

Capital Improvements Committee Meeting Minutes
Meeting held at Montague Town Hall, One Avenue A in Turners Falls
and made available via Zoom
September 8, 2021

Meeting called to order at 3:00pm.

Attendees: CIC members: Greg Garrison (remote), Steve Ellis, Fred Bowman, Jason Burbank (3:05). Ariel Elan, MEC; Linda Hickman. Montague Public Libraries

Some members participated remotely, Roll Call votes were used for all votes taken.

1. Approve Meeting Minutes

Approved the minutes of August 4, 2021. Moved by Mr. Bowman, seconded by Mr. Ellis. Motion passes 3-0.

Mr. Burbank joins...

2. Review of Known FY22 Fall Special Town Meeting Requests

- Mr. Ellis outlines FY22 STM requests that have been suggested to date, including:
 - Replace or repair, and repaint exterior of the Council on Aging building (\$45,000). This is based on a quote from LaRochelle construction. Suggested by architect Chris-Sawyer Laucanno. Noted that the Town still has \$25,000+/- in the roof and siding appropriation, reducing the amount of new funding that will need to be appropriated.

Mr. Bowman moves, Mr. Garrison seconds to recommend \$45,000 be appropriated for the purpose of exterior renovation at the COA. Motion carries 4-0.

- Matching funds request for Montague City Road Flooding Mitigation project (\$100,000-\$150,000)
- Retaining wall issues at Burnham Cemetery off Turnpike Road near Montague City.
- WPCF superintendent may request new pickup truck (proposed electric vehicle)
- Possible need for added funding for moisture remediation/HVAC work at Montague Center Library, beyond the original \$22,500 appropriation

Extended discussion of the Montague Center Library Moisture Remediation Need.

- Mr. Ellis reminded the group that \$22,050 was originally appropriated. None has been spent due to uncertainty re the scope. The trustees offered a different opinion of what should be done than was in the original quote. Conversation has started and stopped over a two-year period, in part due to COVID.

- An ERV was installed in December 2020 with CARES funding to improve fresh air circulation in the building.
- Mr. Burbank has worked on the controls/settings of the existing oil furnace and the ERV, which has offered substantial improvements.
- Library received recommendation to improve exterior drainage and level concrete apron to reduce basement moisture (flooding is not apparent, but it gets damp). This should come first. DPW is engaged.
- Jamrog Plumbing recommends mini-splits and making separate circuit for the ERV, taking it out of the existing furnace, which Mr. Burbank suggests should be maintained for back up.
- Now mixed feelings about basement moisture barrier and its potential to create mildew/mold.
- Decided that the project is not clearly laid out and it is unclear whether more funding should be considered.
- Some Possible FY23 Capital Requests were noted. All of which will require more information before CIC can consider and recommend
 - Town hall roof replacement (awaiting quotes)
 - Hillcrest Asbestos Containing Tile (awaiting further quotes and discussion of options)
 - Shea Theater – front roof issues, the one section that was not replaced
 - Items presented on DPW capital project list (Vactor is apparent, list is confusing)
 - Items presented on WPCF capital project list (several big ticket items)
 - Police cruiser

3. MSBA Process Research

- Mr. Ellis reports that he has done some research regarding the MA School Building Authority process following a CIC meeting at Hillcrest where AC tile issues were viewed. Total price tag for that project, if done with the best long term solution, is nearly \$600,000. Unclear whether that and the numerous other capital requirements presented in building assessments of Hillcrest and Sheffield make sense – or whether a new school building project would be more cost effective in the short and long term.
- Spoke with the OPM for our DPW project, who offered an overview of the process. MSBA exercises a lot of authority over design and construction decisions, including hiring of design and construction firms. They would participate in the assessment of whether renovation of both or only one of the schools is the better option, or whether a new building is the best option. Town can have its preferences, but MSBA has 9 votes and we have 3.
- We believe the maximum subsidy for a building project is now 80% and the process from date of application to building construction is likely to be five years.

- Joanne Blier is beginning research into the application process and will work with Steve and engage the committee when the district is in position to have this conversation. Needs to begin this fall because it is critical context for the approach to ACT repair.

4. FY23 Capital Request

- Board consensus is to announce department head deadline of November 1 for requests for both the winter STM and the Annual Town Meeting. Request deadline of December 1st for the GMRSD.
- Agreed that we will do first reviews in the fall and advise proposers of questions and how to strengthen their requests before re-submission by January 15.

5. Review of Building Assessments

- From working with them and seeing Library Trustees' questions regarding the recommendations for the Montague Center Library (they hired a structural engineer to review some of the report findings and were given contradictory advice), as well as the rapid escalation of the issues with and cost of the Hillcrest ACT, it is apparent that these are high-level tools.
- These assessments offer a big picture of the capital needs, but are not definitive. Discussion of whether we'd do better to hire subject area experts to review. Have a plumber/HVAC look at each building, a roofer, etc. Would be more complex to pull it all together. Mr. Burbank values the comparability of the single firm approach.

6. Member vacancy

- Discussed desire to add someone with building construction/general trades expertise now that Mr. Lively and Mr. Obar are not with the CIC.
- Mr. Garrison will seek to get the word out through the Recorder/Reporter. Mr. Ellis will follow up with any leads he can identify.

7. Future Meetings

- DPW's Tom Bergeron and Will Stratford will be in to share road and bridge information on September 15. Will ask them to comment on vehicle and equipment capital list at that time as well.
- Next meeting will be held virtually, by consensus agreement.

Adjournment.

Mr. Bowman moves to adjourn. Mr. Garrison seconds. Roll call vote passes 4-0.