

Capital Improvements Committee Meeting Minutes
Montague Town Hall, Downstairs Conference Room
One Avenue A, Turners Falls MA
January 27th, 2021

Attendees: Capital Improvements Committee members: Steve Ellis, Fred Bowman, Josh Lively, Bob Obear, Greg Garrison. Ariel Elan. Town Planner Walter Ramsey.

1. Approve meeting minutes of December 2nd and December 27th

Mr. Ellis moves to approve minutes of December 2nd, 2020. Mr. Garrison seconds. Passes 4-0.

Mr. Garrison moves to approve minutes of December 21st, 2020. Mr. Lively seconds. Passes 4-0.

2. Turners Falls Airport: Proposed Capital Asset Acquisition-Pioneer Aviation.

Members discuss ongoing prospect of purchase of Pioneer Aviation by the Town. Mr. Lively requests the taxable value by parcel for the properties currently owned by Pioneer aviation. Mr. Garrison is going to help in developing an adaptable spreadsheet which will help guide the variable costs. Members discussed all three components of the purchase in succession

- I. Property purchase of Pioneer Aviation. The estimated total being 1.45 million dollars, 95% of which is eligible to to be grant funded at the state and/or federal level.
- II. Fuel station upgrades. \$65,000 to upgrade to fuel station to allow more accessible aviation fuel. Currently customers need to call Pioneer Aviation for access to the pump station.
- III. Hangar Construction. \$370,000. Construction of 8 new hangar spaces for rental purposes.

Members discuss the option of waiting until the pro forma is available. Mr. Lively is comfortable with options one and two but isn't sure about the hangars and would like to see the financial breakdown first. Mr. Garrison states the The Airport may want to allow private investors build the hangar on a lease, shifting the risk and getting guaranteed income while avoiding the costs of ownership and maintenance. Mr. Garrison and Mr. Bowman agree that hangar options should be fully explored in an attempt to avoid borrowing \$370,000.

Mr. Obear joins the meeting.

Mr. Garrison moves to recommend purchase of Pioneer Aviation using the federal and state grant funds, at an estimated 1.4 million dollars and pending Phase 1 Environmental results. Mr. Bowman seconds. Roll call vote Passes 5-0.

Mr. Garrison moves to recommend the Airport update the fuel farm when purchase of the property is complete, utilizing all possible grant funding opportunities. Mr. Bowman seconds. Roll call vote passes 5-0.

3. Discuss/Reconsider any other proposed Special Town Meeting Capital Articles.

a. Chestnut Hill Loop Bridge.

Members discussed bid results and impact on the request. The STM request would be for \$77,148 and contain a 10% contingency. Members discussed a potential alternative for \$15,095 and would cover the cost of applying an epoxy coating for aesthetic purposes. Consensus is to wait until the winning contractor's commitment is firmed up. At this time no. Members wish to wait before acting on this matter.

4. ATM request to fund Phase II Environmental Study of 500 Avenue A property.

Mr. Ramsey explained that despite interest in the property, uncertainties presented in a Phase I 31e Environmental site assessment discouraged bidders and no bids were received. Study would clarify what exactly the conditions are through extensive physical study. The cost is \$32,500 and could prevent risk to the Town, depending on the findings. Mr. Ramsey sees value in performing the study.

Mr. Garrison asks if residential is allowed in the space? Mr. Ramsey states that it is not zoned commercially and is also seen as a commercial corridor. Mr. poses the potential downside would be if there was a need to remediate an issue. Mr. Ramsey explained the implications and that it really all depends.

Mr. Obear states that the purchaser assumes responsibility for the liability, which presents risk if EPA or DEP alters the standards or rules. Mr. Obear goes on to explain that if the Town really wants to sell the property, we really have to identify what the nature of the environmental conditions may be. Any purchasers without that knowledge lack experience and their attorney or investors will likely lead them away from the investment.

Mr. Garrison recommends a Phase II Environmental Site Assessment of 500 Avenue Abe conducted and \$32,500 be allocated for said study at May ATM. Mr. Obear seconds. Roll call vote passes 5-0.

5. Capital Projects Updates

Council on Aging roof bid process starts in February.

6. Set Meeting Schedule

Next week members will discuss any updates regarding the hangars if more info is available.

7. Adjournment.

Mr. Garrison moves to adjourn. Mr. Lively seconds. Roll call vote passes 5-0.