

Capital Improvements Committee Meeting Minutes

Meeting held via Zoom

June 15, 2022

In-Person Meeting with Hybrid Option.

Attendees: Jason Burbank, Steve Ellis, Greg Garrison. Ariel Elan, MEC Liaison.

Meeting called to order at 3:07pm.

1. Approval of Meeting Minutes

No minutes available

2. Review the Six Year Capital Improvement Plan/Capital Planning Policy

Mr. Garrison elects to address this out of order as the most timely piece of business. Mr. Ellis notes that our thinking about this plan is influenced by the expected adoption of the previously proposed Capital Planning Financial Policy, which would serve as a guide for the report. Mr. Ellis provided a copy of that plan with some edits and comments he incorporated into it based on passed committee feedback.

Discussion of the specifics of that plan, which focus both on identifying and prioritizing needed projects and the funding of such priorities. Discussion of how maintaining excess capacity in our budget would facilitate the possibility of funding projects once major debt begins to expire. The question of funding and excess capacity interacts with capital improvement s committee but is generally more in domain of FinCom and the Selectboard.

This policy is consistent with the emergent focus the CIC has had on roads and bridges, which historically have been under-emphasized in Montague's capital planning process, left to the domain of the DPW because any such improvements were almost exclusively supported by Chapter 90 road funding. Noted that Mr. Ellis received agreement from FRCOG to conduct a pavement management study, which will give the town a comprehensive overview of its road conditions, providing a systematic view of conditions and expected investment needs.

Mr. Garrison feels comfortable that the policy guides us well relative to the Six Year Report and will not create issues relative to our planned approach. Desire to have them finalized to allow us to proceed.

Mr. Garrison moves to recommend the Capital Planning policy to the Finance Committee and Selectboard as presented and Mr. Burbank seconds. Motion passes 3-0.

3. Discuss FY23 Committee Membership and Organization

Noted that Mr. Martineau has decided not to seek reappointment to the committee due to increasing work demands. This leaves thee seats open due to Mr. Bowman's earlier resignation and Mr. Ellis' plan to step back from a voting position in FY23. Mr. Garrison notes that Chris Menegoni, a finance committee member, is interested in joining. He also suggests - and Ariel

Elan confirms - that Ms. Elan is interested in joining, building on the role that she has played as MEC Liaison. There is consensus among the members that these candidates appear well qualified to contribute. Each has or will need to contact the Moderator, Ray Godin, to request appointment.

Mr. Garrison agrees to serve as Chair again if members would like him to remain in that position. Highlights that it is not realistic for the chair to take minutes – nor can the Town Administrator – for every meeting. It needs to be better distributed.

4. Debrief on Annual Town Meeting Outcomes

Reviewed capital projects funded through the ATM and discussed implications of hiring an Assistant Town Administrator focused on Development, Facilities and Infrastructure, which should greatly enhance our ability to plan and execute capital projects. The hiring committee is appointed and awaiting a finalized job description, which the Selectboard will take up at its next meeting.

5. Capital Project Updates

Mr. Ellis outlined unexpected announcement from MassDOT That they are committing an expected \$56M to replace all three of the bridges between 5th and 6th street in the Turners Falls Canal District. These would replace the failed and temporary bridge that goes over the canal at 6th street, as well as the Green and White bridges that go over the canal and CT river at 5th Street. One of these bridges will go in the same general area as our in-progress 5th Street Pedestrian Bridge project. That project carries substantial risk and benefit, but in light of these new commitments from DOT the Selectboard has determined we should discontinue that project. The MassDOT project is expected to be advertise in FY27.

We also learned that the MassDOT intends to replace the General Pierce Bridge in its entirety. This bridge is currently being restored for a service life MassDOT has described as 25 years, while the Town has advocated for a more comprehensive project. They have determined that a larger restoration or outright replacement – we don't know which – should be accelerated. This is likely a result of the new federal infrastructure investment act (The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law or BIL).

DPW Facility update provided by Mr. Burbank as the chiller controls are now working. He will be presenting a paper about this to ASHRAE in the near future.

5. Adjournment

Mr. Burbank moves to adjourn. Mr. Garrison seconds. Motion passes 3-0