

Capital Improvements Committee Meeting Minutes (Draft)

Meeting Conducted Via Zoom

March 3, 2021

Attendees: Capital Improvements Committee members: Josh Lively, Steve Ellis, Fred Bowman, Bob Obear (3:15), Greg Garrison. Joanne Blier, GMRSD, Ariel Elan, MEC (3:10).

Meeting called to order at 3pm.

1. Approve Meeting Minutes

Mr. Ellis moves to adopt the minutes of September 2nd, 2020 as presented, Mr. Bowman seconds. Roll call vote. Motion passes 4-0.

Mr. Garrison moves to adopt the minutes of January 27, 2021 as presented, Mr. Bowman seconds. Roll call vote. Motion passes 4-0.

2. Consider Recommendations to Previously Discussed Capital Article Requests for ATM

Agenda items taken out of order to allow attending GMRSD representative to participate and leave without unnecessary delay.

- **Hillcrest School Building Façade Repair (\$55,000)**

This is the first priority on the GMRSD request list. Project has been well discussed over the course of two years and GMRSD has thoroughly researched the project. The repair is essential and should be considered a priority based on safety and future cost avoidance. Local and trusted mason, Scott Allen has offered what is considered a reliable quote.

Mr. Garrison moves to recommend the request for \$55,000 to fund repairs to the brick façade and any related areas of the Hillcrest Elementary School. Mr. Bowman seconds. Roll Call Vote, motion passes 4-0.

- **Sheffield School/GMRSD Admin Building Façade Repair (\$45,000)**

This is a close second priority on the GMRSD request list. Project has been well discussed over the course of two years and has been thoroughly reviewed. The repair is essential and should be considered a priority based on safety and future cost avoidance. A solid quote is in hand.

There were concerns regarding the proposed method of repair when presented for consideration in FY20. Mr. Lively elaborated on how those concerns have been addressed in the revised plans as presented, which include better detail of the method used in cladding deteriorated masonry.

Mr. Garrison moves to recommend the request for \$45,000 to fund repairs to the brick and cement façade and any related areas of the Sheffield Elementary School and GMRSD Administrative Office Building. Mr. Bowman seconds. Roll Call Vote, motion passes 4-0.

- **Sheffield School/GMRSD Admin Building Fire Alarm Upgrade/Modernization (\$90,000)**

This is the third priority on the GMRSD request list. Project is new for FY21 and has been well discussed in previous meetings. This project will include a new fire alarm panel and full replacement of existing call devices throughout the two sides of the building, as well as expansion of call devices throughout the Sheffield Elementary School to enhance ability to identify location of any alarm incidents.

This project will improve building safety and reduces call response times when alarms are triggered, improving efficiency for both school and fire department. A solid quote for the work was presented.

Mr. Bowman moves to recommend the request for \$90,000 to fund the modernization of the fire alarm system within the Sheffield Elementary School and GMRSD Administrative Office Building. Mr. Garrison seconds. Roll Call Vote, motion passes 4-0.

- **Turners Falls High School Tennis Court Repair and Re-surfacing (\$56,511)**

This is the fourth priority on the GMRSD request list, but is considered an essential repair. Project has been well discussed over the course of two years, has a solid quote, and has been thoroughly reviewed. The repair is essential and should be considered a priority based on safety and future cost avoidance. A solid quote is in hand. The total request is for \$60,000, of which \$56,511 is Montague's proportional share.

As discussed previously, the district has been informed by the MIAA that the tennis courts are no longer suitable for competition and that failure to improve the courts will result in loss of approval for teams to play there. The school has enjoyed active boys and girls tennis programs for years and the courts are available to local residents.

Mr. Garrison moves to recommend the request for \$56,511 to fund repair and resurfacing of the Turners Falls High School Tennis Courts. Mr. Bowman seconds. Roll Call Vote, motion passes 4-0.

- **Sheffield School Roof Repair (\$55,000)**

This is the fifth priority on the GMRSD request list, but is considered an essential repair to maximize life of the existing roof. This project is new for FY21 and was proposed after it was listed as a priority on the building condition assessment report. Project need is compelling on the basis of future cost avoidance, but the district only has the building assessment cost estimate in hand. A well-qualified contractor has been on site to review the roof and affirmed the necessity of repair, but has not yet provided an estimate. CIC Members agreed that this should be not be considered until that quote is in hand. Ms. Blier agreed. This may be revisited at the March 11, 2021 meeting.

Brief discussion of district's increased budget commitment and focus on capital asset management, maintenance and repair.

Mr. Obear joined the meeting. Having completed GMRSD votes, meeting returned to item 2a on the agenda.

- **DPW Six-Wheeler Truck with Plow and Sander (\$250,000 outright, 55,000 5-year lease)**

Request has been well discussed with DPW and reflects need to continue to replace an older vehicle (1997) that is at the end of its useful life. This truck will have a wing blade for to allow efficient plowing of larger roads with breakdown lane. Quotes provided. Cost to purchase the desired vehicle, fully equipped quoted at \$248,970 or five-year lease at approximately \$54,892, depending on interest rate at time of financing.

Mr. Garrison moves to recommend the request for \$55,000 to fund repairs to the brick façade and any related areas of the Hillcrest Elementary School. Mr. Obear seconds. Roll Call Vote, motion passes 5-0.

- **DPW Discretionary Account (\$100,000)**

Request has been well discussed with DPW. This account was established several years ago and has a governing policy that limits its use to vehicles and equipment. Expectation is that the FY21 account balance will be near zero based on past and planned expenditures detailed by Mr. Bergeron at a previous meeting. Accounting for expenses is always available at Town Accountant's Office.

Members feel the fund is important and there is sufficient accountability on the part of the DPW to the Finance Committee and Capital Improvements Committee. The fund ensures continuity of operations and reduces the likelihood that we will have a surge in necessary expenses as smaller vehicles and equipment age out of service. Mr. Ellis and Mr. Lively suggest that a similar account for facilities may be advisable.

Mr. Garrison moves to recommend the request for \$100,000 to fund the DPW Discretionary Account. Mr. Obear seconds. Roll Call Vote, motion passes 5-0.

- **Phase II Environmental Study of 500 Avenue A Property (\$32,500)**

As previously discussed with the Town Planner, attempts by the Town to sell the former DPW (500 Avenue A) property were unsuccessful, despite much apparent interest at the bidders' conference. No bids were received and consensus feedback was that the findings of a previously completed Phase I study created too much uncertainty relative to possible liability for bidders to submit their applications. The Town feels urgency to move this building back onto the tax roll and into the hands of a responsible developer, and recognizes that the asset is likely to deteriorate if left unoccupied for too long.

Mr. Garrison moves to recommend the request for \$32,500 to fund a Phase II environmental study of the Town's property at 500 Avenue A in Turners Falls. Mr. Obear seconds. Roll Call Vote, motion passes 5-0.

3. Discuss Development of Capital Improvements Committee Report of Recommendations

Mr. Lively volunteers to take the lead on development of the FY21 report of CIC Report of Recommendations the Finance Committee and Selectboard. The report will focus exclusively on articles considered for the Annual Town Meeting, omitting previously considered Special Town Meeting requests. Report will note that GMRSD articles actually represent two years of requests due to decision to delay votes during the pandemic last spring and fall.

4. Hear Any Capital Project Updates

None.

5. Next Meeting Schedule

Next meeting to be held via Zoom on Thursday, March 11 at 3:30pm. Focus will be on review, discussion, and editing of CIC report, as well as any further action that may be appropriate relative to the Sheffield School roof request from GMRSD.

Noted that the CIC will present to the Finance Committee and Selectboard on March 17th. CIC usually meets beforehand to finalize any outstanding edits to the report.

6. 7. Adjournment.

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