

Capital Improvements Committee Meeting Minutes
Montague Town Hall, Conference Room
One Avenue A, Turners Falls
November 14, 2018

Attendees: Capital Improvement Committee (CIC) members Fred Bowman (chair), Greg Garrison, Josh Lively, Bob Obear, and Steve Ellis. Energy Committee members Chris Mason, Ariel Elan. Gill-Montague School District representatives Joanne Blier (dir. of business) , Mike Langknecht (school committee), and Heath Cummings (facilities manager). Library director Linda Hickman. Library Trustee members Trisha Perlman, Nancy Crowell and, Vicki Valley. Highway Department Superintendent Tom Bergeron. Town Planner Walter Ramsey. Chris Sawyer-Laucanno

I. Review and approve of minutes

Mr. Bowman moves to approve minutes of Sept 12th, 2018. Mr. Garrison Seconds. Motion passes 5-0

II. META Grant for alternative heat systems at Sheffield and Hillcrest schools

Chris Mason of the Energy Department updated the board with developments regarding the investigation into a subsidized alternative heat system for the Sheffield school and Admin building and Hillcrest school.

The Town has secured a \$12,500 grant from the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources. Mr. Mason suggests the town hire one or multiple engineers with the grant funding to develop cost analysis and environmental analysis. The RFP will be released soon by Mass CEC.

Town planner Walter Ramsey states that there have been some strong hints from the DOER that Montague is a prime candidate to receive a portion of the grant money.

Mr. Mason went on to recommend that 3 separate studies should be done to identify the best possible option. The three systems suggested are a Geo-Thermal ground source heat pump, an electric heat pump system, and a wood chip fired boiler. After some research Mr. Mason discovered that the town would most likely need to hire 3 separate engineers as it appears that the majority of engineers specialize in one or the other, not all 3.

Mr Bergeron expressed concern over the possibility of geo thermal. Mr. Bergeron stated that there has always been problems with the geo thermal installed at the new police station, and that the main cause is the sandy soil we have on the hill. Mr. Bergeron stresses that the underground storage tanks must come out of the ground as soon as possible.

Mr. Obear wonders if we could use the one fiberglass tank buried at the school and have the steel tanks pulled as a precaution.

Mr. Garrison advises the energy that the CIC is waiting for the next steps in the process and would like to a Special Article Request by the first week of January.

Mr. Ellis explained the new form to the present members of the Energy Committee and urges the return of the form by the deadline.

Ms. Elan states that she would like to see all 3 studies done despite the concern over the sandy soil on the hill.

Mr. Ellis states that he and Town Planner Walter Ramsey will oversee the operation.

Mr. Mason offered to have a sit down meeting with Mrs. Blier and members of the Energy Committee to discuss the options further.

CIC will stand ready for new info.

III. Library evaluations and studies discussion

Library Director Linda Hickman presented the CIC with updates regarding the future of the Carnegie Library in Turners Falls as well as some ideas the two other Libraries in Millers and Montague.

The Library Board of Trustees are very active and have been diligently working on cost effective ways to find a good solution to the inherent ADA and mechanical problems facing the Carnegie Library on Avenue A. Originally the plan was to hire an architect for a complete assessment of the Carnegie Library but after consideration. It is now the opinion of the Library Board of Trustees and the director to instead hire a mechanical specialist to evaluate the mechanical systems at the libraries and identify possible upgrades for the heating systems serving the 3 buildings as well as other possibilities to help reduce costs and increase efficiency.

Library director would also hire an architect who specializes in Carnegie Library renovations to evaluate and offer solutions to help the town meet ADA guidelines for accessibility. Ms. Hickman stressed that she will be pushing for pricing information as well as technical information when procuring the evaluation and the CIC agrees that this is vital to the process.

Mr. Garrison asked if the timeline for the Library is the same for library as for the META grant. Mr. Ellis answered saying that the procurement process wouldn't align with the FY 19 budget cycle.

Mr. Bowman and Mr. Ellis that the ADA compliance is the most important issue facing the Carnegie Library.

Ms. Hickman states that the Library has left over funds from other projects to use to finance the studies.

CIC eagerly awaits updates as the process moves forward.

IV. GMRSD

The CIC was introduced to the new Facilities Manager for the Gill-Montague Regional School District Heath Cummings. Mr. Cummings gave a brief description of his background as a facilities and security manager at a local college in Amherst for the last several years.

Water Heaters at High school

Mr. Cummings began updating the CIC on the various concerns he's facing as facilities manager in his first few weeks on the job. The most immediate problem involves the water heaters at the High school. One of two large capacity water heaters has recently experienced catastrophic failure and the other has began leaking this day. Should the second heater fail the school would be forced to close. Business Director Joanne Blier has already budgeted for the replacement of one water heater at a cost of \$50,000 but now the second must also be replaced. Mr. Cummings has located a vendor out of Gardiner MA who can come at short notice and replace both water heaters for a combined cost of \$82,000 which creates a significant savings vs. replacing just one unit for \$50,000. Currently waiting to receive a waiver from DCAMM to bypass the RFP and have the heaters replaced ASAP.

Mr. Garrison asks if a 800,000 BTU unit (current) is still required to serve the building as many advances in energy technology have taken place since the current units were installed.

Ms. Elan inquired as to whether there is a BSG rebate for the gas fired water heaters that need to be replaced. Mr. O'bear answered stating that the Massachusetts Center for Clean Energy website would be a good place to start looking for this information.

Mr. Ellis asked that GMRSD share the name of the vendor with the Town for possible future needs.

Pillars at Administrative Building

Mr. Cummings agrees with the CIC that columns must be replaced as soon as possible.

Mr. Bowman asks if a quote has been generated yet. Mr. Cummings states that they are waiting for Renaissance Builders to provide a price to install new columns, repair brick stairs and landing, and install new handrails.

Ms. Blier asks if there will be a special town meeting early next year. Mr. Ellis states that it is most likely to happen.

In the meantime Mr. Cummings states that he is going to clean up the site where the pillars are currently resting and cover them for the winter.

Mr. Bergeron suggests vinyl railings over wooden.

Hillcrest School and FY 20

Mr. Cummings updated the CIC on happenings at Hillcrest:

Electrical upgrade awaiting final stage. Wont affect school operation hours.

Collection tank for boiler leaking. Circulation tank may need replacement soon.

Mr. Cummings will be looking into the intercom project himself.

The CIC thanked Mr.Cummings for his professional approach to the many issues facing the school district, invites him to contact members of the committee as well as the town admin and highway dept superintendent with any relevant questions that may arise.

Mrs. Blier informed the committee of a roof leak at Hillcrest school. Roof is over 25 years old. Mr. Ellis suggested going to see the Town Clerk to check for exact age of roof. Mrs Blier explained that there is an MSBA program which could subsidize up to 80% of the cost to replace the roof. Mrs. Blier states the district is hiring a MSBA consultant to evaluate whether or not the roof would qualify for this grant. The district previously applied for a grant to do the Gill roof but the criteria for approval was changed midway through the process.

Mr Cummings states that the brick facade and the window sills at Hillcrest are crumbling and rotting respectively. Brick corners having most sever issues of facade. Severely rotten window sills under the new windows are allowing for insect penetration and hive building. A few students have severe bee allergies, major concern. Mr. Cummings will attempt to use mortar caulking to hold bricks in place that are coming loose and creating a hazard.

FY 20

Mrs. Blier outlined possible budget items for fiscal year 2020. Stated water heater money may come out of funds that the school has saved.

Mrs. Blier says that the district may request a new truck to replace one that has recently quit. Mr. Bergeron offered to help recommend a dealer and vehicle.

Highschool Sidewalks

Mrs. Blier stated that the high school sidewalks are coming apart. MR.Bergeron states that Chapter 90 money not available for to fund replacement. Mr. Bergeron offers his help in coordinating with FRCOG, suggests that granite curbs are needed.

Mr. Bowman asks for as much information as possible.

Mr. Ellis stated that the biggest issue has been fuzzy or incomplete quotes and to please prioritize the collection of clear, complete quotes.

V. DPW Building update.

Mr. Ellis informed the CIC that we have recently hired an owners project manager and have held one meeting with this person. Mr. Ellis went on to state that the RFQ was finalized this morning. We should have an architect by Jan. Start date is scheduled for early 2019 with an ambitious completion date of early the following spring.

VI. Annex Roof and Shea Theater roof.

Chris Sawyer-Laucanno spent 3.5 hours with our newly hired roof consultant, Jack Skypeck, assessing the conditions of both aforementioned roofs.

Shea Theater

They started at the Shea Theater with a careful assessment of the Carlisle roof system and a core sample of the substrate. Found that the foam core is deteriorating. Mr. Skypeck recommended replacement over repair of the roof with an upgrade to R-38 to meet stretch code. Mr. Skypeck suggested we hire someone other than original installer to repair the lower section of the Shea roof.

Annex Roof

Mr. Skypeck recommends that the town replace the annex building roof asap. Suggests eliminating 2nd floor fire egress stairs. Suggests other two small roofs behind town hall should also be addressed as well.

Mr. Skypeck will be drafting an assessment and pricing guideline for multiple scenarios for all roofs for consideration by the CIC.

Mr. Ellis suggests that both roofs be combined onto the same request article.

Mr. Bowman states he wants to see these roofs done right, committee agrees.

CIC looking forward to reviewing the evaluations promised.

VII. FY 20 planning

Mr. Ellis states that since we are investing for a 12 million dollar DPW building in addition to the recent and significant increase in sewer taxes that the town should expect some static when any new requests come before the Town Meeting. Stresses that because of this it's vital to have clear and concise article requests ahead of the annual Town Meeting.

Mr Garrison inquires as to when the solar project funds would become available to the town. Mr. Ellis states that March 31 is the date this is to begin.

Mr. Garrison agree that it is very important to streamline the Capital Article Requests. Suggest that if departments don't meet the criteria with one to two passes to deny article requests based on lack of information.

Mr. Ellis wonders whether its in the town best interest to request a discretionary fund in order to streamline quotes for articles by paying for them instead of relying on free estimates. Mr. Bowman asks how much would be appropriate on a yearly basis. \$10,000 is floated as a possible amount. Mr. Garrison states that this is similar to the discretionary account we provide for the DPW on a yearly basis.

Mr. Ellis suggests we create or otherwise come up with an example of a adequate estimate and provide that to the various department heads for guidance when gathering quotes.

Next CIC meeting November 28th at 3 pm/

Mr. Bowman motions to adjourn. Mr. Garrison seconds. Passes 5-0