

MONTAGUE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, January 8, 2025, 3:30 PM

Montague DPW, 128 Turners Falls Road, Turners Falls, MA

In Attendance:

CIC Members: Gregory Garrison (GG), Chris Menegoni (CM), Ariel Elan (AE), Lynn Reynolds (LR), Jason Burbank (JB) (arrived at 3:50 PM)

Town Staff: Christopher Nolan-Zeller (CNZ)- Assistant Town Administrator, Samuel Urkiel (SU) – Public Works Superintendent

Also in Attendance: John Reynolds (JR)

Meeting called to order 3:33PM, GG Presiding

1. Call to Order and Approve any outstanding meeting minutes: 12/11/24

MOTION to approve the minutes of 11/13/24 by GG, CM Seconded. CM-AYE, GG- AYE, LR- AYE, AE-ABSTAIN, JB-ABSENT. MOTION PASSED

2. Tour of Public Works facility; recent capital purchases; assets in need of replacement

SU demonstrated several features of the new DPW facility, including bay doors that automatically close after 5 minutes to reduce heating costs, a spacious garage interior that enables quick and easy vehicle access, a radiant heated garage floor, fully-equipped repair shop and wash bay, sensor lighting and air filtration throughout the building, and excellent insulation of the entire exterior. SU displayed the two large trucks requested for replacement, noting that these vehicles tend to last about 20 years in New England, which both trucks now surpass.

SU and committee examined other vehicles slated for replacement, discussed recent vehicle repairs, and considered options for downsizing fleet. SU expressed that all vehicles were needed, but noted that the 2001 camera van could be replaced by a smaller vehicle. GG noted that old vehicles are expensive to maintain and present unpredictable costs in the form of mechanical issues.

3. Review of Public Works capital article requests with DPW Superintendent Sam Urkiel

Meeting re-convened in DPW conference room after tour.

GG asked SU about the requested funds for slope stabilization on Oakman Street. SU noted that this amount came from a quote provided by Stantec to engineer repairs to a large washout on the hill between Oakman Street and the pond at the edge of Thomas Memorial Golf & Country Club. SU explained the construction would be done in-house, and deferring the repair would pose a risk to the road.

AE asked if the hill washing out was on the Town's property. SU responded that the washout was being caused by the Town's stormwater drainage, meaning it is our responsibility to fix.

GG asked about the capital request for guardrail and culvert work. SU responded that this was to repair eroding infrastructure on Meadow Road. AE asked if this construction could also be done in-house. SU responded that it could not, as the department lacked equipment to drive guardrail posts into the ground, and does not encounter this enough to warrant purchase of the equipment to do so.

SU noted that he was working to log data from GIS assessments for the purpose of developing plans for the needed culvert, guardrail, and sidewalk repairs, plus non-Chapter-90-eligible paving around Town.

AE asked whether other committee members supported bonding to cover the full \$3 million cost for Phase 2 of the sewer relining project. GG noted that determining a funding source was the responsibility of Finance Committee, while CIC is tasked with prioritizing capital requests in a strategic manner. GG thanked SU for being proactive with maintenance and repairs.

CNZ asked about the two recurring DPW capital requests, which are the Discretionary Fund, and Alley/non-Chapter 90 paving. GG explained that the Discretionary Fund was replenished on an annual basis to be able to start each fiscal year with a \$100,000 balance. For the past few years, Town Meeting had appropriated a consistent \$30,000 to fund alley and other non-Chapter-90-eligible paving projects.

SU explained the importance of the Discretionary Fund for being able to keep his department's fleet operational when the need for unexpected repairs arises.

4. Status review of ongoing major capital projects

CNZ updated the Committee on the completion of the Carnegie Library Basement renovation, upcoming 11th Street Bridge repairs, and the Strathmore Mill demolition currently being engineered.

5. Topics not anticipated in the 48 hour posting requirements

None.

6. Establish next meeting date(s)

The next meeting would be virtual at 3:30PM on 1/15.

7. Adjournment

MOTION to close the meeting at 4:58PM by LR, CM Seconded. CM-AYE, GG-AYE, LR-AYE, AE-AYE, JB-AYE. MOTION PASSED

Respectfully Submitted,

Christopher Nolan-Zeller