe and Bond suggests replacement could run in the \$500,000 range. This will need to be done within 3-5 years. These are on town property and are the town's responsibility. We have no idea what's going on under ground right now. Also there was discussion of above ground tanks and alternative storage options that may be developed for the Administration building.

Meeting adjourned at 4:30